

PUBLISHED

# RESEARCH ARTICLES



2023 | 2024 | 2025

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Volume 1

## Research Paper Publications List

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- 1) Government of Afghanistan Republic from Revolution to Collapse: A Realist Perspective on Political Dominance. Publication Date, 2023/11/29. American Journal of Law and Political Science
- 2) The significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan. Publication Date, 2024/02/10. Nangarhar University International Journal of Biosciences
- 3) Exploring Refugee Crises: A Comparative Study of US Withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan. Publication Date, 2024/05/13. The American Journal of Political Science and International Relationship
- 4) Strategic Interests and Geopolitical Considerations: Assessing the Importance of Afghanistan for the US Post-Withdrawal. Publication Date, 2024/5/26. Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Science
- 5) Studying the Factors Contributing to the Sexual Harassment of Women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan: A Social Perspective. Publication Date, 2024/6/24. Journal of Higher Education and Development Studies
- 6) A Review on the Great Game in Afghanistan: A Realist Perspective on the Geopolitical Struggle for Control. Publication Date, 2024/8/10. Journal of International Relations and Peace
- 7) Intellectual Property Rights and Food Security Enhancement in Afghanistan: A Human Rights-Based Analysis. Publication Date, 2024/11/10. JSS Journal for Legal Studies and Research
- 8) Political Cartelization and the Empty Ballot Box Phenomenon in Regional Elections. Publication Date, 2024/11/13. Jurnal Mengkaji Indonesia
- 9) Legal Responsibilities' of Water Purification Companies in Afghanistan its impact on Climate Change. Publication Date, 2024/11/20. JSS Journal for Legal Studies and Research
- 10) Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education: Mitigating Risks, Embracing Opportunities, and Shaping the Future. Publication Date, 2024/12/20. Kardan Journal of Engineering and Technology
- 11) The Legal Imperative of Bawaslu's Oversight in Enforcing Verdict Compliance. Publication Date, 2025/01/23. Jurnal Ilmu Hukum
- 12) The Deployment of Military Robots and the Principle of Distinction in International Humanitarian Law: Balancing Human Protection or Emerging Challenges. Publication Date, 2025/01/28. Journal of Arts, Humanities, and Social Science
- 13) The International Humanitarian Law and AI Deployment in Afghanistan's War: A Just War Theory (2001-2021). Publication Date, 2025/01/31. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation

- 14) Factors Leading to Educational Centers' Closure in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan. Publication Date, 2025/5/10. Journal of Education, Learning, and Management (JELM)
- 15) Building Resilience: The Need for International Cooperation in Afghanistan's Climate Change Adaptation Post-2021. Publication Date, 2025/6/30. Kardan Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (KJSSH)
- 16) The Geopolitics of International Aid and its Influence on Afghanistan's Post-2021 SDGs Priorities. Publication Date, 2025/8/30. Journal of Arts, Humanities and Linguistics
- 17) Factors Contributing to the Occurrence of Medical Crimes in Jalalabad City and Their Prevention Methods. Publication Date, 2025/9/30. Addaiyan Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- 18) Adaptive Resilience of International Law: Sustaining Legitimacy, Trust, and Effectiveness in Contemporary Global Conflicts. Publication Date, 2025/10/31. International Journal of Multidisciplinary on Science and Management
- 19) Leveraging Household Economics for Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation: Strategic Recommendations for the Afghan Government. Publication Date, 2025/10/31. Al-Taqwa International Journal of Social Science

## Government of Afghanistan Republic from Revolution to Collapse: A Realist Perspective on Political Dominance



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### Article's History

**Submitted:** 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 2023

**Accepted:** 12<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023

**Published:** 28<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023

### Abstract

**Aim:** The aim of this study was to explore the collapse of the Republic of Afghanistan's government, and to identify the main factors contributing to its collapse. By analyzing a variety of political and historical factors, the research seeks to find the underlying causes of the collapse of the government.

**Methods:** This research used a qualitative research design, including document and articles analysis. The sources of data included books, academic articles, and reports. The data was analyzed using a realist framework to identify the underlying causes of the collapse of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan.

**Result:** The collapse of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan between 1973 and 2021 was mainly due to the lack of inclusive and stable administrations representing national interests; external interference, media propagandas, internal conflicts and economic instability have contributed to the collapse. Lessons learned include the need for political engagement, regional collaboration, economic development and international support to prevent future collapses and promote a sustainable and inclusive model of government in Afghanistan.

**Conclusion:** This study offers recommendations for future governance in Afghanistan, taking into account the complex situation.

**Recommendation:** In order to ensure Afghanistan's future stability and prosperity, it is essential that inclusion, representation and political stability are given priority. This includes actively involving marginalized groups and communities in the decision-making process and supporting an inclusive political environment.

**Keywords:** *Republican government, political instability, domestic conflict, interference, interest*

## INTRODUCTION

Realism emphasizes the role of power and self-interest in shaping political behavior. It views states as rational actors, prioritizing their interests over others, such as accumulating resources and expanding influence. Realism suggests that states seek to establish and maintain dominance over others to protect their interests. Self-interest is a fundamental principle in realism, as states prioritize their survival and security, manifesting in the pursuit of power to accumulate resources, expand influence, and protect their security in a competitive international arena (Isiksal, 2004).

Comprehensive overview of Afghanistan's three republican governments includes the Revolutionary Republic, the Khalq Republic, and the Islamic Republic. Afghanistan's modern history is marked by political upheaval, communal violence, and the gradual fall of the republican government. The Revolutionary Republic emerged in 1973, instantly following a bloodless coup d'état led by Mohammed Daoud Khan, overthrowing King Zahir Shah and satisfactorily establishing a republican government to modernize Afghanistan and reduce monarchy influence (Mukerjee, 1975). President Daoud Khan comfortably established the Republic Government in 1973 and later in 1978, Khalq Revolution happened by the Communist Party, and to painstakingly restore executive power, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979. However, they intentionally left in 1989 (Jamal & Maley, 2023).

Daoud Khan properly implemented social, political, and economic reforms and pursued a policy of proper non-alignment in international relations. The Revolutionary Republic typically ended with the Saur Revolution on April 27, 1978 (Halliday & Tanin, 1998). The Communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) eagerly seized executive power, typically leading to an ideological shift from a republican government to a socialist regime. The Khalq Republic promptly began after the Saur Revolution in April 1978, when the PDPA typically established a socialist government in Afghanistan (Dupree, 1979).

The PDPA, divided into two independent factions, Khalq and Parcham, implemented radical leftist policies and social reforms. The political Khalq faction, led by Nur Muhammad Taraki and later Hafizullah Amin (Halliday & Tanin, 1998), eagerly pursued an agrarian reform program and correctly aligned Afghanistan more closely with the Soviet Union. The Khalq Republic resolutely faced internal divisions, political instability, and political resistance from various factions, including tribal leaders and religious groups. The Soviet Union intervened militarily in December 1979 (Hughes, 2008), to enthusiastically support the established PDPA government, sparking the Soviet-Afghan War. The Khalq Republic collapsed in 1992 carefully following the gradual withdrawal of Soviet forces and internal conflicts among the Mujahideen factions. On December 22, 2001, the Taliban regime was overthrown, leading to the declaration of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (Crews & Tarzi, 2008), which aimed for a democratic transitional administration upholding Islamic principles, human rights, and the rule of law. It earnestly sought to rebuild Afghanistan, properly promote dynamic stability, and instantly establish a representative government (Marples, 2016).

The Islamic Republic collapsed in August 2021 because of the Taliban insurgency, Doha contract, corruption and Afghan government reliance on US, causing the fall of the Afghan government. Afghanistan's political landscape has voluntarily undergone significant changes and considerable complexities, with internal conflicts and external interventions shaping its historical trajectory. The Taliban took over from 1992 to 2002, typically causing a civil war. In 2001, the US-led invasion naturally sought necessary stability and lasting peace (Bosin, 2009).

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However, the country has not completely recovered from the previous instability. The Soviet Union was deposed after the 9/11 direct attacks, despite undoubtedly helping to reconstruct Afghanistan. The potential US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 undoubtedly resulted in the Taliban's ultimate defeat and the official establishment of a democratic government. The Republic's centralized administration faced social, political, and economic challenges. Afghanistan's political and economic power has grown since the collapse of the Taliban in terms of infrastructure improvements, open school enrollment, and democratic elections (Jamal & Maley, 2023).

### **REVOLUTIONARY REPUBLIC GOVERNMENT 1973 -1978**

The official establishment of the Republic of Afghanistan in 1973 was the result of a complex combination of political, economic, and social events. The monarchy's inefficiency and corruption caused many Afghans to believe a republic would end the previous era of governance. Leftist and socialist movements emerged in the 1960s and early 1970s, persistently advocating for social and economic equality (Latif et al., 2011).

The National Revolutionary Party properly established the Republic Government in 1965 (Mukerjee, 1975), with western countries supporting it with aim of restricting the influence of Soviet Union. The Soviet Union enthusiastically supported the official establishment as long as it traditionally served Soviet objectives. Afghanistan faced economic issues in the 1970s, including trade imbalances, inflation, and a failing agricultural sector (Hughes, 2008).

The democratic republic would aid in instantly resolving these economic problems and enthusiastically promote exponential economic growth. The Republic Government was established in 1973 because of factors such as the monarchy's lasting effects, the influence of leftist and socialist groups, foreign pressure, and economic hardships. It properly established a more equitable society and significantly altered Afghanistan's political, economic, and social environment. Dawood Khan's republican system in Afghanistan failed due to lack of elections and his alignment with communist elements, a mistake that ultimately undermined democratic principles (Hawar, 2016).

The Republic government typically prioritized reducing the considerable influence of religion in modern politics and impressive building a secular state. A modern constitution was enacted, reliably distinguishing between religion and state, and disbanding the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs. The Republic Government implemented land reform, transferring land from large landowners to small-scale farmers. This program valiantly attempted to progressively reduce long-standing discrepancies in land ownership and promote more essential economic equality (Mukerjee, 1975).

For all local Afghans, to adequately provide complimentary access to education, the Republic Government significantly increased the number of higher education institutions. The reasonable rates of functional literacy and academic success, therefore, demonstrated a considerable improvement. The Republic Government significantly advanced and allowed women's fundamental rights, including voting, compulsory education, and work. They were

recruited to senior positions in democratic government and other key sectors and funded infrastructure projects like bridge construction and intelligent transportation systems. This typically caused Afghanistan's economic growth and expanded tremendously possible linkages. The official establishment of the government shifted Afghanistan's political, economic, and social environment, but encountered opposition from conservative and religious organizations (Hughes, 2008).

In 1978, the responsible government was overthrown because of its concerted efforts to enthusiastically promote social and economic reforms and secularize the independent state. The Republic of Afghanistan was founded in 1973 but faced several challenges before collapsing in 1978. The Republic Government was marked by political instability, frequent changes of leadership, and growing opposition from conservative and religious organizations (Sidky, 2007). This considerable uncertainty subtly undermined the democratic government and instantly made it more vulnerable to properly direct attacks from its potential adversaries. The Republic Government confronts significant economic challenges, like a growing trade imbalance, skyrocketing inflation, and a failing agricultural sector. These potential problems gently encouraged ideological opposition to the democratic government's standard policies and raised public dissatisfaction with them. Powerful landowners resisted the Republic Government's controversial land reform strategy, which eagerly sought to transfer property from significant landowners to private farmers. The increasing unrest and potential instability in Afghanistan were fueled by successful resistance and contributing factors such as the Soviet Union's military and economic support since 1973 (Westad, 1994).

The Soviet Union's potential invasion in 1979 intentionally caused a decade-long conflict that ultimately contributed to the considerable fall of the Republic Government. In 1978, the democratic Khalq faction overthrew the responsible government, leading to increased hostility and a gradual descent into civil war (Mukerjee, 1975). The Republic Government typically faced political turmoil, economic hardships, and political opposition from powerful interest groups, ultimately leading to its successful overthrow in 1978, which was hastened by the democratic Khalq faction's political coup and Soviet involvement. Sardar Mohammed Daoud Khan, the first noble head of the Republic Government of Afghanistan, was overthrown in a 1978 coup. Socialist and communist movements, and conservative and religious groups, naturally increased their considerable criticism of Khan's presidential administration. Afghans were discontented with the democratic government's affirmative actions, citing corruption and judicial tyranny (Sidky, 2007).

Economic issues, like trade deficits, inflation, and a failing agricultural industry, led to opposition and general dissatisfaction. Daoud Khan's presidential administration was characterized by political irrationality, frequent cabinet changes, and an apparent lack of policy consistency. This historical volatility instantly made it difficult for the democratic government to properly address economic and social issues, resulting in increased discontent. Many Afghan military soldiers eagerly sought the Communist Party as a possible means of achieving precise change because they were dissatisfied with Daoud Khan's effective leadership. Key members of the Afghan Communist Party properly conducted a potential coup in 1978 that was greatly inspired by military leaders. The Soviet Union also played a role in Khan's ultimate downfall. Since 1973, the Soviet Union has supported Afghanistan militarily and economically, constituting merely an inseparable bond with the Afghan Communist Party (Bosin, 2009).

The Soviet Union genuinely believed that the Communist Party represented its considerable interests better than Daoud Khan's presidential administration. The presidential administration inevitably encountered many potential obstacles and considerable hurdles. With numerous

ethnic and tribal differences, Afghanistan maintains a divided society. While the considerable bulk of the reasonable people resided in rural regions, the PDPA naturally had a strong support base in proper cities. Several elite groups, including tribal organizations and elected representatives of the religious community, adamantly opposed the presidential administration. The administration also had to deal with external pressures and antagonism from nearby nations like Pakistan, Iran, and China (Dupree, 1979). In key addition, the United States generously funded counterrevolutionary troops and fiercely opposed the PDPA Administration (Mukerjee, 1975).

The PDPA Administration was reliably distinguished by its revolutionary goals and attempts to positively affect social change in Afghanistan. However, it encountered fundamental internal and external problems that ultimately contributed to its ultimate demise. Overall, many contributing factors, including growing opposition to Daoud Khan's presidential administration, economic challenges, political turmoil, military upheaval, and geopolitical factors, contributed to his ultimate downfall and a combination of political instability, economic crisis, social and cultural factors. Opposition from Islamic fundamentalists, Soviet intervention, and lack of popular support led to the collapse of the Republic Government of Afghanistan in 1978. The key factors that proved his ultimate downfall gently lead to further unrest and potential violence in Afghanistan in the upcoming years.

#### **KHALQ REPUBLIC GOVERNMENT 1978-1992**

On April 28, 1978, the Afghan Communist Party's Khalq division prepared a potential coup (Dupree, 1979), overthrowing the Republic Government of Afghanistan and gaining power. Nur Mohammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin led the democratic Khalq faction (Halliday & Tanin, 1998), which was more radical and driven by ideology than the Parcham wing. The Khalq caused a socialist revolution in Afghanistan by promoting atheism, land reform, and establishing a secular state. They focused on modernizing Afghanistan's economy and society, focusing on industrialization and education. However, their controversial ideals encountered opposition from landowners and religious leaders, who perceived them as a threat to Afghan culture and Islamic values. Resistance and unrest remain key issues that the Khalq group had to deal with while in control. Both the public and other Communist Party factions, such as the Parcham faction, criticized them. The group equally failed to address the country's economic issues, which included a failing agricultural sector, a growing trade deficit, and excessive inflation (Dupree, 1979).

Ultimately, the Khalq faction's radicalism and policies led to their destruction. In 1979, Hafizullah Amin launched a coup to remove the faction, which led Soviet forces to assassinate him (Mukerjee, 1975). The Afghan government was ousted by the Khalq section of the Communist Party in 1978 after a ten-year battle. Hafizullah Amin, Afghanistan's President, faced political repression, factionalism, Soviet intervention, economic struggles, and international isolation, leading to human rights abuses and a prolonged war (Azmatullah & Sultana 2023). Since 1973, various groups have attacked the Republic Government, aiming to represent themselves as a radical alternative (Dupree, 1979). The Soviet Union provided financial and armed support to Afghanistan during the Khalq revolt. However, the movement experienced a brief reign of terror and confronted difficulties in the years that followed. Several Communist Party groups, including the Parcham faction, opposed the Khalq faction. This opposition increased the administration's propensity for turbulence and instability. The Khalq group engaged in two controversial initiatives: the promotion of atheism and land reform. Strong interest groups resisted these measures, adding to the increasing discontent of the general population, including landowners and religious authorities (Halliday & Tanin, 1998).

The Mujahideen, an Afghan insurgency fighting against the government and Soviet troops, constituted a significant threat to the Khalq faction. They gained general sympathy by defending Afghan culture and religion against the radical policies of the Khalq faction. However, resistance and instability led to their inability to manage the government. Afghanistan faced severe economic difficulties during the Khalq group's rule, including a rapid trade imbalance in the 1970s, inflation, and weak returns (Westad, 1994). The agricultural sector also encountered difficulties, leading to widespread discontent and a decline in the country's agricultural sector. The industrial sector was undeveloped, with mining and agriculture being the unique industries. It was challenging for the nation to diversify its economy and lessen its reliance on agriculture because of limited industrial growth. Afghanistan faced major economic difficulties overall when the Khalq group was in control, which added to the populace's discontent with the administration. The rigid policies of the faction and the resistance that these policies aroused from strong interest groups caused these issues to worsen (Dupree, 1979).

Throughout the decades of violence and instability that followed, Afghanistan's economic difficulties remained a significant issue. The Soviet Union was a critical factor in the revival and demise of the Afghan Republic Government. Sardar Mohammed Daoud Khan, who proclaimed himself president and overthrew the monarchy, caused a bloodless revolution in 1973 that resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Afghanistan (Mukerjee, 1975).

The Soviet Union provided financial and armed support to Afghanistan's recent administration, aiding in infrastructure development and armed force training. The Soviet Union continued supporting Afghanistan post-revolution. The administration did, however, confront several hurdles, including escalating resistance from conservative and religious organizations, economic issues, and political instability. The Communist Party's Khalq group ousted the Republic Government in a coup that took place in 1978 (Dupree, 1979).

The Soviet Union initially supported the Afghan Republic Government, but tensions deteriorated due to the Khalq faction's maximum activities and Soviet interests in Afghanistan. In 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to counter the Mujahideen's insurgency, which lasted over ten years. The Soviet Union's collapse in 1991 highlighted its significant role in the Afghan Republic Government's restoration and demise (Marples, 2016). Although it originally supported the government, the Soviet Union's engagement in the nation ultimately caused its fall and launched a protracted war that had a profound impact on Afghanistan and the surrounding area. During its time in office, the Afghan administration of the Khalq Democrats, which was headed by individuals like Noor Mohammad Taraki, Hafizullah Amin, Babrak Karmal, and Dr. Najeebullah Ahmadzai, considered several difficulties. Other groups within the Communist Party, like the Parcham faction, opposed the Khalq faction (Dupree, 1979). Babrak Karmal, Afghan President from 1979-1986, faced opposition, human rights abuses, economic struggles, internal strife, international isolation, and health resignation due to health reasons. His government repressive policies and internal factionalism weakened the ruling party (Azmatullah & Sultana 2023).

These groupings opposed the Khalq faction's extremist policies and were more moderate than it was. The administration became more unrest and instability-prone because of this resistance. Atheism promotion and land reform were two contentious initiatives carried out by the Khalq group. Strong interest groups, like landowners and religious leaders, opposed these reforms, which added to the public's rising unhappiness. The Mujahideen, a group of Afghan insurgents battling the government and Soviet soldiers, presented the Khalq side with substantial opposition. By portraying themselves as protectors of Afghan culture and religion against the

radical policies of the Khalq group, the Mujahideen were able to obtain the public's support. Significant economic difficulties were encountered by the Khalq Democrats government, including a trade imbalance, rising inflation, and a faltering agriculture industry. These economic difficulties increased resistance to the government's authority and fueled public discontent with it. The Khalq Democrats' administration obtained assistance from the Soviet Union at first, but over time, tensions between the two nations grew (Halliday & Tanin, 1998).

In 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led to a bloody conflict, ultimately toppling the Communist government. The Afghan administration led by the Khalq Democrats experienced several difficulties while in office, including opposition from other factions, unpopular policies, Mujahideen resistance, economic difficulties, and Soviet invasion (Mukerjee, 1975). These elements ultimately played a role in the fall of the government and set off a protracted era of unrest and violence in Afghanistan. Some Afghan leaders of the Khalq Democrats administration persisted through the fall of the government and the ensuing fighting, while others did not. Taraki, who presided over Afghanistan from 1978 to 1979, remains the founding figure of the Khalq group. Political instability, economic issues, human rights violations, international isolation, and corruption marked Taraki, leading to the overthrow of President Daoud Khan and a civil war (Azmatullah & Sultana 2023). He was toppled in a coup by his own deputy, Hafizullah Amin, and eventually put to death in September 1979 by Amin's loyalists. From September to December 1979, Amin presided over Afghanistan in place of Taraki. Amin, a hardliner, was in charge of carrying out many of the Khalq faction's most extraordinary ideas (Dupree, 1979).

In a coup supported by the Soviet Union, he was ousted and executed in December 1979. Following Amin's fall in 1979, Karmal, a senior member of the Communist Party's Parcham group, was chosen to lead Afghanistan. Compared to the Khalq faction, Karmal was more moderate and aimed to roll back some of its more radical measures. He ruled until 1986 when Dr. Najibullah Ahmadzai captured his place. From 1986 to 1992, Ahmadzai who belonged to the Khalq group presided over Afghanistan (Halliday & Tanin, 1998). He was more moderate and sought diplomatic solutions to the Afghan issue. Mohammad Najibullah Ahmadzai, Afghanistan's President from 1987-1992, faced insurgency, economic struggles, corruption, international isolation, and government collapse due to intensified insurgency, civil war, and Soviet aid reliance (Azmatullah & Sultana 2023).

He sought safety at the United Nations complex in Kabul after his government was overthrown in 1992, staying there until the Taliban took over in 1996. Belatedly, in 1996, the Taliban executed him. Afghanistan's political climate was significantly impacted by the Khalq Democrats' rule. The hardline views of the Khalq faction and criticism from other Communist Party factions helped polarize Afghan politics. (Halliday & Tanin, 1998). Indeed, after the Communist regime was overthrown, this division would remain a crucial aspect of Afghan politics. The Mujahideen a group of Afghan insurgents engaged in conflict with both the government and Soviet soldiers presented a severe challenge to the Khalq Democrats regime. By portraying themselves as protectors of Afghan culture and religion against the rigorous policies of the Khalq group, the Mujahideen could obtain the public's support. The Khalq Democrats' administration initially received assistance from the Soviet Union at first, but over time, tensions between the two nations grew (Azmatullah & Sultana 2023).

In summary, the Soviet Union's intervention and support to the Afghan government played a crucial role in the collapse of the government in 1978. The Soviet presence and policies triggered a decade-long conflict and insurgency, leading to the eventual collapse of the communist regime in 1992. In 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to combat the

Mujahideen insurgency, provoking a devastating war that ended the Communist regime (Dupree, 1979). Afghanistan's Khalq Democrats' government's role in the battle impacted the nation for years, causing instability, bloodshed, and strife. The Afghan administration conducted by the Khalq Democrats had a tremendous influence on the political climate of the nation, causing division, the development of the Mujahideen, the Soviet invasion, and continued violence. For many years to come, the effects of their authority would continue influencing Afghanistan's political development. Overall, a combination of Soviet intervention, resistance from Mujahideen, ethnic and tribal divisions, economic crisis, political instability, and lack of popular support led to the collapse of the Republic Government of Afghanistan in 1978-1992.

### **ISLAMIC REPUBLIC GOVERNMENT 2001-2021**

During its 20 years in power, the Republic Government of Afghanistan, which was founded after the Taliban's authority fell in 2001, experienced several difficulties. Political unpredictability, frequent changes in the leadership, and accusations of corruption characterized the Republic Government. This unpredictability weakened the legitimacy of the administration and led to a rise in popular unhappiness with it. The revived Taliban insurgency and the advent of other violent organizations like ISIS were among the major security difficulties the Republic Government was facing. Despite its excellent efforts, the Afghan government was incompetent to fully take control of the nation, especially in the countryside. Significant economic obstacles, including massive unemployment, desperate poverty, and a faltering agricultural sector, beset the Republic Government. Prolonged fighting and unrest worsened problems, preventing government resolution. International assistance from nations and NATO military backing helped the Republic Government (Crews & Tarzi, 2008).

However, resolving the problems confronting the administration and fostering stability did not entirely result from this assistance. The Republic Government, including the conducting of ordinary elections and the adoption of a constitution that upheld democratic ideals, imposed a number of democratic changes into place (Network & Clark, 2022). However, political meddling and corruption sometimes undercut these improvements. Women's rights have advanced somewhat under the Republic Government, especially in metropolitan areas. But many women however had to deal with prejudice and abuse, especially in rural regions. Principally, the Republic Government of Afghanistan experienced persistent difficulties and problems between 2001 and 2021, including political unrest, security issues, economic hardships, and hostilities (Crews & Tarzi, 2008).

The US-led invasion in 2001 led to the formation of a contemporary government, but the Taliban insurgency grew stronger, despite foreign assistance. Corruption, political rivalry, and poor administration undermined the government's authority and discontent. In 2021, US and NATO forces left Afghanistan, removing essential military support. Hamid Karzai, the first leader of the Islamic Republic, played a crucial role in the formation of the modern administration and establishing stability (Network & Clark, 2022). However, he was accused of incapacity to deal with corruption and poor leadership, and relying on ethnic coalitions for during his tenure (Saradi, 2023).

Ashraf Ghani, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's president, faced challenges like Taliban insurgency, political wrangling, and corruption accusations (Jamal & Maley, 2023). Despite improving security forces, the government struggled to govern rural areas, and its hold was weakened by political instability, leadership changes, and corruption allegations. This unpredictability undermined the credibility of the administration and fueled a rise in popular

discontent. Along with poor leadership, the government had trouble providing the people with even the most key services. The administration was confronted with considerable economic difficulties, such as rising unemployment, poverty, and a failing agricultural industry. Prolonged fighting and unrest worsened issues, leading to the government's failure to resolve corruption and embezzlement, with officials facing embezzlement charges. Cronyism was equally prevalent, with important government jobs frequently going to political allies rather than people who met the requirements. Regional and influential governments, notably the United States and other major world powers, interfered with the administration (Saradi, 2023).

The meddling frequently made it more difficult to promote stability and handle the nation's problems. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's failure between 2004 and 2021 was attributed to factors like conflict, security issues, political unrest, economic difficulties, corruption, and regional interference. Despite significant strides in democratization and women's rights, these challenges overshadowed the government's efforts, ultimately failing to provide long-term stability to the nation. The Islamic Republic government of Afghanistan fell in 2021 due to several factors, including the Taliban resurgence, the withdrawal of international forces, and weaknesses in Afghan security forces (Network & Clark, 2022).

The Taliban intensified its armed campaign, capturing provincial capitals and gaining territorial control. Afghan security forces struggled to thwart Taliban advances due to the withdrawal of foreign troops, corruption, low morale, and limited equipment. Elite infighting and political squabbles further strained their ability to battle the Taliban as a unique force. The collapse of regional support further undermined the government's position. Public disillusionment and lack of trust in the government stemmed from issues like corruption, poor governance, and inadequate service delivery (Jamal & Maley, 2023). Taliban propaganda and recruitment efforts capitalized on grievances, religious rhetoric, and promises of justice and stability, gaining support from segments of the population. Negotiation and peace process challenges between the Afghan government and the Taliban faced significant setbacks, such as disagreements over power sharing, the release of prisoners, and the inclusion of diverse stakeholders (Network et al., 2022).

The international community's shifting priorities, coupled with fatigue from the long-standing conflict, led to reduced attention and support for the Afghan government, weakened the government's position, and limited its ability to seek assistance in confronting the Taliban's advances. These factors combined with other contextual factors contributed to the fall of the Islamic Republic government of Afghanistan in 2021. The fall of the Republic government in Afghanistan from 1973 to 2021 can be attributed to a combination of political, social, and security factors. Political instability and coups led to the establishment of a republic, but power battles and frequent leadership changes further weakened the republican government's authority and legitimacy. The Soviet Union's invasion in 1979 and the Mujahideen resistance led to extensive destruction, fatalities, and population displacement, weakening the republican administration and increasing civil dissatisfaction (Sidky, 2007).

The Taliban's rise in the 1990s worsened the situation, as they took over significant parts of Afghanistan, ultimately taking Kabul in 1996. The Taliban's Islamic Emirate idea coincided with the fall of the republic government. US military intervention and transitional governments began military involvement in Afghanistan, leading to the overthrow of the Taliban government in 2001 and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in 2004 (Shankar, 2004).

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan was attributed to the failure of the previous Afghan government to understand and manage the war against the Islamic Emirate. The absence of direct talks between the US and the Islamic Emirate weakened the previous system, and the Afghan government's efforts to overthrow the Islamic Emirate and merge it into the Republic were also cited as reasons. The centralization of the system, administrative corruption, and struggle for long-term legitimacy were also identified as the final reasons for the fall of the republic. In summary, the collapse of the Afghan government in 2021 was influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. The withdrawal of US forces, the Taliban insurgency, Pakistan's support for the Taliban, media propagandas, and regional dynamics all contributed to the collapse of the government. Corruption and governance issues within the Afghan government also played a role. (SIGAR. 2023).

Hamid Karzai, Afghan President from 2004-2014, faced challenges like Taliban resurgence, corruption, ethnic tensions, weak institutions, inadequate service delivery, and political instability. The Taliban's violent campaign, corruption, ethnic tensions, and political instability weakened the government's legitimacy. Ashraf Ghani, Afghanistan's President from 2014-2021, faced numerous challenges such as the Taliban insurgency, political instability, corruption, media propaganda, economic issues, ethnic and regional tensions, peace negotiations, and human rights issues. The Taliban's territorial gains, power struggles, corruption, and economic issues exacerbated the country's problems (Malik & Achakzai, 2023).

However, issues like factionalism, corruption, and persistent insurgency continued despite efforts to construct a stable democracy. Insurgency and security challenges continued, with the Taliban exploiting grievances, ethnic tensions, and poor administration to gather support and undermine the legitimacy of the republic government. The security situation deteriorated in many areas due to the security forces in Afghanistan struggling to quell the insurgency and preserve stability. Weak governance and corruption further jeopardized the public's faith in the government, jeopardizing service delivery and hampering the creation of efficient institutions. The Afghan populace became disillusioned due to the absence of competent administration, the rule of law, and accountability, further jeopardizing the stability and credibility of the republic government. The complex confluence of causes caused the fall of the republic government in 2021, with the Taliban resuming power. The fall of the republic government was attributed to Western withdrawal, Taliban military successes, and Afghan security forces' inability to repel attacks. Afghanistan's political environment, with a history of instability, violence, and governance issues, made it challenging for consistent republican rule. Overall, a combination of factors, including the Taliban insurgency, insufficient security forces, corruption and governance issues, international intervention and withdrawal, sectarian and ethnic divisions, external support for the Taliban, and a weak economy, led to the collapse of the Republic Government of Afghanistan in 2001-2021.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Afghan Republic Government, Khalq Democrats, and the ongoing political instability in the nation have taught us valuable lessons about inclusion, stability, and national interests. Throughout the Republican era in Afghanistan, successive rulers have consistently prioritized the preservation of their own authority, neglecting to establish a structured and seamless power transition process. Consequently, each president, ranging from Daud Khan to Ashraf Ghani, has failed to undertake substantial measures to facilitate the electoral process, ensure the smooth transfer of power, and safeguard the longevity of the republican system. The Republic Government confronted difficulties due to lack of participation and representation, particularly

for marginalized groups like rural and tribal people. Subsequent governments must prioritize inclusion and representation to foster confidence and legitimacy among all facets of the populace.

Political instability and frequent cabinet changes led to rising dissatisfaction and challenges in responding to the nation's economic and social problems. To create efficient governance institutions and comply with long-term requirements, upcoming administrations must prioritize political stability and continuity. Economic issues, such as trade imbalances, rising inflation, and a faltering agricultural industry, fueled public unhappiness and resistance to the Revolutionary Republic and Khalq Democrats' governments. The future governments must prioritize addressing Afghanistan's economic problems to improve contemporary standards and generate a comprehensive national strategy. This plan should support foreign interests and national interests, based on a thorough study of Afghanistan's history, geography, culture, and political environment. To forge genuine bonds and advance Afghan interests, future governments must pursue vigorous diplomatic contacts with other nations and international organizations. Building ties with nearby nations, regional powers, and international players remains a priority.

Economic growth is crucial for promoting national interests and minimizing reliance on foreign aid. To preserve Afghanistan's independence and national sovereignty, upcoming administrations must exercise caution by securing resources and territorial integrity and maintaining a powerful military and security system. Additionally, they must encourage regional collaboration to advance regional stability and approach standard issues. In conclusion, Afghanistan's later administrations will likely confront persistent difficulties in carefully balancing foreign interests while prioritizing national interests. By generating a clear national strategy, engaging in robust diplomatic relations, prioritizing economic development, protecting national sovereignty, and encouraging regional cooperation, future governments can work towards advancing Afghan interests while interacting with the international community.

Afghanistan's collapse as a nation from 1973 until 2021. It asserts that the administrations set up during this time, including the first republic under Mohammad Daoud Khan, were self-imposed and did not include the Afghan people in political decision-making, elections and other chances for the populace to participate in the creation of their government were nonexistent. Due to a lack of political engagement and representation, the country follows nearly four decades of civil conflict as a result of misguided theological interpretations, racial prejudice, and poor literacy rates. Regional and international meddling influenced the transparent and unstable administrations that developed during this time, contributing to corruption, the emergence of terrorism, and economic catastrophes. The several administrations and governments that were founded during this period, including the Taliban, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Mujahidin, and communist regimes. Afghanistan's collapse as a nation from 1973 until 2021.

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the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Mujahidin, and communist regimes. It emphasizes how dependent these governments were on foreign help and how none of them were financially self-sufficient. The study argues that the lack of an effective and stable administration that correctly represented Afghanistan's national interests without consideration for ethnic, linguistic, or foreign agendas was the primary cause of the collapse of the Republic of Afghanistan from 1973 to 2021. The fall of the Republic Government in Afghanistan has had a huge impact on how the nation would be governed going forward, leading to instability, poverty, and bloodshed.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Prioritization of inclusion and representation: ensuring inclusion and representation, especially for marginalized groups. Establish mechanisms for their participation in the decision-making process.
2. Foster political stability and continuity: Give priority to stability and continuity. Minimize frequent changes to the cabinet and create a conducive environment for long-term governance.
3. Addressing economic challenges: Developing a comprehensive national strategy for addressing economic problems. Research history, geography, culture and politics to inform economic policy.
4. Strengthen diplomatic relations: Establish strong diplomatic relations with countries and international organizations'. In order to establish stable and supportive relations with neighboring countries and international players.
5. Promote economic growth and self-sufficiency: give priority to economic development to reduce dependence on foreign aid. The implementation of policies for growth, employment and support to local industries.
6. The safeguard of national sovereignty: the protection of independence, resources and territorial integrity. Maintain a strong army and address regional issues for stability.
7. Improve governance and accountability: Establish transparent and accountable governance institutions. It provides essential services and infrastructure, education, health care, etc.

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# The Significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan

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## ABSTRACT

Afghanistan confronts significant issues as a result of climate change, as the nation is susceptible to landslides, floods, droughts, and rising temperatures. Studying how international cooperation influences Afghanistan's attempts to mitigate climate change becomes crucial in light of these challenges. This study delves into the significance of such cooperation and its influence on Afghanistan's climate change policies and governance. To explore this topic, we employed a qualitative research approach along with content analysis, framed within a neoliberal framework. By adopting this approach, we aim to identify and analyze international cooperation on climate change in Afghanistan. The study reveals that international cooperation significantly impacts Afghanistan's climate change policy and governance, aligning with neoliberal institutionalism theory's emphasis on global challenges. Important conclusions from our research can help development partners, policymakers, and groups addressing climate change in Afghanistan. The results highlight the necessity of funding, technical support, and capacity building for the creation of successful policies and initiatives. Afghanistan can improve its resilience to climate change and sustainable development by placing a high priority on international cooperation. Financing, technical support, and opportunities for knowledge sharing would all be necessary for this. In addition to investments in sustainable agriculture, disaster risk reduction, facility training, foreign aid, and renewable energy, Afghanistan needs international funding currently. This article emphasizes the need for international cooperation in Afghanistan's struggle against climate change and the possibility for sustainable development through the exchange of information, operational help, and funding.

**Keywords:** Climate change, International Organization, Cooperation, Natural Disaster, Development

## INTRODUCTION

International institutions play a crucial role in promoting cooperation among states by providing rules, norms, and procedures, reducing uncertainty, promoting transparency, and encouraging conflict resolution (Keohane, 1984). A serious environmental and development issue that affects the entire world, climate change results in a high death toll, financial losses, and natural disasters. It has an impact on human security, civil society, the economy, and governance (Mehrad, 2020). International cooperation is essential to fighting climate change because no one country can solve the issue on its own. This attempts to integrate practice and theory in the area of climate change cooperation (Cui, 2023). Afghanistan, despite low emissions, is among the six most climate change-vulnerable nations due to frequent droughts, floods, and hunger, necessitating urgent adaptation measures (Zaki, 2023). To tackle climate change, a comprehensive strategy involving legislation, institutional development, capacity building, and physical infrastructure investment is needed across various sectors (Ahmadzai & McKinna, 2018). Afghanistan signed the 1992 UNFCCC agreement, and in 2002, it joined the organization as a member (Cui, 2023). Afghanistan passed its first set of environmental legislation in 2007, formed the Department of Climate Change in 2010, and established the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) in 2005 (Zaki, 2023). With assistance from UNEP agencies and the Green Environment Fund, Afghanistan filed a report to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2013. A Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan was created by the NEPA in 2016 (Khakimov, 2019). The Ministry of Agriculture, with the support of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, has developed a strategy for managing drought vulnerability (Mehrad, 2020). Afghanistan has been working to secure international funds to mitigate the effects of climate change but has not been allocated a climate change response budget (Zafarullah & Huque, 2018). By 2030, Afghanistan intends to utilize \$10.7 billion of its budget for climate change adaptation for aquaculture and water management, with an extra 6.6 billion required to mitigate (Zaki, 2023). The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established in 2011 to assist nations struggling with climate change in creating climate-resilient mitigation

(Alam, 2021). International organizations including the World Bank, UNESCO, UNEP, UNDP, Asian Development Bank, and WFP facilitate funds for energy conservation programs; Afghanistan receives no funding directly from any of these organizations (Cui, 2023). In August 2020, Afghanistan received 17.2 million dollars in co-financing from the GCF and 4.2 million dollars from the UNDP, but the project was halted after the Taliban regained power (Alam, 2021). Afghanistan ranks fourth in the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' list of countries facing severe climate and natural disasters due to climate change, primarily affecting agriculture, and ranks eleventh in earthquakes (Zaki, 2023). Afghanistan, a struggling nation, can benefit from international cooperation in environmental protection and natural resource management, involving law editing, global interactions, and enhancing institutional capacity (Haxthausen & Williams, 2003).

### ***INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN AFGHANISTAN***

Climate change, primarily caused by global warming, refers to the long-term alteration of Earth's climate (Alam, 2021). Understanding climate change cooperation requires a comprehensive understanding of political economy, institutional, and liberal theories, focusing on institutional efficacy, state willingness, and economic interest's alignment (Milner, 1992). Neoliberal institutionalism theory emphasizes the significance of international institutions in promoting international cooperation and convergence of interests, particularly in the context of climate change (Ahmadzai & McKinna, 2018). Since 2013, Afghanistan has been identified as one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change impacts (Khakimov, 2019). International cooperation is a key factor in Afghanistan's climate change mitigation process, involving input, collaboration, and implementation from various actors (Bauck & Strand, 2009). UNEP and NEPA are influenced by international environmental norms and standards, such as the United Nations, which serve as guiding principles for their cooperative efforts in Afghanistan, establishing a common framework for environmental protection and management (Zaki, 2023). The climate change programs of the Afghan government, projected to have an annual cost of \$1078.5 million, were \$100 million underfunded between 2013 and 2015. As a result, more funding from multilateral contributors and other assistance institutions became necessary (Alam, 2021). The 2015 Paris Agreement seeks to cut polluting emissions and provide nations with \$100 billion a year to fight climate change. Despite Afghanistan's participation in the meeting and providing suggestions, the agreement has not yet been finalized (Cui, 2023). In cooperation with foreign organizations, Afghanistan aims to combat climate change and promote sustainable development by lowering greenhouse gas emissions until 2030; however, after August 2021, 32 projects totaling 826 million dollars came to a standstill (Zaki, 2023). Prior to August 2021, Afghanistan was awarded \$34 million by the Green Climate Change Fund (GCF) for climate action, and the Adaptation Fund has approved a \$10 million project for irrigation systems and water management. However, no international cooperation has been provided since (Nori, 2020). Afghanistan, initially funding-focused, ratified the UNFCCC in 2002 and established environmental institutions like NEPA. In 2010, it ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and in 2016, it completed climate change analysis (Khakimov, 2019). Afghanistan's economic growth relies heavily on development aid from donor countries, but political instability and climate change's agriculture impacts threaten it. Multilateral donor mechanisms should be utilized (Ershad, 2017). The Paris Agreement, signed by most countries, aims to support developing countries, including Afghanistan, in achieving climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals (Mehrad, 2020). The \$100 billion annual agreement aims to enhance Afghanistan's development by providing financial support, technical expertise, and capacity building. Afghanistan's limited financial support, primarily from the Green Climate Fund and the Paris Agreement, could be utilized for improved development (Zafarullah & Huque, 2018). Afghanistan faces challenges in implementing climate change policies due to limited resources, weak institutional capacity, and political instability, necessitating a balance between international cooperation and local priorities and realities (Zaki, 2023). Afghanistan's climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts require international cooperation, technical assistance, financial resources, and knowledge-sharing platforms, as well as training programs and renewable energy projects (Mohammadinia, 2023). The UNFCCC collaborates with international organizations and donors to boost climate awareness, provide financial and technical aid, and promote climate-friendly policies. This benefits Afghanistan through capacity-building programs, conferences, and partnerships, ensuring effective climate change policy and governance (Quraishi, 2021). External financial and technical support from multilateral institutions significantly influences Afghanistan's policy development, but challenges like time pressures, coordination issues, donor funding, turnovers, and institutional knowledge complicate cooperation (Cui, 2023). Bilateral donors in Afghanistan are integrating climate change into their projects, but they need to



avoid relying solely on international cooperation without considering local community involvement (Mohammadinia, 2023). Afghanistan must overcome capacity gaps related to climate change, including the development of human resource skills, at all levels and for all stakeholders (Zaki, 2023). Countries must adapt to or mitigate climate change's effects at national, regional, and local levels. Adaptation involves adjusting to the expected climate, while mitigation involves human intervention. Both strategies aim to minimize harm, seize opportunities, and maintain vulnerability and resilience (Quraishi, 2021). The Islamic Emirate faces delays in climate action due to a lack of international cooperation, a suspension of major climate crisis programs, and a ban on Afghanistan's National Environmental Agency (NEPA) submitting climate change reports (Zaki, 2023). The Paris Agreement and treaties like the Montreal Protocol aim to limit global warming, but international cooperation is crucial to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change (Chan et al., 2018). Implementing international policies and institutions is crucial for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting de-carbonization, and supporting low-carbon development, considering factors like institutional capacity, equity, cost, benefits, and climate targets (Nori, 2020). International cooperation needs to prioritize climate technologies like renewable energy, carbon capture, and green construction, with developed countries leading in developing and financing these technologies for shared goals (Milner, 1992). Afghanistan needs to improve its institutional capacity, data collection, awareness, and stakeholder coordination to tackle climate change challenges, with international partners providing support and learning from other countries' experiences (Mohammadinia, 2023). Afghanistan requires international cooperation to effectively manage climate change adaptation, de-carbonization, and mitigation to achieve its goals by 2030 (Zaki, 2023). However, the situation has stalled, and by 2030, the world will implement its plan in other places, leaving Afghanistan to suffer the damages of climate change without receiving any international funds (Mohammadinia, 2023). Afghanistan's resilient population requires urgent support to cope with climate change-related shocks, reinforcing adaptive and livelihood capacities, and coping with shrinking productive capacity (Cui, 2023).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study uses qualitative research to examine the impact of international cooperation on climate change in Afghanistan, utilizing reliable data sources, an analytical discussion framework, and content analysis. It provides valuable insights into Afghanistan's climate change situation and highlights critical aspects requiring attention.

## **RESULTS**

International cooperation for climate change benefits backward countries more, but Afghanistan has not received any aid since August 2021. Afghanistan is entitled to a lot of aid due to the SDGs and climate change international agreements. The Afghan government needs financial assistance for mitigation and adaptation efforts. Until 2030, the international community will implement its plan in other countries, but Afghanistan will only suffer from climate change. In addition to financial assistance, Afghanistan needs technical support, tools, and knowledge sharing to combat climate change.

## **DISCUSSION**

The international community's financial aid to Afghanistan, aimed at mitigating climate change damage, is hindered by complex mechanisms, preventing progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Addressing the issue of climate change damages and addressing the international community's failure to achieve its goals is crucial. This lack of recognition has adversely affected Afghanistan, causing further damage without proper compensation. The Paris Agreement consents to compensation, but it's not completely applied in this case. Afghanistan already faces the devastating effects of climate change, and the lack of international support improves mitigation. Afghanistan, despite needing millions of dollars in annual investments, struggles to effectively address climate change due to its heavy reliance on foreign assistance and inadequate capacity building. The Islamic Emirate's leadership should invest in infrastructure for better mitigation planning. The international community must instantly identify the need for expanded support in Afghanistan's fight against climate change. By providing satisfactory funding and resources, we can create a sustainable future and significantly mitigate the devastating effects of climate change. The Afghan government

should ask the international community for its financial contribution in the field of climate change and make convincing proposals.

## CONCLUSION

Afghanistan's climate change policies and governance require international cooperation due to its vulnerability and limited resources. Financial assistance, technical expertise, and knowledge-sharing can help implement climate change policies, benefiting citizens and the environment. Support for renewable energy projects and training can ensure food security and diminish the impact of climate change on farming communities. International cooperation can develop governance structures by providing funding, training, and capacity-building programs for government officials and civil society organizations. Facilitating knowledge exchange and best practices enhances Afghanistan's ability to tackle climate change, protect its environment, and promote coordination, collaboration, transparency, and accountability.

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# **JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIP (JPSIR)**

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1 (2024)



PUBLISHED BY  
**E-PALLI PUBLISHERS, DELAWARE, USA**

## Exploring Refugee Crises: A Comparative Study of US Withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan

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### Article Information

**Received:** April 17, 2024

**Accepted:** May 08, 2024

**Published:** May 13, 2024

### Keywords

*The Refugee Crisis, US  
Withdrawal, Forced Migration  
Theory, Political Disorder,  
Military's Involvement*

### ABSTRACT

The refugee crisis is a recurring consequence of the long-term conflict and political turmoil. This research aimed to study and compare the refugee crisis resulting from the U.S. involvement in the complex political dynamics of both Vietnam and Afghanistan. The study analyzes the causes, reactions and impacts of these refugee crises and gives insights into the complexity of the displacement and international response. The qualitative research design focused on content analysis. Books, academic papers and reports are used as data sources. The framework of realist and forced migration theory was applied to identify the root causes of the refugee crisis in Vietnam and Afghanistan, allowing comparative analysis. The study examined the US military's involvement in the refugee crisis since 1975 in Vietnam, highlighting its impact on refugees and host communities. The US's withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 led to the Taliban's takeover, increasing Afghan refugee numbers and posing political tensions and security risks. In Vietnam, an estimated 2 million and in Afghanistan, an estimated 1 million refugees fled the country after the withdrawal due to push and pull factors. The Vietnam and Afghanistan refugee crises share similarities, but they have significant differences. Vietnamese refugees primarily fled by sea, while Afghans used land, air, and sea routes. Vietnamese refugees settled in Southeast Asia and the US, while Afghan refugees sought asylum in various countries. The U.S. government's policy response to refugees exhibited a mix of welcome and skepticism, influenced by Vietnam's strategic importance during the Cold War. The study recommended enhancing international cooperation, prioritizing humanitarian aid, implementing comprehensive refugee policies, promoting conflict prevention, enhancing resettlement programs, addressing socioeconomic factors, raising awareness, combating stigma, strengthening legal frameworks, investing in education, and learning from past experiences to address refugee crises.

### INTRODUCTION

The US military involvement in Afghanistan and Vietnam, both protracted and costly, significantly influenced American foreign policy and society during the Cold War and post-Cold War eras (Lovvorn, 2023). The US involvement in Vietnam began in the 1950s, aimed at preventing communism from spreading. The war escalated, leading to a peace agreement in 1973, but North Vietnam invaded in 1975, resulting in Vietnam's collapse (Grinter, 1975). The US war in Afghanistan, initiated by Carter in the 1970s, escalated with the Soviet Union's invasion in 1979. The Reagan-Bush presidency saw the Soviet withdrawal, leading to the US Army's two-volume history (den Ouden, 2011). Critics argue the war caused significant damage and committed war crimes. The US supported the Afghan mujahideen in 1979 and 1980, leading to the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991. The Taliban seized control in 1996, and the US invaded in 2001, but the Taliban retook power in 2021 (Tripathi, 2023). The US war strategy has evolved over time, influenced by geopolitical factors. Post-9/11, the US launched military invasions in Afghanistan and Iraq, integrating sea, land, and air power to maintain regional balances. Geopolitical theorists emphasize controlling key regions.

The US's involvement in the Vietnam War, initially a secret affair, failed due to misunderstandings and secrecy. The US involvement in Afghanistan and Vietnam, despite similarities, differed in strategy and immediate objectives. The US's direct interventionist approach in Vietnam and indirect approach in Afghanistan led to the refugee crisis (Scalettari, 2023). Since the Vietnam War, the US has repeatedly failed to achieve its initial objectives in wars and military interventions, leading to resource depletion, strain on forces, and public support. Interventions often employed political, military, and diplomatic tactics. The US invasion of Vietnam was motivated by China's perceived support for North Vietnamese communists, fear of a potential power shift in Southeast Asia, concerns about closed economies, and the desire to establish a post-colonial world order (Komar, 2018). The US wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan share similarities in duration, resource investment, and decisional failings. Both failed to achieve early objectives, leading to the Vietnam Syndrome. The 2020 US-Taliban agreement aims for troop withdrawals and negotiations.

The US invasion of Afghanistan, driven by geopolitical factors, Soviet misrepresentation, democracy, ignorance of Afghanistan's history, and potential wealth, led to a spiraling out of control. The US withdrawal from

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Vietnam and Afghanistan, involving a phased troop withdrawal with the Taliban, has raised concerns about the credibility of American power and its implications for regional stability and security. The US withdrawal from Vietnam and Afghanistan significantly affected refugee crises, with the Orderly Departure Program facilitating legal emigration in Vietnam and a migration crisis in Afghanistan. The Taliban's seized power threatens a larger crisis, with challenges including resettlement, healthcare, language barriers, and integration.

### **Vietnam**

The Vietnam War, also known as the Second Indochina War, lasted from 1955 to 1975, involving North and South Vietnam, with covert military support from the US, Soviet Union, and China (Rostow, 1996). The Vietnam War, originating from French colonial rule in Indochina, began in 1941 with the Viet Minh resistance movement (Katz, 1980). After WWII, French attempts led to the First Indochina War, ending French rule in 1954. The US's military and economic aid to South Vietnam in the 1950s led to a covert war against North Vietnam in 1964, resulting in a costly conflict (Davidson, 1991). The Vietnam War, marked by the Tet Offensive in 1968, marked a turning point in the US's struggle against communist forces. The Vietnamization in 1969 gradually withdrew US troops and trained South Vietnamese forces. It authorized secret bombings in Cambodia, causing civilian casualties. In 1973, a peace agreement ended US involvement (Schulzinger, 2006). The Vietnam War, despite a peace agreement, ended in 1975 with North Vietnamese forces capturing South Vietnam, causing widespread protests, social unrest, and economic damage, as well as millions of deaths and displacement (Starr, 1991). The Vietnam War resulted in political repression, economic hardship, and social upheaval in Vietnam, with communist regimes threatening citizens' safety and freedom, leading to land reform and nationalization. The new government promoted communist ideology, suppressed traditional practices, and enforced strict social norms, leading to fear of violence and retribution, causing desperate boat people to flee.

The Vietnam War (1955-1975) saw South Vietnam defeat North Vietnam, resulting in the deaths of over 3 million Vietnamese civilians and 58,000 US soldiers, and 1.2 million Vietnamese fleeing to neighboring countries, facing dangerous journeys, overcrowded refugee camps, and cultural and language barriers (Schulzinger, 2006). The mass exodus of refugees following the fall of South Vietnam was a tragic event, a testament to the human spirit of survival and the desire for freedom, but also a reminder of the devastating consequences of war and conflict (Wiest, 2003). The Indochina Migration and Refugee Act of 1975 and the Refugee Act of 1980 addressed the Vietnam War refugee crisis, admitting 130,000 refugees and establishing a resettlement program. The US government provided humanitarian assistance, facilitating the emigration of over 800,000 Vietnamese citizens and

enhancing the US refugee system (Vu & Satzewich, 2016). Vietnamese refugees are influenced by various factors such as ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status. Cochinchinese, Kinh, and ethnic Chinese refugees are diverse and often face suspicion and discrimination from the communist government (Tawardros, 1981). Affluent, middle-class, and poor refugees face different resettlement experiences in the US. Affluent refugees find employment easily, middle-class professionals integrate smoothly, while poor refugees face challenges like employment and discrimination (Troeng & Lê, 2016). Vietnamese refugees face numerous challenges in their new host countries, including language barriers, cultural differences, economic hardship, mental health issues, discrimination, loss of identity, and family separation. These challenges could lead to feelings of isolation, stress, anxiety, and mental health issues. Despite these challenges, many Vietnamese refugees had successfully adapted, establishing businesses, preserving their cultural heritage, and embracing new cultures (Gartner & Segura, 2000). The US government initially provided humanitarian aid and family reunification to Vietnamese refugees after Saigon's fall in 1975. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) later shifted focus to economic integration and family reunification. The US government has expanded its resettlement options, collaborating with private organizations and faith-based groups, and focusing on refugee empowerment to develop leadership skills and advocate for their needs. The US government offered 1,500 refugee visas annually to Vietnamese citizens at risk of persecution, demonstrating its commitment to support their rebuilding and societal contribution (Lipman, 2020).

### **Afghanistan**

The US-led invasion of Afghanistan, Operation Enduring Freedom, began on October 7, 2001, following the September 11 attacks, aiming to dismantle al-Qaeda and its Taliban hosts (Miller, 2021). The 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led to the rise of militant Islamic groups, including the Taliban, which seized significant territory by the mid-1990s (Ghiasi, 2021). On September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda killed nearly 3,000 people in the US, marking the deadliest terrorist attack in human history, and U.S. President George W. Bush pledged to bring them to justice. Operation Enduring Freedom, launched in 2001, aimed to dismantle al-Qaeda and Taliban hosts in Afghanistan. Initially successful, Bush administration's Iraq focus allowed Taliban re-emergence (Idrees & Anwar, 2017). Despite US aid, the 20-year Afghan war aimed to counter the Taliban, leading to their resurgence and ongoing conflict in the country.

The US intervention in Afghanistan from 2001-2021, involving fighting the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, resulted in over 170,000 Afghan civilians and 2,400 US soldiers, and displaced over 2.2 million Afghans, leading to difficult living conditions, insecurity, and challenges in integrating into new societies (Miller, 2021). President Biden announced US withdrawal from Afghanistan by

September 11, marking the end of America's longest war, but the chaotic and poorly executed withdrawal resulted in Taliban control. The Afghanistan war had cost trillions, resulted in thousands of deaths, and left Afghanistan in chaos. It was too long, expensive, and unreliable, with a growing consensus on military used as a last resort (Joshua, 2022). The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021 caused push factor among Afghans, leading to unemployment, economic hardship, and fear of human rights abuses. The withdrawal of US and allied forces caused panic and desperation, leading to a mass exodus of Afghans seeking refuge in neighboring countries. The Afghan refugee crisis is complex and requires international assistance to address its root causes (McNamara, 2023). The Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan sparked fears of persecution and economic hardship, prompting many Afghans to seek refuge abroad. The collapse of the Afghan economy and limited US and allied forces withdrawals exacerbated the refugee crisis. Despite US efforts, the situation requires international cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

### **Realist & Forced Migration Perspectives**

Realism theory suggests that states are the primary actors in international relations, driven by self-interest and power pursuit (Kreutz, 2023). It explains the refugee crises resulting from US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan. The US interventions in Vietnam and Afghanistan were aimed at preventing communism spread in Southeast Asia and preserving the US-led alliance system. In Afghanistan, the US aimed to dismantle al-Qaeda and overthrow the Taliban regime, which harbored al-Qaeda and threatened US national security interests. Realists argue that states pursue policies in their national interest (Collinson, 2011), as seen in the US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan. In Vietnam, the public became weary of the war, leading to a lack of consensus on its goals. In Afghanistan, the US achieved its initial objectives of dismantling al-Qaeda and overthrowing the Taliban regime (Mazzola, 2018), but the war became unpopular and costly, and the government was no longer willing to commit resources to sustain the intervention. The security dilemma is a significant issue in international relations, where states enhance their own security but are perceived as threats by others, leading to a cycle of arms races and conflict (Betts, 2009). For example, in Vietnam and Afghanistan, US interventions were seen as threats to communist governments and al-Qaeda, escalating conflicts and causing refugee crises due to US withdrawals. The realist perspective on international relations offers a valuable understanding of the refugee crises caused by US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan. It highlights the influence of power politics, national interest, and security dilemmas on state behavior and conflict generation, enabling a better comprehension of the complex dynamics contributing to these crises (Kreutz, 2023). Forced migration theory provides a framework for understanding addressing conflict, poverty, and inequality

through conflict prevention, human rights enhancement, international cooperation, and sustainable development is crucial for addressing refugee crises and promoting global order (Collinson, 2011). Forced migration theory emphasizes human agency in decision-making, influenced by personal networks, world knowledge, and perceptions of safety and opportunity, despite circumstances beyond control. Forced migration theory suggests US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan led to a surge in refugee flows due to the collapse of governments, allowing armed groups to target vulnerable populations. The forced migration theory explains the differences in refugee experiences in Vietnam and Afghanistan. Vietnam's US government successfully resettled refugees, while Afghanistan's less prepared government led to a longer, more protracted crisis for Afghans (Mazzola, 2018). Forced migration theory offers a framework for understanding refugee crises, including US military withdrawals, by examining push and pull factors and human agency, aiding in identifying root causes. The forced migration of South Vietnamese refugees to the US was influenced by factors like the Vietnam War victory, government collapse, and fear of persecution. The US resettlement program mitigated the crisis. The US withdrawal in 2021 led to the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, causing a refugee crisis. The crisis has been exacerbated by the ongoing economic crisis and drought in the country. Forced migration theory aids in understanding the long-term impacts of refugee crises, including challenges in integrating into new communities, potential social and political tensions, and their economic and societal impacts (Betts, 2009).

### **Comparative Study of Refugees' Crisis**

The Vietnam and Afghanistan Wars resulted in significant refugee crises, with US withdrawal in 1975 leading to 3 million Vietnamese refugees (Cunliffe, 1995), and 2.2 million Afghans seeking refuge in neighboring countries and the US (Lovvorn, 2023). The Vietnam War, a violent conflict between communist North and South Vietnam, resulted in widespread destruction and instability, with the US military's aerial bombardment causing displacement and political repression, leading to 3 million Vietnamese refugees (Cunliffe, (1995). US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan resulted in a complex refugee crisis, with refugees seeking refuge from communist regimes with human rights abuses and Taliban regimes with Islamic law violations. The US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan led to large-scale refugee crises, causing millions to flee their homes. These crises are complex and multifaceted, with no easy solution.

The US government initially addressed the Vietnam War refugee crisis with ad hoc legislation, including the Indochina Migration and Refugee Act in 1975 (Huynh, 2016), and the Afghan Allies Protection Act in 2002, which has been more successful in identifying and protecting vulnerable Afghans (Shen, 2022). The Afghanistan War, a two-decade conflict triggered by the US invasion, has led

to significant humanitarian issues, including displacement, political instability, and economic hardship, resulting in a refugee crisis involving 2.6 million Afghans and 3.5 million refugees in neighboring countries (Lovvorn, 2023). The US government has implemented resettlement programs for Vietnamese and Afghan refugees, with a public and private sponsorship system for Vietnamese refugees and a centralized government-run program for Afghan refugees. Despite criticisms, the programs have been praised for their effectiveness in identifying and protecting vulnerable Afghans (Scalettaris, 2023).

The US government has implemented different strategies for integrating Vietnamese and Afghan refugees into American society. Vietnamese refugees received language training and vocational education, promoting self-sufficiency but causing cultural assimilation. Afghan refugees received basic services, criticized for not adequately integrating them. The initial response to the Vietnam War was less organized, while the Afghan War response was more proactive (Tripathi, 2023). Refugees' reasons for fleeing their home countries significantly influence their perception and treatment in their host countries. War or persecution refugees are generally welcomed, while those with higher education and language proficiency are more likely to succeed and integrate (Shen, 2022).

Vietnamese refugees have shown better integration into host countries than Afghan refugees, largely due to factors like reasons for fleeing, skills, education, language, and community attitudes. Understanding these factors can aid in successful integration (Helbling & Meierrieks, 2022; Lovvorn, 2023). Vietnamese refugees have demonstrated high levels of education, employment, and homeownership, with 73% of those aged 25 and older having a high school diploma or higher, 68% employed, and a median household income of \$78,183 in 2018, compared to 64% of the US population (Grinter, 1975). The American Community Survey reveals that Afghan refugees face significant challenges in integrating into their host countries, with only 45% having a high school diploma, lower employment rates, lower median household income, and less ownership of homes compared to Vietnamese Americans. Vietnamese refugees are generally better educated and skilled than Afghan refugees, with higher English proficiency. US government's resettlement policies are generous, providing housing and job training. The host community's attitudes are welcoming, and Vietnamese refugees are self-reliant and proactive. Understanding factors contributing to successful resettlement can help develop effective policies (Komar, 2018; Faiez *et al*, 2021). The U.S. government did not initiate early, proactive planning for refugee resettlement, ensuring comprehensive contingency plans, well-funded, organized programs, and community engagement. This includes supporting English learning, connecting with neighbors, and finding employment. The U.S. government did not offer comprehensive language training, pre-arrival screening, cultural orientation, long-term support, job training, counseling, and case management to refugees.

International cooperation is crucial to address refugee crises and develop effective solutions (Lovvorn, 2023). Learning from Vietnamese and Afghan experiences can help develop compassionate policies and programs for refugees' integration into their new communities.

Vietnamese and Afghan refugees faced forced flight, political repression, and economic hardship, with dangerous escape routes, overcrowded boats, and border crossing risks. They faced challenges in camps, poor sanitation, and cultural adjustment, but make significant contributions to their new countries (Scalettaris, 2023; Stedman, & Tanner, 2004). Vietnamese and Afghan refugee experiences have shared similarities but also significant differences. Vietnamese refugees arrived in waves in the 1970s and 1980s, predominantly women and children, while Afghan refugees have faced suspicion and hostility (Tawardros, 1981; Tripathi, 2023). The US government responded to the Vietnam refugee crisis with a massive resettlement program, allowing over 1 million Vietnamese refugees to be admitted over the years, providing assistance in education, healthcare, and cultural adaptation (Troeng, & Lê, 2016). The US faced a refugee crisis after withdrawing from Afghanistan in August 2021, evacuating thousands of Afghans and committing to resettling up to 125,000 refugees over five years. The US has not done enough and face potential security risks (Mumford, 2023).

US military interventions caused destabilization, violence, displacement, economic hardship, and social unrest, exacerbated by economic hardships and disillusionment with foreign powers, leading to a difficult cycle of violence. US military interventions negatively influenced refugees, causing decreased aid, increased xenophobia, psychological effects, and cultural loss, diverting resources away from necessary aid and causing difficulties in integration. US military interventions have had long-term effects on refugees and host countries, causing crises like the Vietnam War, Iraq War, and Afghanistan War. These interventions have displaced millions, impacted Afghanistan's economy, and negatively impacted its infrastructure (Amiri, & Habibyar, 2023). The US, a founding member of the UNHCR, has provided humanitarian aid, resettlement programs, and international cooperation in addressing refugee crises. However, it has faced criticism for military interventions in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and supporting repressive regimes contributing to human rights abuses. Ethical dilemmas arise in the US, including non-refoulement, burden-sharing, and humanitarian intervention. Debates arise over justification, requiring careful consideration of international law obligations and responsibilities to refugees. The US did not reconsider military interventions, support peaceful conflict resolution, and increased its commitment to refugee resettlement programs. If it invested in refugee, integration programs and promote international cooperation on refugee issues, supporting organizations like UNHCR. This approach positively influences millions of lives (Delawar, 2022).

**Table 1:** Comparing of Vietnam and Afghanistan Wars

Aspect	Vietnam War (1955-1975)	US Intervention in Afghanistan (2001-2021)
US Involvement	Supporting South Vietnam against North Vietnam	Fighting the Taliban and Al-Qaeda
US Withdrawal	1975	2021
Outcome	North Vietnamese victory, fall of South Vietnam	Taliban regaining control of Afghanistan
Estimated Casualties	Over 3 million Vietnamese civilians and soldiers, 58,000 US soldiers	Over 170,000 Afghan civilians and soldiers, 2,400 US soldiers
Reasons of nation Fleeing	Communism, Human rights abuses, fear of reprisals	Taliban rule, suppression of women's rights, fear of violence
Refugee Crisis	Over 1.2 million Vietnamese fled by boat ("boat people") and to neighboring countries	Over 2.2 million Afghans internally displaced, and hundreds of thousands fled to neighboring countries and beyond
Challenges Faced by Refugees	Perilous journeys by sea, overcrowded refugee camps, cultural and language barriers in resettlement countries	Difficult living conditions in refugee camps, insecurity in neighboring countries, challenges integrating into new societies

Table 1 clearly and concisely summarizes a comparative study of refugee crises in Vietnam and Afghanistan, providing comprehensive insights as briefly described above

**RESULT**

The US withdrawal from Vietnam and Afghanistan in the 1970s and 2020s led to significant consequences for both countries and the broader refugee crisis. Vietnam's fall to communist North Vietnamese forces resulted in a mass exodus of Vietnamese refugees, with over 3 million fleeing to neighboring countries. The UNHCR played a crucial role in coordinating assistance and resettlement efforts, with many refugees eventually resettled in Western countries. Afghanistan's swift takeover by the Taliban in 2021 led to a humanitarian crisis and large-scale refugee outflow. The UNHCR estimated that over 400,000 Afghans fled the country, seeking refuge in neighboring countries like Pakistan and Iran. The US government's handling of the refugee crises differed, with Vietnam initially resisting resettlement efforts but eventually playing a significant role in assisting Vietnamese refugees. US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan teach lessons for managing refugee crises, emphasizing preemptive diplomacy, early warning systems, effective communication, and international cooperation for

humanitarian assistance. The US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan in the late 20th century led to significant refugee crises, highlighting the complex consequences of military interventions. The Vietnam War resulted in widespread civilian casualties and destruction. Nixon's "Vietnamization" policy led to the fall of Saigon in 1975, causing over a million Vietnamese refugees. The Afghan War, led by the US in 2001, aimed to dismantle the al-Qaeda terrorist organization and overthrow the Taliban regime. The US intervention initially met with success, but the Taliban regrouped and regained control of much of the country. The withdrawal of US forces in 2014 created power vacuums exploited by the Taliban, leading to their takeover of Kabul in August 2021. The fall of Kabul sparked another major refugee crisis, with over 78,000 Afghans evacuated by the US and other countries. The US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan have led to significant refugee crises, triggered by political instability and power vacuums. The US's resettlement policies significantly impact refugee experiences, with differing responses. Refugee decisions are driven by personal perceptions of safety and opportunity. These crises have long-term consequences, impacting receiving countries' economies and societies. Forced migration theory helps identify root causes and develop effective strategies.

**Table 2:** Refugees Crises: US Withdrawals – Vietnam vs. Afghanistan

Feature	Vietnam War (1975)	Afghanistan War (2021)
US Involment Duration	Over 20 years	Nearly 20 years
Nature of US Withdrawal	Hasty and chaotic	Planned withdrawal with rapid escalation at the end
Number of Refugees	Over 1 million	Over 100,000 (estimated)
Destination of Refugees	Southeast Asian nations, US, Europe	Primarily neighboring countries, US, and Europe

Challenges Faced by Refugees	Language barriers, cultural differences, economic hardship, trauma	Similar challenges, with additional security concerns under Taliban rule
Paraallels	Fear of persecution by new regime, reliance on US support, difficult escape journeys	Yes, including chaotic airport scenes and reliance on US evacuation efforts.
Differences	More organized US resettlement efforts for Vietnamese refugees	Less time for planning for Afghan refugee resettlement due to rapid Taliban takeover.

Table 2 compares US Withdrawals during the Refugees Crisis in Vietnam and Afghanistan. It's a valuable resource for understanding these historical events.

**DISCUSSION**

Refugee resettlement experiences vary based on the country and available resources. Countries with established programs and support services have smoother processes, while those with fewer resources may face greater challenges. Financial resources, family connections, and individual circumstances also influence refugees' experiences. Afghan refugees' experiences are influenced by their age, gender, education, and skills. The international community has a responsibility to support Afghan refugees and help them build a better future. Afghan refugees face limited humanitarian aid, corruption, and mismanagement, hindering their access to essential services like education. Language barriers, childcare shortages, and discrimination hinder integration into host societies, with some countries exclusion or segregation. Afghan refugees face challenges in securing employment, including lack of skills, language barriers, discrimination, and limited work options, often at lower wages than native-born workers do. The international community and host governments must address Afghan refugees' challenges by providing humanitarian aid, education, employment programs, and advocating for their rights. They can improve access to aid, education, and employment by investing in language training, childcare, and anti-discrimination policies. The UNHCR and humanitarian organizations have provided crucial aid to Afghan refugees, including food, shelter, healthcare, and protection. The US has resettled thousands since the Taliban's takeover. However, more is needed to address the Afghan refugee crisis, with the UNHCR calling for \$5.4 billion in 2023 and the US pledging to resettle 40,000 refugees. The US has contributed to global refugee crises through military interventions, causing deaths, displacement, and infrastructure destruction. The US has not boosted humanitarian aid, resolved conflicts, and promoted policies to prevent future crises. The international community is crucial in addressing these crises, providing aid, resolving conflicts, and supporting rebuilding countries. The US government should review military policies, increase transparency, and collaborate with international organizations to promote peace and stability in conflict-ridden regions. A comprehensive approach addressing conflict, poverty, and inequality is needed, including conflict prevention, human rights

enhancement, international cooperation, and sustainable development.

**CONCLUSION**

The US military involvement in Afghanistan and Vietnam influenced foreign policy and society, leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of the Taliban. The Vietnam Syndrome emerged, raising concerns about American power's credibility and regional stability. The US withdrawal from Vietnam significantly impacted refugee crises, including legal emigration in Vietnam and challenges in Afghanistan due to the Taliban's power seizure. The Vietnam War, involving North and South Vietnam, escalated with the Tet Offensive and Vietnamization policy. The US government has facilitated Vietnamese refugee resettlement through the Indochina Migration and Refugee Act of 1975 and the Refugee Act of 1980. The Vietnam War and US-led invasion of Afghanistan have led to humanitarian challenges, but resilience of Vietnamese refugees has been demonstrated. The realist perspective and forced migration theory explain US withdrawals from Vietnam and Afghanistan, focusing on state interests and security dilemmas. The realist perspective highlights conflict prevention, human rights, and sustainable development, while the forced migration theory emphasizes government preparedness and long-term integration. The US should have reconsidered military interventions, prioritize peaceful conflict resolution, and increase refugee resettlement programs. Ethical dilemmas arose in refugee crises, and the US should have considered international law obligations. Increased humanitarian aid, resolved conflicts, and implement policies to prevent future crises. The US should have provided additional funding, promote good governance, support economic development, and address climate change while balancing national security interests with refugee protection. Collaboration with international communities, addressing ethical concerns, and promoting sustainable development were also crucial for these nations.

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## Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Science (JAHSS)

ISSN: 3006-9491 (Online)

Volume 1 Issue 2, (2024)

 <https://doi.org/10.69739/jahss.v1i2.18>

 <https://journals.stecab.com/index.php/jahss>

 Published by  
Stecab Publishing

### Research Article

## Strategic Interests and Geopolitical Considerations: Assessing the Importance of Afghanistan for the US Post-Withdrawal

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### About Article

#### Article History

Submission: March 12, 2024

Acceptance : April 29, 2024

Publication : May 26, 2024

#### Keywords

*Strategic Interests, Geopolitical Consideration, Realism, Withdrawal, Doha Agreement*

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### ABSTRACT

This research aimed to understand the US's strategic interests, political goals, and geopolitical considerations in Afghanistan post-US military occupation, highlighting its strategic value for the US, given its connection to Central Asia, South Asia, China, and Russia, and its importance to US. This study used qualitative research to conduct a content analysis of the US's strategic interests and geopolitical considerations in Afghanistan post-withdrawal, using the theories of realism offensive and defensive to determine the value of Afghanistan for the US in the region, thereby revealing US's clear strategic interests. Afghanistan helped as a US strategic base, reducing China, India and Russia's influence in the region, promoting its weapons industry, energy resource, indirect engagement and diplomatic initiatives, counter-terrorism, and non-proliferation and regional stability. The US also established a military presence and stable government in Afghanistan, focusing on US interests. Afghanistan has become a battleground for great powers like US, India, China, and Russia, who has used its strategic location for their own interests. The US has worked for its interests in Afghanistan for 20 years, and its policy changes and goals remain safe after withdrawal. However, their interests remain constant. The Afghan government and future generations must recognize Afghanistan's significance for US strategic interests and geopolitical considerations. US's priorities and policies change in the region, and when regional and great powers pose challenges, US's presence in Afghanistan becomes possible.

### Citation Style:

Imranullah, A., & Hakimuddin, M. (2024). Strategic Interests and Geopolitical Considerations: Assessing the Importance of Afghanistan for the US Post-Withdrawal. *Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Science*, 1(2), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.69739/jahss.v1i2.18>



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Realists suggest power and self-interest influence states' foreign policy decisions (Sørensen *et al.*, 2022), with the US strategic interests in Afghanistan influenced by its location, resources, and potential regional stability. Afghanistan's strategic location at the Asia-Pacific crossroads allows for regional power projection and trade routes, its rich mineral deposits; including copper, gold, and lithium, enhance economic power. Stability in Afghanistan influences neighboring countries' security, prevents terrorism and extremism, and poses threats to the US and its allies. The US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 was motivated by al-Qaeda's safe haven status and 9/11 threats (Gojree, 2015). The US aimed to eliminate the Taliban, prevent terrorist resurgences, and promote stability. The US also trained and assisted the Afghan government (Hafiza, 2023). Realism in understanding US strategic interests in Afghanistan is limited as it overlooks the role of ideology, domestic politics, and non-state actors in shaping foreign policy. Moral considerations, democracy promotion, global leadership credibility, domestic politics, and non-state actors like the Afghan people and Taliban also played significant roles. After the Soviet Union's defeat, the United States identified Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and Afghanistan as Rouge regimes, viewing them as significant obstacles to national interests and aiming to eliminate those (Idrees & Anwar, 2017). During the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, the US funded the Mujahideen, but after the defeat, the US left Afghanistan in a civil war, with informal interactions with the Taliban government (Mishra, 2023). The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 1267, creating the al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee, linking the two terrorist entities and imposing sanctions on their funding, travel, and arms shipments, following al-Qaeda's ascendancy and the Taliban's sanctuary (Lyle, 2004). Al-Qaeda hijacks four commercial planes, causing 3,000 deaths. Despite Afghanistan being their base, none of the hijackers is Afghan nationals. U.S. President George W. Bush vows to win the war against terrorism and targets al-Qaeda and bin Laden in Afghanistan. Bush calls on the Taliban regime to deliver al-Qaeda leaders (Idrees & Anwar, 2017). US attacked Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003 due to their weak economic and military status. Iran and North Korea, with their military strength, were considered perfect for invasion. US's strategy of overthrowing them with orange revolutions and pressures has not been successful (Lyle, 2004). On September 18, 2001, President Bush signed a joint resolution authorizing force against terrorists, leading to sweeping terrorism measures such as the invasion of Afghanistan, eavesdropping, and setting up the Guantanamo Bay detention camp (Mishra, 2023). On November 9, 2001, the Taliban regime collapsed after losing Mazar-e-Sharif to Uzbek forces, and strongholds crumbled after coalition and Northern Alliance offensives. The UN Security Council passes Resolution 1378, establishing a transitional administration and inviting peacekeeping forces (Thomas, 2023). Following Kabul's fall in 2001, the United Nations invited Afghan factions without the Taliban to a conference in Bonn, Germany. The Northern Alliance and former king's group signed the Bonn Agreement with Iran's support. The agreement installed Hamid Karzai as interim administration head and established

ISAF (Xenia & Michael, 2014). The Chairperson of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan, Karzai, is selected to head the transitional government. He returned to Afghanistan after 9/11 to resist the Taliban. Some observers accuse him of corruption. The Northern Alliance, dominated by ethnic Tajiks, checks presidential powers (Thomas, 2023). Afghan President Karzai and US President Bush declare their countries strategic partners, granting US access to Afghan military facilities for the war against terror and extremism. The alliance aims to strengthen ties and ensure Afghanistan's security, democracy, and prosperity. President Obama unveils a new strategy linking Afghanistan's success to a stable Pakistan, aiming to disrupt al-Qaeda and its safe havens in Pakistan. The plan includes increased aid to Pakistan, strict progress measurement, and additional soldiers for Afghan training. Afghan President Karzai supports the strategy (Xenia & Michael, 2014). US has approved \$450 million for Pakistan, a move that was previously stopped due to Trump's South Asia strategy. The funds are intended to combat terrorism and maintain nuclear weapons, with special significance for Afghanistan (Carolyne, 2022). U.S. Marines launch a major offensive in southern Afghanistan, targeting Taliban insurgency. The operation aims to restore government services, strengthen local police forces, and protect civilians (Thomas, 2023). NATO member countries agree to hand over security in Afghanistan to Afghan forces by 2014, starting in July 2011. The transition process will coincide with a drawdown of US troops, but concerns remain about the ability of Afghan forces to take over (Carolyne, 2022). U.S. forces in Pakistan, sparking debates about continuing the Afghanistan war, kill Al-Qaeda leader bin Laden. As President Obama withdraws surge troops, lawmakers call for a hastened withdrawal, while analysts argue for sustained military engagement. Afghan President Karzai emphasizes international forces should focus on the Pakistan border (Raj, 2022). Relations between the United States and the Taliban have been complex and fraught with tension since the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. In 2001, the United States invaded Afghanistan in response to the September 11 attacks, which were orchestrated by the Taliban's ally, al-Qaeda (Ghiasy, 2021). The United States quickly ousted the Taliban from power, but the group has since regrouped and continued to wage an insurgency against the Afghan government and its international allies. In recent years, the United States has sought to negotiate with the Taliban in an effort to find a political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. The two sides have held several rounds of talks, but progress has been slow. The Taliban has refused to renounce violence and has insisted on retaining control of its territory in Afghanistan (Joshua, 2022). The United States had also been concerned about the Taliban's links to al-Qaeda. The group had denied harboring al-Qaeda leaders, but there was evidence that al-Qaeda members had continued to operate in Afghanistan with the Taliban's knowledge and support (Jakhar, 2022). The United States invaded Afghanistan in 2001 for several reasons. One reason was to achieve its ideological goals by combating terrorism, which it believed originated from the Middle East countries (Mishra, 2023). Afghanistan's geopolitical position, being close to the Middle East and Central Asia, made it a strategic platform for the US to establish military bases, protect



its interests in the region, particularly in relation to oil, and gas resources (Khaliq, 2023). Additionally, the US saw Afghanistan as a bridge to its geopolitical interests in Central Asia, but its policies based on democracy and human rights failed, leading to the search for an overriding global threat, which emerged after the 9/11 attacks (Laurel & Miller, 2022). The US's militaristic approach culminated in the War on Terror, but the mission faced challenges due to the complex security environment and the geopolitical thrust underlying it (Khaliq, 2023). Ultimately, the US invasion of Afghanistan aimed to eliminate terrorism and protect its geopolitical interests in the region.

The US motivations for invading Afghanistan in 2001 were multifaceted. One motivation was to retaliate against the terrorist group al Qaeda for their attacks on September 11, 2001 (Raj, 2022). Another motivation was to ensure that Afghanistan would not be used as a safe haven for terrorists in the future (Joshua, 2022). Additionally, the US saw Afghanistan as a strategic location in Central Asia that could serve its geopolitical interests (Yousif & Kakar, 2022). Afghanistan's proximity to the Middle East and Central Asia, which are rich in oil and gas resources, was economically important to the US (Joshua, 2022). The US also aimed to establish military bases in Afghanistan to counter the influence of powers such as Russia, China, and Iran. Overall, the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 was driven by a combination of counterterrorism objectives and geopolitical considerations. The consequences of the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 were significant. The US and its allies created a powerful central government that focused on resource extraction rather than service provision, leading to a failure of governance and erosion of the Afghan government's legitimacy (Hafiza, 2023). The war witnessed colossal war crimes committed by the US forces, including the killing of innocent civilians, women rapes, and abductions, which caused immense damage to Afghanistan (Joshua, 2022). The invasion also had global repercussions, shifting the balance of power in the Middle East, weakening US influence, and undermining the prestige of the United States (Yousif & Kakar, 2022). Additionally, the US occupation of Afghanistan resulted in a strategic defeat for the United States and its allies, damaging trust in Washington as an alliance partner and undermining the US's reputation (Thomas, 2023). Overall, the consequences of the US invasion of Afghanistan included governance failure, war crimes, geopolitical shifts, and damage to US credibility.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Analyzing of Doha Agreement

The Doha Agreement, officially titled the Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan, was a peace agreement signed between the United States and the Taliban on February 29, 2020, in Doha, Qatar. The agreement aimed to end the 2001–2021 war in Afghanistan and facilitate the withdrawal of US and NATO troops from the country (Amin, 2021). The United States agreed to withdraw all of its troops and those of its NATO allies from Afghanistan within 14 months of the signing of the agreement. The Taliban pledged not to allow al-Qaeda or any other terrorist group to use Afghan soil to threaten the security of the United States or its allies (Farr, 2020). The agreement called for intra-Afghan negotiations between the

Taliban and the Afghan government to form an inclusive political settlement. A comprehensive and permanent ceasefire was to be implemented within 135 days of the signing of the agreement. The agreement included provisions for the release of Taliban prisoners from Afghan custody and the release of Afghan government prisoners from Taliban custody (Ibrahimi, 2022). The Doha Agreement was a controversial agreement, with some critics arguing that it gave the Taliban too much power and that it did not adequately address the issue of human rights in Afghanistan. However, others praised the agreement for ending the war in Afghanistan and for paving the way for a political settlement (Farr, 2020). In the months following the signing of the Agreement, the Taliban continued to make advances on the battlefield, taking control of large swathes of territory and besieging major cities (Amin, 2021). The Afghan government, meanwhile, struggled to maintain its grip on power, and its forces were often demoralized and poorly equipped. In August 2021, the Taliban launched a major offensive and quickly captured the capital of Kabul, ousting the Afghan government and taking control of the country. The collapse of the Afghan government was a stunning and unexpected development, and it raised serious questions about the insight of the Doha Agreement (Farr, 2020). The Doha Agreement has had a significant impact on the future of Afghanistan. The Taliban is now the de facto ruler of the country, and it has imposed a strict interpretation of Islamic law. The human rights situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated, and women and girls in particular have seen their freedoms curtailed. The agreement also had significant implications for the future of Afghanistan. The withdrawal of US and NATO troops created a power vacuum that the Taliban quickly exploited, leading to their rapid takeover of the country in August 2021.

The Taliban's return to power has had a devastating impact on Afghanistan, with the country plunging into a humanitarian crisis and facing a resurgence of terrorist activity. The Taliban's victory has emboldened other extremist groups, such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, and it has raised concerns about the stability of the region (Ibrahimi, 2022). The future of Afghanistan is uncertain, but the Doha Agreement has played a major role in shaping the country's current trajectory. The agreement has had both positive and negative consequences, and its long-term impact will depend on how the Taliban runs the country and how the international community responds to its rule (Amin, 2021). The Doha Agreement remains a contentious issue, with many questioning its effectiveness in bringing peace to Afghanistan. The long-term consequences of the agreement are still unfolding, and it remains to be seen how the international community will respond to the Taliban's rule. Regarding realism the Doha Agreement is a self-interest action, signed in February 2020, and significantly influenced the US strategic interests in Afghanistan, with both positive and negative implications for offensive and defensive realism (Farr, 2020). Offensive realists view the Doha Agreement as a setback for US power in Central Asia, as it grants legitimacy to the Taliban and could lead to terrorist groups. However, offensive realists also see it as a strategic retreat, allowing the US to maintain regional influence through alliances with India and Pakistan. Defensive realists view the Doha Agreement as



a chance to reduce terrorism threats from Afghanistan and promote stability in the region. They believe the agreement could moderate Taliban behavior and create a more secure Afghanistan (Khan, 2020). However, they also acknowledge risks such as potential Taliban non-compliance and concerns about human rights. The Doha Agreement has affected US strategic interests in Afghanistan, and it is too early to predict its long-term consequences. The future of relations between the United States and the Taliban is uncertain. The two sides are diametrically opposed on many issues, and it is unclear whether they can reach a mutually acceptable agreement. If the conflict in Afghanistan continues, it is likely to have a significant impact on relations between the United States and the Taliban for years to come. The agreement has propositions to US, to improve relations with the Taliban. First, a stable and peaceful Afghanistan would be a more secure environment for the United States and its allies. Second, improved relations with the Taliban could lead to a reduction in violence in Afghanistan. Third, improved relations could also lead to the Taliban renouncing violence and accepting the Afghan constitution.

## 2.2. Us Strategic Interests and Geopolitical Consideration

In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the United States' primary strategic interest in Afghanistan was to eliminate the Taliban regime, which had harbored al-Qaeda and provided a safe haven for terrorist activities. The invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 was seen as a necessary step to prevent future terrorist attacks and to promote stability in the region (Zahir, 2022). Alongside counterterrorism objectives, the United States also sought to foster democracy and human rights in Afghanistan, but after the withdrawal, the US government declined it (Jakhar, 2022). The establishment of a stable and democratic government in Afghanistan was seen as a long-term solution to the country's instability and as a bulwark against the spread of extremism.

In 2014, the United States transitioned from an occupying force to a supporting role, providing training and assistance to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The goal was to enable the ANSF to take over the responsibility of securing Afghanistan and to prevent the Taliban from re-emerging as a dominant force (Nazari, 2020). The United States' military withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 marked a significant shift in the country's strategic landscape (Ayalon *et al.*, 2022). The Taliban, which had been steadily gaining ground, capitalized on the power vacuum created by the withdrawal and quickly seized control of major cities and eventually the capital, Kabul. The Taliban's return to power has raised concerns about the country's future stability and its potential to serve as a breeding ground for terrorism. The United States and its allies have maintained a limited presence in Afghanistan to facilitate the evacuation of Afghans and to provide humanitarian assistance (Sumit, 2022). After the Soviet Union's defeat, Russia faced two options in international politics: joining the European Union or NATO. The US expanded NATO from Western Europe to Eastern Europe, while China was deemed economically less desirable. If there were a positive change in China's economy and people's lives improved, the US would increase their demands for a better life (Zahir, 2022). The Orange Revolutions,

promoting democracy, human rights, and other fundamental issues, were popular parts of US strategy. US donated based on these positive political slogans. The Islamic world was a major challenge for US, as it aimed to exploit reserves, minerals, oil, gas, and energy in the region. These resources were considered more important than anything else was for US (Charles, 2022). In 2001, US's long-term strategy was to establish a military presence in Central or South Asia, focusing on countries under Soviet influence—Pakistan with nuclear weapons, Iran with strong revolutionaries, and Afghanistan as a weaker country. Afghanistan has a unique political-strategic position on the world map (Zahir, 2022). The national interests of regional and international players are always attracting attention for a variety of reasons. Afghanistan's geographical location has remained very important throughout history. Afghanistan has exclusive bridge ability on the world map between South Asia and Central Asia. The USA is the only great power who get the regional hegemony, and the main goal of the USA is to establish the status quo of the international system and, in front of potential states, create hurdles that cannot compete with it (Mearsheimer, 2001).

The US has spent an estimated \$2.26 trillion on the war in Afghanistan over the past two decades, including military operations \$1.04 trillion, reconstruction efforts \$130 billion, veterans' care \$820 billion, and interest payments \$530 billion on borrowed funds. The cost has been steadily increasing, from \$500 billion in 2001 to \$2 trillion by 2021. The war has also significantly affected the US economy, costing the country \$2.5 trillion in lost economic output, Agreeing to the Congressional Budget Office (Karina & Karoline, 2022. Elena, 2021). The war has been a long and costly conflict for the US, and as it continues, the costs are likely to continue to rise. The cost of the war has been a significant burden on the US economy.

Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman, and General Dynamics were major contractors for the war in Afghanistan. Lockheed Martin was the largest contractor, receiving over \$45 billion in contracts for weapons and equipment such as F-16 fighter jets, helicopters, and missiles. Boeing supplied aircraft like C-17 cargo planes, Osprey tilt-rotors, and drones, receiving over \$30 billion in contracts. Raytheon supplied missiles and other weapons systems, receiving over \$25 billion. Northrop Grumman supplied aircraft and defense systems, receiving over \$20 billion. General Dynamics supplied armored vehicles and ground-based systems, receiving over \$15 billion in contracts. These companies contributed significantly to the US military's operations in Afghanistan (Karina & Karoline, 2022. Vinokourov, 2021). Private military companies (PMCs) played a crucial role in the Afghanistan War, providing security, training, and logistical support to the U.S. military and Afghan government forces. DynCorp International, one of the largest PMCs in Afghanistan, offered services such as security, training, aviation, and logistics. However, it was involved in controversial incidents like the 2007 Baghdad shooting and the killing of 17 Afghan civilians in 2009. Blackwater USA, another major PMC in Afghanistan, provided security and training to US and Afghan forces. Triple Canopy, a major provider of security services in Afghanistan, was involved in several incidents. Xe



Services, formed from Blackwater USA, continued to provide security and training services in Afghanistan but faced legal challenges (Elena, 2021; Vinokourov, 2021).

China is continually increasing its economic growth and trying to dominate Asia in the way of the USA, which got the domination in its western hemisphere and hegemony, (Zahir, 2022), but the USA checks on it and never wants that China get regional hegemony. Russia also has an economic and strategic interest in Afghanistan and this region. The main objective of great powers is to control the world's resources, to get and catch the maximum wealth (Mearsheimer, 2001). Afghanistan's importance has more increased because it is located nearest to de-facto nuclear states like China and Russia and de jure nuclear states like India and Pakistan (Zahir, 2022). To deal with both conventional and non-conventional threats and pursue its geopolitical objectives, US followed a militaristic approach. To meet diversified threats, many states increasingly relied on the United States for either the actual provision of security or the training and equipment necessary to perform security functions (Mearsheimer, 2001). Afghanistan's mineral deposits and concluded that Afghanistan can help solve the supply problem of rare earth elements.

Almost after eleven years of Soviet withdrawal, the USA got the legitimate permit for intervention in Afghanistan in the backdrop of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and toppled the Taliban regime (1996–2001) (Sattar, 2013). It became apparent that the US had not only to deal with terrorism; it had to contain the power of Iran, China, and Russia and diversify energy supplies to contain the dominance of these powers in energy politics (Charles, 2022). China and the USA had divergent interests at all three stages: strategic, political, and economic. Strategically, the US military presence in Afghanistan and its surroundings irked China because now the USA and China share the Wakhan Corridor. Politically, the USA is promoting the Indian role in Afghanistan's internal affairs, which is in conflict with China's expanding influence in South Asia. Economically, China has economic interests and wants access to mineral resources in Afghanistan, but here, the USA has interests to compete (Tasleem *et al.*, 2021). The Russian expert and strategist General Leonid Ivashov has stated that the USA's aim is not to promote democracy nor restore order, but to be using Afghanistan as a strategic bridgehead where it could keep putting pressure on China, Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asia. Geopolitical studies emphasize how geographical configurations such as location, climate, natural resources, population, and physical terrain determine state foreign policy (Grygiel, 2006).

The United States of US is the most influential and determinant country, which has affected the geopolitical setting of Afghanistan. Vividly, it is quite interesting that, since 1979, Afghanistan has become the focal point of US geopolitical interest (Hilali, 2017). Treacherously, the USs had supported the Mujahidin with weaponry and logistics against the USSR's intervention. However, the 9\11 showed, it was exposed that the incumbent Taliban government had linkage with the notorious terror group Al-Qaeda (Taj, 2011), which was utterly responsible for an exterminated terror attack on the mainland of the USA. The Bush administration and NATO declared the global war against terrorism in Afghanistan. Post-9\11, the

principal objective of the U.S. in Afghanistan has been to prevent a terrorist attack on the USA and become a peril to its people and assets, or U.S. allies elsewhere (Mir, 2010). Further, ensure that Afghanistan's territory is not used to sponsor terrorism worldwide. Other US interests in Afghanistan are to maintain regional balance of power. Curb and crack down Chinese, Iranian, and Russian influence in South Asia, Central Asia, and oil-rich West Asia (Amiri & Habibyar, 2023). In the post-Soviet era, wielding sufficient influence in Afghanistan was considered vital to US strategic ambitions for multiple reasons. First, its geographic contiguity with most of the Central Asian states was considered instrumental in facilitating a greater US role in the energy-rich Central Asian region. Second, it could provide an alternative route to transport Central Asian energy resources to the world market, bypassing Russia and Iran, and therefore be deemed instrumental in denting their regional influence. Third, military bases in Afghanistan and in the surrounding region were considered important by US foreign policy makers to check the strategic moves of Russia, China, and Iran, the primary conventional threats in the post-Cold War era. Fourth, the geo-strategic location of Afghanistan was vital to allowing the US to develop multidimensional strategies based on the ocean as well as land (Ghiasy, 2021; Nazari, 2020). The United States' primary strategic interest in Afghanistan stems from its history as a breeding ground for terrorist organizations, particularly the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The 9/11 terrorist attacks, which were orchestrated by al-Qaeda while operating from Afghanistan's territory, highlighted the direct threat posed by Afghanistan to US national security (Natalia, 2021). The United States has long seen Afghanistan as a haven for terrorists, and the Doha Agreement is intended to reduce the threat from these groups. The Taliban has agreed to prevent terrorists from using Afghan soil to plan or carry out attacks against the United States or its allies.

Afghanistan's strategic location at the crossroads of Central and South Asia makes it a critical player in regional stability. A stable Afghanistan is less likely to harbor terrorist groups or become a source of instability that could spill over into neighboring countries. The United States has a stake in ensuring that Afghanistan does not become a base for anti-US or destabilizing activities (Saima, 2023). Afghanistan is a strategically important country located at the crossroads of Asia. Stability in Afghanistan is important to prevent the spread of violence and instability to neighboring countries. The Doha Agreement is intended to help create a stable Afghanistan that is not a threat to its neighbors.

The United States has long championed human rights and democracy promotion as core values of its foreign policy. Afghanistan's history of human rights abuses, including the suppression of women's rights, has been a cause for concern for the US government (Sumit, 2022). While the US has not always been successful in advocating for human rights in Afghanistan, it has consistently used its influence to push for progress in this area. The United States has a long history of promoting human rights around the world, and it has been a strong advocate for human rights in Afghanistan (Sergei, 2022). The Doha Agreement includes provisions for protecting human rights, and the United States will continue to work with the



Afghan government to ensure that human rights are respected. The Taliban's human rights record has deteriorated since the group seized power, particularly with regard to women's rights. The US withdrawal has made it more challenging to pressure the Taliban to respect human rights, and the group has shown little willingness to do so.

The United States has had strategic considerations in Afghanistan, such as preventing the spread of illicit drugs, promoting economic development, and combating corruption. These issues are interrelated with the broader goals of countering terrorism and preserving regional stability. The US withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 has undoubtedly affected its strategic interests in the country (Wu, 2022; ZAHIR, 2022). The Taliban's return to power has raised concerns about the resurgence of terrorism and the erosion of human rights. The US will need to continue to engage with Afghanistan through diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian channels to mitigate these risks and safeguard its remaining interests in the country. Offensive realists argue that states are competitive and constantly strive to increase their power to survive in an anarchic international system (Dunne *et al.*, 2021). The US's strategic interests in Afghanistan are driven by maintaining its hegemonic power and preventing rival powers from arising. They emphasize Afghanistan's strategic location and resource wealth as valuable assets for the US economy. The 2001 US invasion and subsequent engagement in Afghanistan aim to consolidate US dominance and build a strong, compliant Afghan state. Defensive realists argue that states prioritize security and minimize threats to survival (Sørensen *et al.*, 2022). The US's strategic interests in Afghanistan are driven by preventing terrorist and extremist threats, promoting stability, and preventing instability from spilling into neighboring countries. This includes training and equipping Afghan security forces to build a secure, unexploited Afghanistan. Both offensive and defensive realism offer insights into the US's strategic interests and geopolitical considerations in Afghanistan, but the weight of these perspectives has likely shifted over time. The United States is concerned about China's growing influence in Afghanistan. The Doha Agreement includes provisions for preventing the Taliban from providing sanctuary to terrorist groups that could threaten China.

The USA would benefit from staying in Afghanistan and directly connecting with the Taliban by establishing routine diplomatic engagement, implementing a development assistance program, and imposing tailored sanctions (Nandan *et al.*, 2022). This approach would help protect US interests in the region, including preventing Afghanistan from becoming a base for transnational terrorist groups, securing the departure of at-risk Afghans associated with the US occupation, and reducing anti-Western sentiment (Joshua, 2022). Additionally, engaging with the Taliban can provide an opportunity for international cooperation to counter terrorism in Afghanistan, in line with international law (Charles, 2022). By maintaining a presence and actively engaging with the Taliban, the USA can contribute to the establishment and recovery of the new Afghan government, which is currently facing an economic crisis and a lack of international aid and support (Jakhar, 2022). Remaining in Afghanistan and directly connecting with the Taliban

would result in the US losing the international consensus that aid should not be given to the Taliban government until it addresses issues such as inclusive government and the presence of foreign extremists (Thomas, 2023). It would also undermine Russia's efforts to assist Afghanistan and advertise its influence in Central Asia (Saima, 2023). Additionally, it would unsettle regional governments, especially China and Russia, who are trying to make diplomatic and economic inroads (Manish *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, it would risk tamping down anti-Western sentiment and preventing Afghanistan from becoming a base for transnational terrorist groups (Ayalon *et al.*, 2022). Lastly, it would make it practically more difficult to protect the fundamental rights of the people of Afghanistan and could lead to adverse outcomes for millions of people (Khaliq, 2023).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The study used qualitative research to analyze the US's strategic interests and geopolitical considerations in Afghanistan post-withdrawal. It used reliable data sources, an analytical discussion framework, and content analysis to provide valuable insights into Afghanistan's strategic location and highlight critical aspects of US interests. The theory of realism is used to determine the value of Afghanistan for the US in the region.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

20 years ago, US interests proposed attacking Afghanistan, ending Taliban rule, and establishing a new government due to the 9/11 incident. The US claimed al-Qaeda was responsible and should be punished. After 20 years, the US ended its presence, as Osama bin Laden was dead and the Taliban pledged to cut ties with al-Qaeda and prevent invasion. Afghanistan could be used against other countries, especially US. The United States prioritizes human rights, women's rights, civil liberties, and democracy, which is reflected in its military, intelligence, and political efforts. However, this approach often conflicts with human rights and democratic principles, affecting the legitimacy of every US war and affecting the history of US military, intelligence, and political efforts. US believes al-Qaeda has weakened, and Taliban pledges non-threatening behavior in Afghanistan. Military presence no longer necessary, but interests remain relevant. Afghanistan remains crucial to the United States for counter-terrorism, natural resources, regional stability, countering Chinese and Russian influence, non-proliferation, weapons industry development, military bases, no military presence, creating committed private military in the Asia, and geopolitical considerations, even after the withdrawal of US troops in 2021. The country's mountainous terrain and porous borders have long been a haven for terrorist groups, such as al-Qaeda and the ISIS. The US withdrawal has raised concerns about the potential resurgence of these groups, which could pose a significant threat to the US security interests and allies in the region. A stable Afghanistan can prevent the spread of extremism, promote trade and economic development, and enhance cooperation among regional nations. Additionally, Afghanistan's location at the crossroads of Central and South Asia gives it strategic importance in terms of trade routes and energy pipelines. Afghanistan's vast natural resources could



also become important to the global economy in the future. However, the US carefully calibrated its engagement with Afghanistan in the post-withdrawal era to promote long-term stability and security. Afghanistan's location has also made it a focus of geopolitical competition among regional powers, including India, Pakistan, China, and Russia. The US navigated this complex environment to maintain its influence and avoid being entangled in regional rivalries. Balancing relationships with these powers is crucial for ensuring regional stability and preventing Afghanistan from becoming a proxy battleground. The US has historically defended human rights and democracy promotion as core values of its foreign policy. Afghanistan's history of human rights abuses, particularly against women and minorities, has been a source of concern for the US government. The US has used its influence to push for progress on human rights and democratic reforms, although with limited success. The United States and Russia have long competed for influence in Afghanistan. The Doha Agreement is intended to create a more stable Afghanistan that is not a proxy for conflict between the United States and Russia. Afghanistan's strategic location at the crossroads of Central and South Asia makes it a critical node in regional security dynamics. The country's proximity to potential terrorist sanctuaries and its history of hosting extremist groups poses a direct threat to US national security and the broader global effort to counter terrorism. The US has long viewed Afghanistan as a key battleground in the War on Terror, seeking to prevent the country from becoming a safe haven for terrorist organizations like al-Qaeda and the ISIS. A stable Afghanistan is essential for maintaining regional stability and preventing the spread of instability to neighboring countries. The country's internal conflicts and political instability can have destabilizing consequences for the region, potentially leading to cross-border violence, refugee flows, and the proliferation of weapons and illicit goods. The US has sought to promote stability in Afghanistan to maintain its own interests and those of its regional partners. The drug trade fuels corruption, violence, and instability in the country, while also contributing to the global narcotics market. The US has worked to combat the drug trade and promote alternative livelihoods in Afghanistan, recognizing its impact on security and development.

The United States of US may consider Afghanistan in the future due to strategic interests and geopolitical considerations. If the Taliban provide safe havens to terrorist groups or destabilize the region, the United States may be forced to re-engage militarily. However, if the Taliban moderate their behavior and pursue a more constructive role in Afghanistan, the United States may be more willing to maintain a hands-off approach. The increasing influence of China and Russia in the region may also affect the decision of the US to return to Afghanistan. If China or Russia seek to assert their dominance in Afghanistan, the United States may see the need to resume its military presence to prevent their influence. Public opinion in the United States will also play a role in determining whether the United States will return to Afghanistan. If there is strong public opposition to a new military intervention, the US government will be less likely to send troops back into the country. The US military is currently facing a number of challenges, including budget

constraints and the need to turn its attention to other parts of the world. If the US does not have the resources to start a new war in Afghanistan, it will be impossible to go back. The possibility of US coming to Afghanistan is uncertain. The decision will ultimately be based on a complex assessment of strategic interests and geopolitical considerations at the time. However, the United States will continue to be closely involved in Afghanistan, even if it does not resume a large-scale military presence. Meanwhile, the United States will likely continue to focus on counterterrorism operations, humanitarian assistance, and diplomacy to promote stability in Afghanistan. The US will also work with its allies in the region to coordinate their efforts and ensure that the Taliban does not pose a threat to the security of the region and the world. The US may re-engage militarily in Afghanistan if the Taliban continues to provide a safe haven for terrorist groups or destabilize the region. The rise of China and Russia could also influence the US's decision to return to Afghanistan. Public opinion and the availability of resources also play a role in determining the US's response. The US will work with allies to ensure the Taliban does not pose a threat to regional or global security. The US has realized that its 20-year presence in Afghanistan is not sustainable due to financial cooperation with Pakistan against terrorism, Afghan government expenses, and military presence. The US needs a stable government to maintain the US economy and maintain interests in Central and South Asia. The US has not considered other alternatives to protect its interests in Asia, but instead chose other regions to strengthen its arms industry, to sell arms there and avoid direct involvement. This decision highlights the need for a permanent government that balances stability and interests in Asia. The exclusion of the Taliban from the Bonn and republican government from Doha agreements, suggesting that this exclusion may lead to unfavorable outcomes similar to those of the Bonn Agreement.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the US's approach to Afghanistan is shaped by a combination of strategic, geopolitical, and humanitarian considerations. These factors shape its long-term goals, diplomatic engagement, military interventions, and humanitarian assistance programs in the country. The US must carefully balance these interests to maintain its influence, prevent the resurgence of terrorism, and promote stability and development in Afghanistan. The United States can effectively balance its strategic interests and geopolitical considerations in Afghanistan by pursuing a nuanced and multifaceted approach that combines diplomatic engagement, economic assistance, and targeted support for civil society organizations. Twenty years later, China and Russia are expanding their influence and challenging US hegemony in the Middle East, with India being the only country forced to travel with the US. The US is pursuing goals in Afghanistan, including preventing its territory from being used against it, reducing Pakistan's nuclear threat, and ensuring a stability, constant Afghan government that does not view US as a strategic enemy, despite the Taliban's significant role. The interests of regional countries and US goals in Afghanistan are closely related, with countries viewing stability as their own interest. The US believes regional countries should



participate more in peace and stability. Pakistan seeks stability, economic development, and connectivity with Central Asian markets after US military end, aiming to protect interests, avoid threats, and benefit from energy resources. Pakistan seeks stability in Afghanistan, avoiding Taliban secession, while China seeks China-Pakistan Economic Corridor connectivity, while Russia fears Afghanistan becoming a drug production hub. US military presence in Afghanistan benefits China and Russia, avoiding conflict, while Iran needs stability for economic growth and preventing warring groups, affecting Pakistan, China, Russia, Central Asia, and Iran. Now, US understand to change a game, need to transfer power and found a stable and reliable group to keep US interests. The United States' strategic importance of Afghanistan has evolved since the 2001 invasion, shifting from dismantling the Taliban regime to promoting stability and democracy. The country's porous borders and rugged terrain could make it a safe haven for terrorist groups, posing a threat to the US and its allies. Afghanistan's role in regional stability is crucial, as it is located at a strategic crossroads between Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East. A constant Afghanistan could prevent the spread of violence and instability to neighboring countries. Its untapped natural resources could make it an attractive destination for foreign investment and trade, benefiting both the Afghan economy and US businesses. It could also help counter drug trafficking, as it is the world's largest producer of opium poppy. A stable Afghanistan could also promote human rights and democracy, aligning with US foreign policy goals. The US will need to engage with Afghanistan through diplomacy, military assistance, and economic cooperation to support these goals.

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## Studying the Factors Contributing to the Sexual Harassment of Women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan: A Social Perspective

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Volume 4, Issue 1 (Winter 2024) | ISSN (Online): 2959-300X | ISSN (Print): 2959-3174 | Pages: 207–219

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**Abstract:** This research looked at the social causes of sexual harassment of women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, and discovered workable solutions. The study included descriptive analyses, content analysis, field-based data collecting, and a qualitative methodology. Semi-structured interviews with married women who experienced sexual harassment, offenders, and community members were used to gather qualitative data. Two hundred semi-structured interviews with a representative sample of married women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, were conducted as part of the survey research approach. This research examined the ways in which patriarchal attitudes, societal norms, dominant expectations, sexual perception, non-mahrams, cohabitation, excessive freedom, honor culture contribute to sexual harassment. The study, based on feminist theory, identified 20 societal factors contributing to sexual harassment, including social stigma, lack of knowledge, and negligent legal enforcement, and suggested preventive measures like community education campaigns and legislative changes. In Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, sexual harassment of women is a serious issue with societal contributing elements. Effective prevention of sexual harassment requires a holistic strategy that addresses societal norms, empowers women, and strengthens legal frameworks, while also considering cultural norms, inadequate enforcement mechanisms, and a culture of silence. In order to advance gender equality, provide safer surroundings, and stop sexual harassment of women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, this paper makes specific recommendations for legislators, non-governmental organizations, and local authorities. Based on these findings, this study recommends evidence-based prevention methods. These could involve advertisements for sexual harassment awareness, legal changes for better protection, and training for law enforcement on handling complaints more effectively.

**Keywords:** Sexual Harassment, Women of Jalalabad City, Feminism, Social Factors, Prevention Methods

### Introduction

Afghan women, victims of unrestrained freedom and extremist discrimination due to Western civilization and misunderstanding of Islam, are becoming increasingly sensitive to each other (Hemat, 2023). Violence

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against women is widespread globally, particularly in the Western world, with 13 million women in the European Union experiencing physical and 3.7 million experiencing sexual violence in 2013 (Orfan et al., [2022](#)). Afghan women are not receiving Islamic rights, and liberal circles are alienating them from society, causing destruction and urging their removal from these circles (Hemat, [2023](#)). The Boon Conference established a separate ministry for women in 2001, which was dissolved in 2021. In 2009, a law was introduced to end violence against women, but it divided society, raised suspicion of Western involvement, and conflicted with Islamic teachings, leading to its being unapproved by parliament.

Women's contributions are crucial for national development, affecting families, societies, and economies. It is important to prioritize their safety. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979, is hailed as a global women's rights bill, promoting gender equality in various spheres and condemning discrimination against women (Bhat & Deshpande, [2017](#)). Sexual harassment is a significant issue in Afghanistan, where women are fighting for their human rights, including life, education, and employment. Sexual harassment in Afghanistan is a growing issue that is often overlooked due to a lack of legal investigations, cultural condemnation, family and social barriers, and police misconduct. Violence against women and girls is a serious global human rights violation and is often linked to gender discrimination. This must be stopped because violence harms women physically, mentally, and financially, limiting their freedom and opportunities. It creates dependency, making women subordinate. Cultural norms and traditions that discriminate against women increase violence. Structural change is needed to prevent violence and effectively support survivors. This article examines sexual harassment against women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, focusing on societal factors that contribute to the issue.

Sexual harassment in public places, a form of sex discrimination, often goes unrecognized by social science researchers due to its verbal and nonverbal actions (Lahsaeizadeh et al., [2012](#)). Sexual harassment is a widespread issue in various spaces, particularly in retail, affecting millions daily and necessitating immediate action (Zahra, [2024](#)). Afghanistan, a poor country, is rife with violence against women, with 87.2% experiencing sexual, physical, or psychological abuse and 52% experiencing spousal violence, and gender inequality persists in education (Orfan et al., [2022](#)). Afghan women and girls face harassment, including sexual harassment, which can challenge their honor and lead to further restrictions, prompting legal initiatives to address this issue (Shi & Zheng, [2021](#)). Harassment is illegal because of sex, including sexual advances, favor requests, and offensive remarks (Akpotor, [2023](#)). Various laws aimed at fighting violence against women in Afghanistan address sexual harassment (Orfan et al., [2022](#)). The law prohibits harassment against women, including physical contact, illegitimate demands, verbal/nonverbal abuse, psychological harm, and insult to dignity (Shi & Zheng, [2021](#)). Sexism is an attitude in which one sex perceives themselves as superior to another sex (Chaudhury et al., [2017](#)). Sex discrimination refers to the discrimination or treatment of an employee based on sex in employment decisions or treatment (Akpotor, [2023](#)). Harassment is often caused by power dynamics, misguided beliefs, and social conditioning, and promoting compassion and emotional intelligence can help deter such behavior (Folorunso, [2023](#)). However, Sexual harassment is a form of unwelcome sexual behavior.

## Literature Review

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a complex issue with no universally agreed definition and interpretation in various contexts (Popoola, [2008](#); Joseph, [2015](#)). Sexual harassment refers to unwelcome advances and requests, often involving physical, verbal, and nonverbal actions. It can occur offline or online and can include unwelcome touching, kissing, hugging, sexual comments, and intrusive questions about someone's private life (Akpotor, [2023](#); Galdi & Guizzo, [2021](#)). Misogyny stems from the Greek term "mīsoḡunīā" and shows as male privilege, patriarchy, gender bias, harassment, and violence (Chaudhury et al., [2017](#)). Sexual harassment; unwelcome sexual advances in unequal power settings. Includes physical contact, requests for favors, inappropriate comments, display of pornographic material, and sexual behavior (Bhat & Deshpande, [2017](#)). However, the definition provided by the Afghanistan Law of 2009 on Prohibiting Harassment against Women and Children is similar.

Sexual harassment involves insulting, harassing, poisoning, or turning someone off, focusing on appearance, body parts, sexual orientation, or activity, and includes uninvited sexual gestures and physical contact (Shi & Zheng, [2021](#); Glass et al., [2020](#)). Sexual violence in society includes exploitation, rape, assault, prostitution, workplace violence, insults, swearing, selling, trafficking, and sexual threats against women, affecting their well-being and safety (Rostamzadeh et al., [2016](#)). Harassment or violence against women, particularly between the ages of 18 and 25, endangers their mental health and society (Hemat, [2023](#)). Sexual harassment victims often avoid reporting due to fear of retaliation. Respect, responsibility, and education are crucial for addressing this issue through collective action (Sarawgi, [2023](#)). However, Sexual harassment is repeated, unwanted verbal and physical acts done for pleasure and displeasure.

Sexual harassment involves unwanted sexual acts that must be performed using self-consent. If satisfaction is initially expressed, the act should be stopped, and if continued forcefully, it is considered sexual harassment, potentially leading to sexual assault or rape. The four types of sexual acts: rape, adultery, sodomy, and sexual harassment, each involving different forms of sexual assault, sexual relations, and unwanted advances (Shi & Zheng, [2021](#)). Sexual harassment, including verbal, physical, spectatorship, and psychological forms, can result in physical, emotional, and psychological harm, including sexual jokes, violent actions, sexual behaviors, and exposure to images (Hemat, [2023](#)). Conditional environmental sexual harassment involves offering something in exchange for sexual relations or space, whereas hostile environment sexual harassment occurs when employees leave an unfavorable work environment (Akpotor, [2023](#)). Rape is the act of using another person against their will to satisfy sexual desire. Illegitimate sexual intercourse is considered a crime in Islamic and Afghan society. Sexual harassment is a prelude to rape because it suppresses sexual desire. However, rape involves penetration, but sexual harassment does not (Azizi, [2022](#)). The Quran's fourth chapter, An-Nisa, discusses women's rights, with the 34th verse criticizing feminist criticism, asserting that men are in charge of women and righteous ones are devoutly obedient (Chaudhury, et al, [2017](#)). Henry suggests updating religious curricula to combat harmful gender stereotypes and violence (Henry, [2017](#)).

### **Islamic, Social and Feminist Perspectives on Sexual Harassment**

Understanding violence against women in Islamic Sociology is crucial for sustainable solutions. It emphasizes societal foundations, personal preferences, and actions based on the Creator's standards and the Holy Prophet's Sunnah, ensuring a balanced approach to addressing this issue (Usman, [2018](#)). With the assistance, the exploration of this study examines pre and post-Islam Arab society to understand Islamic sociology, focusing on the ultimate authority deposition to the Quran and Sunnah (Muneer, [2017](#)). Arab society's social structure was reconstructed through Islam's balanced teachings, emphasizing responsibility, obedience, love, respect, and responsibility towards the Prophet, promoting a peaceful society (Usman, [2018](#)). The Quran prohibits both physical and non-physical sexual harassment. These actions degrade women's human dignity and body sovereignty. Examples include body shaming, groping, poking, and rubbing body parts. Prophet Muhammad PBUH advised against groping a woman who is not his own wife, as stated in hadiths (Mir-Hosseini, [2011](#)). Prophet PBUH advised against laying on another woman's shoulder, as it is better to welt with a pig covered in mud and dirt (Ali, [2016](#)). Hadiths strongly prohibit sexual violence in Islam, as it degrades human dignity, primarily targeting possessed souls with low lusts, resulting in animal instinct and logical and humanity-based reasons.

Feminist theory states that sexual harassment disempower women's efforts to compete with men (Henry, 2017). Feminist theory critiques sexual harassment, arguing that it stems from unequal power dynamics between genders, patriarchy, and the over-sexualization of women's bodies (Berdahl, [2007](#)). This perspective highlights the harmful effects of patriarchal societies, which normalize behaviors that control women and make them vulnerable to harassment (Henry, [2017](#)). The social perspective examines societal norms and institutions that limit women's mobility and participation in public spaces, leading to harassment (Schweinle & Roseman, [2015](#)). Social norms prioritize male honor over female safety, and weak legal systems discourage reporting and seeking justice for sexual harassment (Henry, [2017](#)). However, Combining feminist theory and social perspective can provide a nuanced understanding of sexual harassment in Jalalabad, highlighting gender inequality, social norms, and institutional failures.

Factors like religion, cultural beliefs, peace, and social groups can create a safer, more equitable society for women (Rennison, [2014](#)). Sexual harassment of women is influenced by societal attitudes and behaviors (Schweinle, & Roseman, [2015](#)), including gender roles and inequality (Henry, [2017](#)), traditional expectations, and limited opportunities (Rennison, [2014](#)), which create a power imbalance and vulnerability for women.

### **Materials and Methods**

The study collected qualitative data through semi-structured interviews with married women who faced sexual harassment, perpetrators, and community stakeholders and analyzed the data through content and descriptive analysis. The data were collected field-based through 200 interviews with a diverse group of women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan. The research applied feminist theory to study the influence of social norms, patriarchal attitudes, and the aftermath of conflict on sexual harassment. The data were gathered from 200 married women, with interviews conducted among female employees in government and private organizations, female teachers, students, housewives, and public women.

## Results

Sexual violence, often overlooked due to social and cultural factors, is a significant contributor to women's deviations, affecting them both during and after marriage, with family violence playing a more significant role (Soleimani, 2010). Violence against women is a complex sociological issue influenced by moral, social, economic, and political factors and is now a significant human rights concern in family and home settings (Jha, 2020). Violence against women has social and cultural roots that view women as inferior and require male control. These harmful beliefs justify oppression and harassment. We explored social factors related to the sexual harassment of women. Women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, face violence in marriage and family, reflecting their low social status. Sexual harassment occurs anywhere, to anyone, and anytime. Victims often ask, "Why me?" without a clear answer. Here, we explore social causes. Our interview results revealed that the participants experienced sexual harassment in various situations.

**Table 1**

*Social factors of sexual harassment in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan*

Factors	Descriptions
Undervaluation women	Afghanistan's undervaluation of women in various fields leads to sexual harassment, neglecting the Islamic values that hold them in high regard, making them vulnerable and recurrent victims.
Dominant expectations	Women are often seen as inferior to men in society and family, leading to tragic outcomes such as ongoing sexual harassment and lack of autonomy in decision-making processes.
Sexual perception	The sexual objectification of women reduces human interactions to satisfying sexual desires, perpetuating demeaning norms and dehumanizing women.
Non-mahrams	Islam prohibits women from relationships with non-mahrams because of the risk of sexual harassment and rape. Unnecessary social interactions can lead to harassment and rape.
Poor conditions and bad relationships	Impoverished families struggle to protect relatives from abuse due to a lack of privacy and improper attire. Close relationships between cousins and other relatives can lead to sexual misconduct.
Defective family	Reflecting on this, women's deviance comes from dysfunctional families lacking Islamic values. Families must prioritize educating their females to combat sexual harassment.
Dirty environment	A girl needs a good family, but when they leave, they face a bad environment. This morally sensitive environment can make sexual harassment seem normal because of common myths.
Bad friends	Bad friends influence sexual harassment. Good friends inspire good deeds, but bad friends lead to wrongdoing.
Cohabitation	Involving a mix of men and women often leads to deviant acts, causing societal temptation and causing women to resort to satanic means.

Factors	Descriptions
Early marriage	This tradition is based on sexual lust, leading to safety concerns, abuse, and domestic violence. Marriage should be lifelong, consented to, and considered, whereas forced marriages are considered coercion.
Giving a girl	The practice of giving a girl to a son, who may later marry, can lead to childhood marriages, forced marriages, and family violence, especially for victims of sexual harassment.
Exchange marriages	Families exchange daughters without consent, leading to abuse, sexual harassment, divorce, or mistreatment, exposing the issue in families and society.
Improper family education	Some families fail to properly educate their children, making them more vulnerable to sexual harassment.
Excessive freedom	Excessive freedom for women and men leads to sexual harassment, particularly in public spaces. Families with more freedom, particularly boys, often harass girls and make sexual demands.
High brides (Dowry)	Young men frequently complain about high brides, a growing issue of sexual harassment. Women are also harassed by men who cannot afford the bride's price. Sexual harassment has become a way of dismemberment.
Forced marriages	Involve girls without consent, often leading to insulting behavior, harassment, and potential violence, including sexual harassment, forced fleeing, or even death for honor.
Honor Culture	Emphasis on protecting family honor, which can discourage women from reporting harassment for fear of shaming the family. Pressure on families to remain silent about harassment to avoid social stigma.
Traditional Practices	Cultural practices that limit women's mobility and social interaction, increasing their vulnerability to harassment. Restrictions on women going out alone and limited access to public spaces.
Social stigma	Women who report sexual harassment are often ostracized by society and blamed for the incident. This fear of social stigma discourages reporting and reinforces the power imbalance.
Online Harassment (Social Media & Calling)	Unsolicited sexual messages, videos and pictures, cyberstalking, and harassment on social media target women.

Table 1 presents social factors contributing to sexual harassment in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, based on semi-structured interviews with married women. Undervaluation of women, dominant expectations, sexual perception, non-mahrams, poor conditions and bad relationships, defective family, dirty environment, bad friends, cohabitation, early marriage, giving a girl, exchange marriages, improper family education, excessive freedom, high brides, forced marriages, honor culture, traditional practices, social stigma, online harassment (social media & calling) are social factors of sexual harassment in Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

**Table 2**

*Issues and solutions to sexual harassment of women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan*

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Gender Norms	Deeply entrenched patriarchal society views women as subordinate. Men feel entitled to control women’s behavior and bodies.	Educational campaigns promoting gender equality. Community discussions challenging traditional gender roles. Empowering women socially.
Lack of Awareness	Many women are unaware of their rights and hesitate to report harassment due to fear of stigma or retaliation.	Public awareness campaigns defining sexual harassment and available support systems. Educational programs in schools and communities about women's rights. Training law enforcement and justice officials on handling sexual harassment cases.
Weak Law Enforcement	An ineffective legal system discourages reporting and emboldens perpetrators. Fear of a biased system prevents women from seeking justice.	Legal reforms are strengthening laws against sexual harassment. Improved training for law enforcement to handle harassment complaints effectively. Establish dedicated support services for victims during investigations.
Limited Mobility	Restricted movement due to cultural norms or safety concerns confines women to limited spaces, increasing their vulnerability.	Promoting safe public transportation and infrastructure, especially for women. Encourage women’s participation in public spaces through supportive social circles. Addressing the underlying security concerns that restrict women’s movement.
Workplace Culture	Male-dominated workplaces lack clear policies against harassment, thus creating a culture of tolerance.	Implement and enforce clear anti-sexual harassment policies in workplaces. Establish grievance redressal mechanisms within institutions for reporting and addressing complaints. Promoting bystander intervention training to encourage colleagues to speak up against harassment.
Social Norms	Limited mobility for women, restricted access to public spaces, and unequal gender roles.	Advocacy campaigns promote gender equality, educational programs challenge traditional gender norms and create safe spaces for women in public areas.
Economic Dependence	Women’s economic dependence on men or their families can make them reluctant to report harassment for fear of losing financial support.	Promoting women’s economic empowerment through skills training, microfinance initiatives, and encouraging female entrepreneurship.

Table 2 shows seven problems and resolutions concerning women’s sexual harassment in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, derived from semi-structured interviews with married women. Gender norms, lack of awareness, weak law enforcement, limited mobility, workplace culture, social norms, and economic dependence are issues and solutions to sexual harassment of women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan.

**Table 3**  
Challenges faced by women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan

Challenge	Description	Example
A Weak Legal Framework	Lack of clear laws against sexual harassment or inadequate enforcement mechanisms.	Difficult for women to report harassment due to fear of repercussions.
Ineffective Law Enforcement	Police are unwilling or unable to investigate complaints due to social norms or corruption.	Cases of harassment going unreported or dismissed.
Lack of Support Services	Absence of hotlines, shelters, or counselling services for victims of sexual harassment.	Women are left without resources to cope with the trauma of harassment.
Gender Norms	Deeply entrenched beliefs about the roles of men and women. Men are seen as dominant, and women are seen as subordinate.	Restrictions on women’s mobility and limitations on educational opportunities.
Victim Blaming	The idea is that women are somehow responsible for the harassment they experience through their clothing or behavior.	Society questions a woman's character if she is harassed.
Lack of Awareness	Limited understanding of sexual harassment as a social ill and its negative consequences.	Jokes about harassment being normalized and the silence surrounding the issue.

Table 3 illustrates the challenges faced by women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, as identified through semi-structured interviews with married women. A weak legal framework, ineffective law enforcement, lack of support services, gender norms, victim blaming, and lack of awareness are the challenges faced by women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan.

**Table 4**

*Women's views on harassing acts in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan*

Category	Act	Prevalence of Sexual Harassment
Public Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Verbal harassment: Catcalling, obscene comments, insults, and threats.</li> <li>* Nonverbal harassment: Leering, stalking, following, exposing oneself, and using offensive gestures.</li> <li>* Physical harassment: Groping, pinching, and brushing against, tripping, and physical assault.</li> </ul>	Medium
Educational Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Unwanted comments or jokes about appearance, body, or gender.</li> <li>* Leering, staring, or following classmates, teachers, or staff.</li> <li>* Unwanted physical contact or advances.</li> <li>* Pressuring for dates, relationships, or sexual favors.</li> <li>* Sharing sexually suggestive content electronically or physically.</li> <li>* Spreading rumors or gossip about a woman's character.</li> </ul>	Medium
Workplaces (Public & Private)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Unwanted comments or jokes about appearance or gender.</li> <li>* Leering, staring, or following colleagues or superiors.</li> <li>* Unwanted physical contact or advances.</li> <li>* Pressuring for sexual favors in exchange for job security, promotions, or benefits.</li> <li>* Creating a hostile work environment through sexual innuendo or offensive jokes.</li> </ul>	Medium
Social Media and Phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sending unsolicited sexual messages, pictures, or videos.</li> <li>* Cyber-stalking or online harassment.</li> <li>* Making inappropriate comments on social media posts.</li> </ul>	High
General social harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Restricting women's freedom of movement and clothing choices.</li> <li>* Socially excluding or ostracizing women who do not conform to gender norms.</li> <li>* Gender-based discrimination and limitations on opportunities.</li> <li>* Intrusive questions about my private life</li> <li>* Questions about when I would get married</li> <li>* Smiling or talking to you in a way that is uncomfortable</li> <li>* Whistling at you</li> </ul>	High

Table 4 presents women's perspectives on experiences of harassment in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, as obtained from semi-structured interviews with married women. Public Places, Educational Settings, Workplaces (Public and private), Social Media and Phone, and General social harassment are women's views on harassing acts in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan.

## Discussion

Sexual harassment is a complex issue influenced by social norms, attitudes, public spaces, education, media, and representation. Social norms, victim blaming, honor culture, unsafe environments, and bystander intervention contribute to this risk. Education and awareness are also fundamental, with limited understanding and inadequate gender equality education contributing to a culture of harassment. Media portrayals that objectify women and lack diverse representation contribute to a sense of female inferiority. These factors often interact and reinforce each other, making it difficult for women to report harassment. In Jalalabad City, society should educate harassers on empathy, equality, and harm caused to women. Men must respect women's needs. I emphasized addressing sexual harassment, prioritizing prevention initiatives and awareness campaigns, starting with children, and promoting unity by addressing gender divides in Jalalabad City. Psychoeducation could potentially address Jalalabad's sexual harassment issue by teaching men empathy and equality, potentially altering their attitudes toward women, and mitigating the psychological impact of harassment. Harassers often seek recognition through provocative actions, necessitating improved policies, reporting procedures, and ethical education to eradicate harassment and promote a respectful society that values dignity and humanity.

Gender inequality in societies increases women's sexual objectification and abuse. In weak gender awareness, strong taboos, and dominant complementarianism views, harassers abuse power without protecting women's privacy. The intersection of gender with class, ethnicity, and religion increases harassment. Increasing public awareness of women's rights and their place in society through television, radio and other means. The more education in rural and remote areas, the more likely it is to reduce sexual harassment of women. The role of scholars in reducing violence against women is the most. Scholars should explain the rights of women within the framework of Islamic teachings and call people to treat women well. In addition to this, the Islamic and Afghan positions against other forms of violence (such as sexual assault, harassing women on the streets, etc.) should also be clarified to the people. Most of the perpetrators of sexual harassment of women escape from the judicial bodies because of money and corruption. If the corruption in the judiciary is reduced, it is possible that the heinous crimes of sexual harassment of women will also be reduced.

## Conclusion

In Jalalabad City, Afghanistan, this research investigated the societal variables that contribute to women being sexually harassed. It identified 20 such elements, including a lack of knowledge, social shame, lax legal enforcement, and a culture of silence. It suggests specific actions, such as educational campaigns, legislation changes, and law enforcement capacity development, for legislators, non-governmental organizations, and community leaders in order to advance gender equality and foster safer surroundings. A rising problem in Afghanistan, sexual harassment has an impact on women's rights to an education, a job, and a life. Through interviews, the study applied feminist theory to investigate how societal variables

affected sexual harassment experienced by 200 women in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan. A number of societal variables, including the devaluation of women, prevailing expectations, non-mahrams, unfavorable living circumstances, early marriage, and many more, have an impact on sexual harassment in Jalalabad City. Fight back by encouraging education and resisting social influences. Due to a patriarchal society, ignorance, lax law enforcement, cultural norms, working culture, and reliance on the economy, sexual harassment occurs in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. Education, community dialogues, women's empowerment, public awareness, and law enforcement training are essential in the fight against this. It is imperative that laws be changed, law enforcement training be improved, advocacy be done, and social standards and workplace culture be taught.

The complicated issue of sexual harassment is shaped by public settings, media portrayal, education, attitudes, and societal standards. The danger is increased by elements such as bystander intervention, risky situations, honor culture, and victim blame. It is important for society to put preventative measures in place and educate harassers about women's needs and sensitivity. Social elements that contribute to the sexual harassment of women in Jalalabad were found in this study. Two hundred women were interviewed; these women included educated women, housewives, workers, and students; all of these women had either personally encountered harassment at work, in the marketplace, or at educational institutions or had knowledge of pertinent incidents. I suggest filling up the knowledge gap about people's obligations in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan.

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# JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND PEACE (JIRP)

**VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1 (2023)**



**PUBLISHED BY  
E-PALLI PUBLISHERS, DELAWARE, USA**

## A Review on the Great Game in Afghanistan: A Realist Perspective on the Geopolitical Struggle for Control

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### Article Information

**Received:** July 12, 2024

**Accepted:** August 07, 2024

**Published:** August 10, 2024

### Keywords

*Great Game, Geopolitics, Self-Interests, Power Politics, Realism*

### ABSTRACT

This review aims to analyze the Great Game in Afghanistan from a realist perspective, focusing on the geopolitical struggle for control among major powers. The study delves into historical events and power dynamics to comprehend the motivations and actions of key actors. The Great Game in Afghanistan refers to the historical rivalry and strategic competition between great powers for regional influence and control. This review adopts a realist perspective, which asserts that states act primarily in their own self-interest and pursue power and security in international relations. The methods employed include historical analysis and comparative analysis, providing comprehensive information on the Great Game in Afghanistan and examining key events, diplomatic maneuvers, and power dynamics. The results shed light on the motivations and actions of key actors, highlighting the enduring nature of the Great Game. The Great Game in Afghanistan, involving great powers like the British Empire, the Soviet Union, and the US, has led to instability and hindered Afghanistan's development as a sovereign nation. The conclusion underscores the significance of power politics in shaping Afghanistan's trajectory, and the Great Game in Afghanistan highlights the persistent power dynamics in international relations, driven by geopolitical considerations and self-interest, resulting in conflicts and instability. The recommendation emphasizes the need for a nuanced and pragmatic approach to managing the country's geopolitical dynamics. The Great Game's historical context calls for a pragmatic approach to managing Afghanistan's geopolitical struggles, prioritizing regional cooperation, inclusive diplomacy, and economic development for stability and progress.

### INTRODUCTION

The geopolitical conflict over Afghanistan typically known as "The Great Game" has been going on for millennia. The 19th century observed the rise of the phrase as the British and Russian empires fought for influence and dominance in Central Asia (Huband, 2019). The Great Game, connected to the 20th-century Cold War, was a secret, open conflict between Victoria Britain and Tsarist Russia over Central Asia for over 50 years. Such a Game is still being played today as numerous regional and international forces compete for influence and control over Afghanistan. The realist interpretation of the Great Game, its historical background, and implications for Afghanistan's political and social climate significantly. Since 1830, Afghanistan has been on the cusp of the Great Game due to its strategic location at the key intersection of Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East, as well as its status as a key buffer state between the burgeoning Russian and British Empires (Husain, 2018). The Great Game refers to the 19th-century geopolitical conflict, particularly between Russia and Britain, for influence and control over Central Asia. The Durrani dynasty, which had constructed a sovereign supreme government and increased the country's geographical holdings, controlled Afghanistan in the early 19th century. However, with the passing of the Durrani king, Shah Shuja, in 1842, Afghanistan entered a period of political unrest and strife that left it open to outside meddling (Fraser, 2018).

Russia and Britain were both enlarging their spheres of influence and attempting to gain a presence in Central Asia at the same time. While Britain had secured authority over India and sought to extend its influence beyond its boundaries, Russia had already acquired significant portions of Central Asia. As these two nations viewed Afghanistan as a crucial buffer state, they both attempted to forge relationships and exert influence there.

The British Empire tried to put in a pro-British monarch in Afghanistan in the 1830s and 1840s, which sparked the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–1842). Although the British originally succeeded in putting in place a puppet government, their soldiers were ultimately routed and driven out of the nation (Rubin & Rashid, 2008). This signaled the start of a period of unrest and fighting in Afghanistan as competing factions fought for control and foreign forces tried to gain sway. Afghanistan remained on the cusp of the Great Game during the 19th and early 20th centuries as Russia and Britain opposed it out for sway in Central Asia (Husain, 2018). Afghanistan's leaders tried to balance the conflicting interests of key countries while preserving their own independence and sovereignty, as the country was caught in the center of this potential conflict. However, as the Great Game grew, more intense, and foreign countries attempted to exert more influence on the nation, and this proved to be more and more challenging. Overall, due to its strategic location and the conflicting interests of exterior powers,

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Afghanistan was on the cusp of the Great Game starting in 1830. Due to its openness to outside influence, internal unrest, and political disarray, the nation served as a crucial theater of conflict in the quest for dominance over Central Asia. (Bearden, 2001). The rivalry and conflict between the British Empire and the Russian Empire for influence and direct control over Afghanistan in the late 19th and early 20th century is referred to as “The Great Game” in Afghanistan. In the 1830s, British intelligence officer Arthur Conolly created the key phrase “Great Game” to refer to the struggle between the two empires for potential influence and dominance in Central Asia. The Great Game in Afghanistan had its roots in the 19th century, a time of territorial expansion and rivalry for influence in Central Asia between the British and Russian empires (Huband, 2019). Afghanistan, which was placed between the two empires in a strategic position, was used as a key battleground in this potential conflict. Early in the 19th century, when they were attempting to generate a buffer state to safeguard their interests in India against Russian expansion, the British first got engaged in Afghanistan. To preserve their influence in the nation, the British assisted in the completed installation of a pro-British ruler in Afghanistan and later engaged in two wars with that nation. The Russians aimed to develop a buffer zone between their empire and British India and were also interested in gaining influence in Afghanistan. In 1878, the Russians promptly dispatched a diplomatic mission to Kabul in an effort to install a sympathetic administration there. Both Russian and British empires competed with one another for control of Afghanistan far into the 20th century, trying to win over Afghan leaders and tribes. The British sought to prevent the Ottomans and Germans from acquiring power in Afghanistan as a result of the rivalry between the two empires, which eventually boiled over into World War One. With the 1917 Russian Revolution and the British withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1919, the Great Game in Afghanistan came to an end. Nevertheless, even into the 20th century, the geopolitics of Afghanistan and Central Asia were still being shaped by the Great Game’s legacy (Burke, 2015). The Great Game manifested in terms of military interventions, proxy wars, and diplomatic maneuvers. The struggle between Russia and the British in Afghanistan to control India was a key aspect of the Great Game (Huband, 2019). The East India Company (EIC) identified the Russian Empire’s perceived incursions into Central Asia as a threat similar to its own expansion in South Asia, leading to diplomatic dealings and military interventions (Jalali, 2017). The Great Game also involved various political factions within the British and Russian empires, as well as their agents who traveled across regions (Afridi, 2023). Additionally, The Great Game artwork by War Boutique depicted successive British military interventions in Afghanistan, highlighting the interplay between art, geopolitics, and military actions (Leslie, 2021). Overall, the Great Game encompassed a complex web of military, proxy, and diplomatic activities aimed at securing control and influence in the region.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Great Game, Conflict, and Afghanistan

The “great game” of international geopolitics impacted Afghanistan by making it a buffer zone between Russia or the USSR in the north and the contiguous power/powers of the Indian subcontinent, Iran, and the Persian Gulf. Afghanistan was therefore in many ways a classic buffer state throughout much of the nineteenth century and possibly until 1947 when the British withdrew from India. The persistence of Soviet-American rivalry in Afghanistan between 1960 and 1973 gave an illusion of a continuing buffer role for Afghanistan in that period (McLachlan, 1997). Afghanistan’s political and social environment was significantly shaped by The Great Game, which also negatively affected the country’s stability and strife. The Great Game has largely contributed to the unrest and violence in Afghanistan in the following ways. Puppet rulers who were frequently unpopular and lacking in legitimacy in the eyes of the Afghan people imposed as a result of the rivalry between the British and Russian empires for influence in Afghanistan. This exacerbated the nation’s political upheaval and social discontent (Jalali, 2017). Tribal alliances and disputes frequently characterized the struggle between the British and Russian empires, with each side vying for the allegiance of various Afghan tribes (Bearden, 2001). As a result, there were more tribal disputes and splits throughout Afghan society. With the British and Russian empires attempting to influence Afghan politics and society, the Great Game also contributed to outside meddling in Afghan affairs. This meddling stoked anti-colonial and nationalist movements in Afghanistan and added to a feeling of anger and suspicion against foreign powers. Border disputes between Afghanistan and its neighbors, notably the British Raj in India, were also influenced by The Great Game. These conflicts increased the sense of unease and instability in Afghanistan and fueled tensions and conflicts along its borders (Jalali, 2017). Overall, the Great Game fueled political unrest, tribal strife, outside involvement, and boundary disputes, which led to instability and bloodshed in Afghanistan. The geopolitical environment of Afghanistan and the surrounding area is still being shaped by the Great Game’s legacy, which also contributes to the country’s continuous instability and lack of security. Afghanistan saw substantial long-term effects from The Great Game, which are still influencing its political, social, and economic growth today. The Great Game, in which foreign powers competed for influence and control over regional leaders, led to the fragmentation of Afghanistan’s political landscape. Over time, this division remained, resulting in continual war and instability in the nation (Amanullah *et al*, 2016). The Great Game also played a role in Afghanistan’s inadequate administration, since outside countries frequently supported unreliable or dishonest leaders in order to serve their own agendas. As a result, it has been challenging for the nation to create efficient institutions and take care of its residents’ needs. The Great Game negatively impacted.

Afghanistan's economic growth because it frequently served as a pawn in a wider geopolitical conflict between foreign countries. As a result, the nation's resources were overused and its economic potential was ignored. As a result, it brought border conflicts between Afghanistan and The Great Game influenced its neighbors, notably Pakistan. Tension between the two nations is still a result of the Durand Line deal, which split the Pashtun people between Afghanistan and British India. The Great Game established a standard for outsider meddling in Afghan politics, which has endured through time. Due to this, it has become challenging for the nation to establish its sovereignty and advance its own interests on a worldwide scale (Afridi, 2023). All things considered, Afghanistan has been affected negatively by the Great Game, which has exacerbated the nation's persistent strife, instability, and underdevelopment. The Great Game still shapes Afghanistan's relationships with its neighbors and the larger international community, highlighting the country's persistent difficulties in constructing a secure and prosperous future. The significance of the Tribal Belt as a buffer to the buffer state of Afghanistan during the Great Game of the 19th century (Amanullah *et al*, 2016). Discover the geo-political tactics and strategies of expansion used by the Imperial British and Czarist Russia in Central Asia. The "Great Game" between the British and Russian empires in the 19th and early 20th centuries significantly influenced Afghanistan's geopolitical struggles. The competition for influence and control over the country shaped its relations with external powers, led to wars and interventions, and left a legacy of instability and conflicts that continue to impact Afghanistan's political landscape (Afridi, 2023).

### The Strategic Interests

Besides, Russian and British, the Regional and international powers possess a number of strategic interests in Afghanistan. The pivotal country of Afghanistan is strategically significant to both regional and international powers because of its specific location at the key intersection of South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East (Walberg, 2011). Due to its position, it serves as a vital transit point for commerce and energy networks and might serve as a base for armed activities. Afghanistan has long served as an operational base for military operations including Russia and British, according to Counterstrategies. Strategically, regional and international powers want to keep Afghanistan from turning into a refuge for political and military operations and get rid of the political threat of coming from there (Reilly, 2003). Raw minerals, oil, and gas are among the numerous essential resources acquired in Afghanistan. Strategic access to and use of these resources is important to regional and global powers. Regional and international countries retain a strategic interest in influencing Afghanistan politically, economically, or militarily. This is known as influence and power projection (Eventon, 2011). Exerting influence on the nation might involve

assisting sympathetic regimes, setting up military bases, or giving help economically. British India, Iran, and China are among the nations that Afghanistan borders. Border security and limiting the excessive spread of unrest and political violence from Afghanistan to other nations remain strategic concerns for regional and international powers (Afridi, 2023). Afghanistan has endured controversial decades of violence, which has created fundamental humanitarian problems such as food shortages, poverty, and displacement. Regional and international powers maintain a strategic incentive to solve these humanitarian issues, whether by donating money, fostering safety and political security, or aiding peace talks. In general, the complex and diversified strategic interests of regional and international forces in Afghanistan. There may be locations where diverse powers cooperate, but there are, moreover, places where they compete and engage in conflict, which can add to the nation's persistent instability and unease. The alleged inability of the Russians, Persians, and British to control Afghanistan was due to its topography, which made it difficult to control, as it is a mountain fortress and virtually a residue of tribal territories and geographical fastness (McLean, 2017). Additionally, Afghanistan was a land-locked state and was absolutely much at the mercy of conspiracy, treaty, or tacit arrangement between the neighbors between which it was a buffer state. The Russo-British division of spheres of political influence in Central Asia in 1907 merely demonstrated the political reality of this political assertion. In summary, both the British Empire and the Soviet Union have had significant influences on the political and security dynamics in Afghanistan. The British exerted influence during the "Great Game" rivalry, while the Soviet Union's intervention in the 1970s and 1980s shaped the country's political landscape and triggered a decade-long conflict. (McLachlan, 1997). Power politics and self-interest have significant implications in the context of the Great Game. The behavior of states in the international system is driven by their need for survival, leading to the development of strategies to ensure their own security (Afridi, 2023). In the case of the Great Game in Central Asia, the major powers, including the United States, Russia, and China, are vying for power and influence in the region (Leslie, 2021). Central Asian states, on the other hand, have become important actors in their own right, pursuing multidirectional foreign policies to avoid dependence on any one patron (Amantayev, 2014). These states have established "local rules" that guide their interactions with external powers, prioritizing regime survival and the use of state resources for private gain (Sareen, 2021). As a result, external powers have had to accept these "local rules" in order to maintain their presence and access in the region (Eventon, 2011). The pursuit of power and self-interest by both the major powers and the Central Asian states has shaped the dynamics of the Great Game, impacting democratic development, human rights, and the overall geopolitical landscape of the region.

### British and Russia in Afghanistan

The British and Russian Empires' strategic rivalry and quest for influence and control over Central Asia and Afghanistan is referred to as "The Great Game". The game persisted until the early 20th century, according to British intelligence officer Arthur Conolly, who invented the phrase in the 1830s (Burke, 2015). For the British, Afghanistan served as a vital buffer state that might prevent Russia from encroaching on their cherished property, India. Afghanistan's topography is significant in its role as a buffer state because it is topographically divided both north and south and east and west by virtue of the mountain knot of the Hindu Kush. This topography has made it difficult for foreign powers to control Afghanistan, as it is a mountain fortress and virtually a residue of tribal territories and geographical fastness (McLachlan, 1997). The Russians might conceivably threaten India's northern frontiers and attack the nation, and the British were worried, that they would take over Afghanistan. The British therefore aimed to uphold Afghanistan's independence and foster cordial ties with its leaders. Afghanistan was valued strategically, but it was equally considered a potential market for British products and a supply of raw commodities like cotton and wool (Walberg, 2011). To get access to the region's resources and markets, the British were also interested in constructing trade routes across Central Asia. The Russians, on the other hand, regarded Afghanistan as a potential entryway to the Indian Ocean, providing them access to ports with warm water and enabling them to increase their influence in the region. They also attempted to create a safety zone between British India and its southern boundaries (McLean, 2017).

To accomplish their goals in Afghanistan, both countries engaged in military operations, espionage, and political game-playing. In the First Anglo-Afghan War (1839–1842) and Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–1880), the British engaged in several conflicts with the Afghan government, while the Russians sought to exert influence through covert operations and diplomacy (Leslie, 2021). The renewed rivalry between regional and international powers for influence and control over Central Asia and Afghanistan in the post-Soviet era is referred to as the "New Great Game", with the fall of the Soviet Union, new players with distinct interests and goals entered the game, including China, Iran, and the United States. In conclusion, throughout the Great Game, the British and Russian Empires were interested in gaining control of Afghanistan for strategic, financial, and geopolitical reasons. With the advent of contemporary actors and interests in the post-Soviet period, the rivalry between these powers, which had been ongoing for more than a century, has been rekindled. Both the British and Russian Empires kept up their key interests in the area after Afghanistan attained independence in 1919 (Khalilzad, 1996).

However, because they no longer devolved direct authority over Afghanistan, their jobs had to adapt.

Afghanistan was however seen by the British as a buffer state that might defend their interests in India. To preserve cordial ties, they maintained diplomatic ties with the Afghan government and gave financial and military support. The British supported Afghan leaders who were cordial to them in an effort to retain their power in the key area (McLean, 2017). On the other hand, the Russians persisted in seeing Afghanistan as a potential entry point to the Indian Ocean and produced efforts to build cordial ties with the Afghan leadership. They supported Afghanistan militarily and economically and worked to expand their influence in the area through commerce and diplomatic relations. To defend their interests in the region, both powers persisted in political bluffing and espionage. The arrival of contemporary players like China and the United States, who also aspired to strengthen their influence in Central Asia and Afghanistan, however, helped to moderate their competition (Sareen, 2021).

Ordinarily, the British and Russian Empires played a role in preserving their interests in the region by diplomatic, economic, and military methods after Afghanistan gained its independence. The geopolitical conflict in Central Asia between the British and Russian Empires in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is referred to as "The Great Game" After Afghanistan gained its independence in 1919, the competition persisted as both nations battled for dominance in the area. Afghanistan followed a policy of neutrality and attempted to forge cordial ties with both the British and the Russians during the rule of Ghazi Amanullah Khan (Khalilzad, 1996). However, Amanullah's efforts to modernize and secularize Afghanistan alarmed the British, who regarded them as a danger to their interests in India. Afghanistan shifted its allegiance to the British when Amanullah was deposed in a coup in 1929 and began receiving financial and military support from them. This persisted under King Zahir Shah (1933–1973), who upheld a neutral stance but supported the British (McLean, 2017).

Afghanistan started receiving increasing help from the Soviet Union in the 1950s and 1960s as it attempted to expand its executive power in the area. Because the British and Americans perceived Soviet engagement in Afghanistan as a danger to their interests, this developed a tense relationship. Afghanistan's ties with the West worsened after a coup in 1978 that installed the communist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan as the country's controlling party. To help the communist regime, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979. This led to a struggle that lasted for ten years before the Soviet soldiers withdrew in 1989. Afghanistan entered a civil war in the 1990s and was governed by several groups, including the Taliban. The US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, which ousted the Taliban rule and established a new government, was prompted by the Taliban's backing for worldwide terrorism (Khalilzad, 1996). However, the nation continues to be unstable and a focal point of geopolitical conflict between numerous countries.

### **Realist Perspective and Geopolitical Struggle for Control**

The significance of power and national interest in influencing the conduct of the British and Russian empires may be highlighted by a realism viewpoint in order to better comprehend the geopolitical fight for dominance in Afghanistan within the context of the Great Game. Realistically speaking, in order to further their respective national interests, the British and Russian empires were vying for influence over and control over Afghanistan (Walberg, 2011). The Russians wanted to set up a friendly government in Afghanistan to act as a buffer between their empire and British India, while the British were interested in Afghanistan as a buffer state to defend their interests in India from Russian expansion. To retain or increase their authority and influence in the area, the British and Russian empires competed with one another in Afghanistan (Amantaev, 2014). Several strategies were used to play out this rivalry, including the installation of puppet leaders, assistance for various Afghan tribes, and boundary conflicts. A realistic viewpoint can also assist us in comprehending why the British and Russian empires were prepared to utilize military force or other coercive methods in Afghanistan. For instance, the Russians dispatched a diplomatic mission to Kabul in an effort to install a sympathetic administration, while the British fought two wars with Afghanistan to protect their influence there and stop Russian growth. Realists view governments as logical agents who pursue their domestic interests amid a chaotic international environment. Regional and international countries are vying for influence and control over Afghanistan in order to further their own national goals (Walberg, 2011). The realist perspective on the “Great Game” between Russia and Britain in Afghanistan highlights the pursuit of power and competition among states. Both nations sought to expand their influence in Central Asia, including Afghanistan, to secure their strategic interests. Afghanistan’s strategic location made it a crucial battleground, serving as a buffer state between the Russian Empire and British India. Security concerns drove their involvement, with both countries aiming to prevent potential invasions. Both nations engaged in proxy wars, supporting local Afghan rulers aligned with their interests (Bhat, 2020). The realist perspective also emphasizes the balance of power, with both countries striving to prevent each other from gaining dominance. This led to the lasting legacy of instability and conflicts in Afghanistan. The emphasizing the importance of power and national interest in influencing the conduct of states and other players, a realism viewpoint might aid us in understanding the geopolitical fight for dominance in Afghanistan within the context of the Great Game. However, it’s crucial to keep in mind that a realist viewpoint does not take into consideration other elements that could affect state conduct, such as customs, ideologies, cultural aspects, and internal politics. In summary, the realist perspective and geopolitical struggle for control in the “Great Game” between Russia and Britain in Afghanistan revolved around the pursuit

of power, security concerns, proxy wars, and maintaining a balance of power. The strategic significance of Afghanistan and the desire to control its resources and access to Central Asia shaped the actions and policies of both powers during this period (Berkowitz, 2007).

A realist perspective on the Great Game in Afghanistan reveals several key findings. Firstly, Afghanistan is considered the hub of the “New Great Game” as regional and global powers vie for influence in the country, impacting regional stability and international security (Peter, 2012). Secondly, India’s active involvement in Afghanistan has raised questions about the nature of the new Great Game, the main actors involved, and the future map of Afghanistan. This involvement has also disturbed the balance of power in the region, which is not favorable for the stability of South Asia (Bhat, 2020). Thirdly, the historical Great Game between Imperial Britain and Czarist Russia in the 19th century revolved around power politics and the manipulation of Afghanistan’s geostrategic location as a buffer state and the Tribal Belt as a buffer to the buffer (Idil, 2013). Lastly, foreign interventions in Afghanistan, such as the Soviet invasion, the involvement of regional players like Pakistan and India, and the US invasion after 9/11, have had unintended consequences, including the promotion of clandestine terrorist activities and proxies, leading to a more insecure Afghan society (Reilly, 2003).

### **The Lack of Effective Governance**

Afghanistan’s capacity to preserve its domination, notably during the Great Game era, was significantly hampered by the absence of efficient government structures and institutions. It was challenging for Afghanistan to present an adhesive front against external threats because of the lack of a substantial central authority, internal instability (Bhat, 2020), and persistent warfare between various ethnic and tribal groupings. Afghanistan’s military and security forces were weak, which had a significant impact on the country’s capacity to preserve its domination due to the absence of functional government structures and institutions. Afghanistan’s military lacked the organizational and logistical capabilities necessary to effectively defend the nation’s borders or preserve its territorial integrity during the Great Game period, and it was ill-equipped and undertrained (Ahmed, 1981). Due to this, it became genuine to internal uprising and invasion as well as external aggression and invasion. Afghanistan’s inadequacy to successfully manage its borders and territory had an impact on its capacity to defend its domination in another way, as well. This was required due to the absence of functional governance institutions and processes. Afghanistan’s borders were sometimes ill-defined and porous, making it difficult for the country to monitor and control the flow of people and products across them. As a result, the government discovered it challenging to prevent the smuggling of guns and other illegal goods as well as the infiltration of foreign agents and subversive elements (Idil, 2013).

Additionally, Afghanistan's lack of efficient governance institutions and processes fueled a culture of patronage and corruption that made it difficult for the nation to efficiently manage its resources and comply with the demands of its people. This made it more difficult for the government to mobilize national support for its attempts to safeguard the nation's sovereignty since it reduced the legitimacy of the government and undermined the social compact between the state and its citizens (Berkowitz, 2007). Overall, Afghanistan's inability to defend its sovereignty during the Great Game was severely hampered by the absence of efficient government institutions and mechanisms. Afghanistan was vulnerable to external invasion and internal revolt in the absence of a strong supreme government, competent military and security forces, and a clearly defined and controlled border, which added to the continued instability and strife in the nation (Ahmed, 1981). The British and Russian Empires engaged in a fierce geopolitical war for dominance and influence over Central Asia known as "The Great Game" in Afghanistan. It is broadly accepted that this time span, which roughly corresponds to the early 19th to the early 20th centuries, was marked by a number of significant occurrences that influenced Afghanistan's political, social, and economic environment as well as that of the larger area (Idil, 2013). Several significant occasions that took place in Afghanistan during the Great Game include: The Treaty of Turkmenchay (1828) established a shared boundary between Russia and Persia, enhancing Russia's power in Central Asia. The First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842) saw the British Empire impose a pro-British government in Afghanistan, leading to the Siege of Herat (1838-1842). The Second Anglo-Afghan conflict (1878-1880) saw the British invade Afghanistan, leading to the Panjdeh Incident (1885). The Durand Line Agreement (1893) established the border between British India and Afghanistan, causing ongoing hostility. The Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919) saw Afghan monarch Amanullah Khan declare his nation's independence, resulting in a war between Afghanistan and the British Empire. The Bolshevik Revolution (1917) influenced the Great Game in Afghanistan. The Anglo-Soviet Treaty (1921) recognized Afghanistan as an independent state. The Afghan Civil War (1929-1933) ended with the Mohammadzai dynasty. The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan (1979-1989) resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and displacement (Bearden, 2001). Principally, the Afghan Great Game was marked by a number of battles, coalitions, and diplomatic engagements between foreign powers and local leaders. The major incidents that took place during this time period retained a significant influence on the political, social, and economic growth of Afghanistan and the surrounding area, and they still have an impact on the geopolitical environment of the area today.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This review employed qualitative research, the data collected from articles and books, and applied a realist

perspective, which suggests that states prioritize their self-interest and seek power and security in international relations. The study employed historical and comparative analysis to present detailed information on the Great Game in Afghanistan, including critical events, diplomatic strategies, and power dynamics.

## RESULTS

The Great Game, a strategic rivalry between the British and Russian Empires, lasted until the early 20th century. The British aimed to maintain Afghanistan's independence and access resources, while the Russians saw it as a potential entryway to the Indian Ocean. The "New Great Game" emerged in the post-Soviet era, with new players like China, Iran, and the United States. Afghanistan, strategically located at the intersection of Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East, has been on the brink of this conflict since 1830. The Great Game has significant implications for Afghanistan's political and social climate. The Great Game of international geopolitics, significantly impacted Afghanistan, making it a buffer zone between Britain and the USSR. This period led to political unrest, tribal strife, boundary disputes, and instability. The legacy of the Great Game continues to shape Afghanistan's political landscape, inadequate administration, and economic growth, posing challenges for the nation's sovereignty and global interests. Regional and international powers, including Russia and the British, have significant strategic interests in Afghanistan due to its strategic location and role as a transit point for commerce and energy networks. They aim to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a refuge for political and military operations, and address humanitarian issues through donations, peace talks, and aid. The Great Game, a geopolitical conflict between the British and Russian empires, focused on power, security, and maintaining a balance of power. The British sought to establish a friendly government in Afghanistan to protect India from Russian expansion, while the British sought to maintain their influence. The "New Great Game" now involves regional and global powers competing for influence. During the Great Game era, Afghanistan's sovereignty was hindered by inefficient government structures, internal instability, and persistent warfare. The country's weak military and security forces made it vulnerable to internal uprisings. The lack of governance institutions led to a culture of patronage and corruption, making resource management difficult. The Great Game, involving the British and Russian Empires, further exacerbated the situation.

## DISCUSSION

The "New Great Game" concept in Afghanistan is examined from a realist perspective. The paper argues that Afghanistan is the hub of the "New Great Game" as many actors try to further their agendas in the region. The motivations and actions of regional and global powers involved in Afghanistan are analyzed using the theory of realism. The study highlights the importance

of understanding the dynamics of the New Great Game for regional stability and international security. The paper also discusses the geopolitical factors contributing to the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan, including the interference of hostile countries and the rivalry of supra-regional and global powers. The involvement of India in Afghanistan is seen as a significant factor in the new great game, disturbing the balance of power in the region. Overall, the research provides insights into the geopolitical struggle for control in Afghanistan and emphasizes the need to consider realist perspectives in understanding the complex dynamics of the region. External meddling from regional and international forces contributed to political turbulence and social discontent. Future strategies should prioritize Afghan-led initiatives and avoid outside meddling. The Afghan government, international community, and Taliban must be involved in the peace process for lasting peace and stability. The future of Afghanistan may involve a combination of internal conflict, regional power competition, increased Taliban influence, fragmentation, international intervention, and peace building.

## CONCLUSION

Afghanistan has a tragic legacy of the Great Game, a series of wars and strategic rivalries between Victorian-era Britain and Tsarist Russia. For over 200 years, Afghanistan has been at the forefront of world affairs due to its geopolitical location. The rivalry between Britain and Russia has used military operations, intelligence gathering, and diplomatic talks to conquer and control Central and South Asia. The Great Game in Afghanistan exemplifies the importance of Afghan-led initiatives in achieving peace and stability. The installation of puppet kings and the struggle for influence among regional and international powers considered. A comprehensive strategy incorporating political, economic, and social initiatives adopted. Addressing the underlying causes of unrest was crucial for establishing long-lasting peace. The historical background of the Afghan Great Game offers valuable lessons for future peace efforts. The Great Game, a cycle of instability and violence in Afghanistan, has resulted in thousands of deaths and millions of refugees. The conflict has impeded economic growth, impacted the environment, and sparked mistrust among ethnic and religious groups. The realist viewpoint emphasizes states are selfish, all the time try to get self-interest like the great powers tried in Afghanistan. The Great Game between the British and Russian Empires in the 19th and 20th centuries highlighted the importance of self-interest and understanding in conflicts. The British saw Afghanistan as a buffer state to protect India from Russian expansionism, while the Russians sought to increase their influence. Both countries engaged in military operations, espionage, and political game-playing, leading to a protracted and destructive conflict. The Soviets withdrew in 1989, but the country remains in turmoil.

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## **Intellectual Property Rights and Food Security Enhancement in Afghanistan: A Human Rights-Based Analysis**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The impact of intellectual property rights on enhancing food security in Afghanistan is assessed in this study, focusing on the human rights framework and the effectiveness of laws and policies. The potential for innovations in agricultural practices and food sources amid the difficulties presented by conflict, economic instability, and climate change is highlighted in this study, which explores the role of intellectual property rights in improving food security in Afghanistan. Literature reviews, articles, and studies on intellectual property rights and food security were analyzed using practical content analysis and descriptive analysis methods. This study suggests that robust intellectual property regulations in Afghanistan can encourage agricultural innovation and lead to the creation of novel methods and crops that will improve food security and output. It is possible to guarantee human rights to food and greatly enhance food production and access in Afghanistan by bolstering the legal framework and public understanding regarding intellectual property rights. Recommendations include enhancing intellectual property rights laws, supporting Afghan agricultural innovators and researchers, raising public awareness, and collaborating with international organizations.*

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Agriculture, Food Security, Human Rights, Intellectual Property Rights

**CITATION:** Imranullah Akhtar & Nazifullah Niazi, “Intellectual Property Rights and Food Security Enhancement in Afghanistan: A Human Rights-Based Analysis”, *JSS Journal for Legal Studies and Research*, Vol. 10 (2) (2024), pp. 33-48, available at <https://www.jsslawcollege.in/jsslc-online-journal/>

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Intellectual Property (IP) encompasses rights for instance copyrights, images, publishing, trademarks, and patents, which protect inventions, trademarks, industrial designs, literary and artistic works, and other ideas, enabling owners to benefit from and seek support from others. This research paper describes the impact of intellectual property rights (IPR) in improving food security for Afghans. The purpose of this research article is to protect IPR, which in turn support innovation and invention, this may result in higher-quality goods and economic expansion. This research topic was chosen to understand the relationship between Afghan IPRs and food security. Given the circumstances, in Afghanistan, this research paper supports that IPRs are necessary to introduce fresh machineries and strengthen innovation. To improve competition in the market, the protection of IPR is essential, and understanding IPR is crucial for the food sector to maintain and develop innovation. The protection system of IPR in Afghanistan and its challenges are significant topics to investigate, considering the food safety issues that Afghan citizens are facing. There is a need to analyze the role of IPR and understand how government policies and the protection of IPR contribute to the food security process. According to this research, the role of IPRs in improving food security for Afghan citizens and how the protection of IPRs improves food quality and production will be clarified. As a research hypothesis, the protection of IPRs has a positive effect on improving food security because it make available a basis for supporting innovation and inventions. This issue is crucial in Afghanistan, so understanding the link concerning the protection of food security and IPRs in other developed countries is necessary. Furthermore, exploring mechanisms and strategies to strengthen the protection of IPRs is important.

IP has a long history, dating back to ancient times when ideas were protected through secrecy, trade secrets, and patent protection. With the advancement of technology and industry, formal laws and regulations were needed to protect IPRs. The Berne Convention in 1883 was the first worldwide agreement, followed by the Patent Protection Act in the US in 1886.<sup>3</sup> The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) was established in 1970 as a result of a series of laws and regulations passed worldwide. Industrialization led to the emergence of industrial agriculture as a commercial domain, allowing the preservation of technological achievements. The introduction of IPRs in agriculture supported the production and accumulation of wealth.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.1 Food Security and Intellectual Property

Food safety is essential for public health, as food must meet quality and safety standards. Protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) is essential to align thru international standards and strengthen business relationships. Food security is a set of principles aimed at ensuring human health, security, and quality in all stages of food production, processing, and distribution.<sup>5</sup> Article 25 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights pinpoints the "right to food" as a crucial right for human life preservation.<sup>6</sup> However, determining governments' obligation to provide this

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<sup>3</sup> Chowdhury. Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights in Bangladesh: To What Extent Is It TRIPS-Responsive? *Beijing Law Review*, **9**, 425-438. (2018).

<sup>4</sup> Ren et al. The Study of Agricultural Intellectual Property and Intelligent Agriculture Development Strategies in China. *Journal of Service Science and Management*, **10**, 230-250. (2017).

<sup>5</sup> Adamo et al., Virtual Water Trade and Food Security for Iraq. *Engineering*, **15**, 417-430. (2023).

<sup>6</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution 217A (III), Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 25 cl. 1(a). (1948).



right has been a contentious issue, with both supporters and critics. One of the most basic human rights is the right to nourishment, guaranteeing access to wholesome, appetizing food in accordance with international accords such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The four elements of the right to food can be identified here.<sup>7</sup> This means that every person must have the means to provide enough food. Food should be affordable and accessible to every person. Food should be healthy, tasty, and nutritious. Individuals should have the right to cultural food. The UN General Assembly accepted the right to adequate and nutritious food in 2002, emphasizing food security components.<sup>8</sup> Governments are committed to recognizing this right, improving individual status, and ensuring the full enjoyment of this right. Countries have specific laws and regulations governing food security, establishing standards for quality and security, and regulating production, processing, and distribution based on legal principles. The FDA and FAO are crucial in food security, establishing standard procedures and regulations. Violation of security laws can lead to penalties and legal consequences, the purpose of which is to protect public health.<sup>9</sup> Governments formulate policies and programs for food security, enhancing agriculture, food industry, and distribution. They also educate the public about food security through public awareness campaigns and maintain monitoring and surveillance mechanisms to continuously assess food quality and security.<sup>10</sup> Food security is a concept based on the right to food, ensuring economic and physical access to healthy, sufficient foodstuff for entirely individuals in the community, promoting a healthy diet for a healthy and active life, and sustainable productivity. Food security is the state in which every human being has sufficient, tasty, nutritious food that is continuously available. Economic, cultural, and social factors are associated to each other. The food production and consumption system must be strong enough to reach all people, affordable food must be compatible with all people's economic status, and the food production and consumption system must be in harmony with the environment and sustainable development.<sup>11</sup> Intellectual property rights are those rights established to protect people and inventions, creative works, and innovations. The rights include copyright, patent, trademark, and industry sample rights. The four elements of the right to food can be identified; it is used to protect literary and artistic works, the patent is used to protect inventions, which gives the right to copy them, trademark protects trademarks and logos, and industrial design rights protect products with a special shape or design.<sup>12</sup> Selvakumar (2002), asserts that economic stability, the right to food, and food security are all significantly impacted by intellectual property rights. They support

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<sup>7</sup> Fan et al., Innovation or imitation: The role of intellectual property rights protections. *Journal of Multinational Financial Management*, 23(3), 208-234. (2013).

<sup>8</sup> Kiprutto et al. Agriculture, Climate Change and Food Security. *Open Access Library Journal*, 2, 1-7. (2015)

<sup>9</sup> Kokabisaghi. Assessment of the effects of economic sanctions on Iranians' right to health by using human rights impact assessment tool: a systematic review. *International journal of health policy and management*, 7(5), 374. (2018).

<sup>10</sup> Ma. The Tripartite Evolutionary Game of Intellectual Property Protection with Government Participation. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 10, 2790-2804. (2022).

<sup>11</sup> Sugeng et al. Intellectual property rights in agriculture: plant variety protection and food security. *Audito Comparative Law Journal (ACLJ)*, 5(2), 66-91. (2024).

<sup>12</sup> Owasa and Fall. Food Security in Developing Countries: Factors and Mitigation. *American Journal of Climate Change*, 13, 391-405. (2024)

innovation and production, ensuring food safety and quality. Producers can innovate to protect food rights, promoting food rights. Economic incentives also strengthen food security. Thus, food is a right, food is security, and intellectual property rights are interrelated, promoting sustainable development and food safety.<sup>13</sup>

### **1.2 Human Rights Framework, IPR and Food Security**

According to the Human Rights, the state has an obligation to protect IPR to achieve this, the government needs to establish strong regulations and laws that ensure the safeguard of inventions, agricultural innovations, and food production.<sup>14</sup> These laws create a conducive environment for farmers and companies to implement innovations and produce food. The government is urged to provide investment and financial support through the enforcement of intellectual property rights. Protecting these rights encourages investors to fund their innovative projects, leading to increased food production and quality. According to the Human Rights Framework, the government should support innovation and research projects, particularly in agriculture.<sup>15</sup> Intellectual property provides a legal framework for innovation that enhances food production and safety through research and invention. The government should raise public awareness about intellectual property. Developing training programs for farmers, students, and professionals is essential to help them understand the value of intellectual property rights and leverage those. By enforcing intellectual property rights, the government is aligning with international standards.<sup>16</sup> This is crucial for Afghanistan's food security to access international markets and prepare products for export according to global standards. The Human Rights Framework emphasizes the promotion of transparency and accountability in the implementation of IPR, which enhances the government's credibility and trust among the people. Enforcing intellectual property rights is vital for improving food security<sup>17</sup> The government must make significant efforts in legislation, investment, innovation, training, and adhering to international standards to enhance food production, quality, and safety. Through these measures, the government can elevate the standard of living for its citizens and take crucial steps towards the economic development of the country.

Article 25, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states that everybody has the right to satisfactory livelihood, security, and adequate food.<sup>18</sup> It expresses the concept of the right that humans should have the necessary materials for their life and well-being. Article 11, The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) pays special attention to food security and emphasizes that everyone has the right to food security.<sup>19</sup> This

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<sup>13</sup> Selvakumar. Overlap of Trademarks with Other Intellectual Property Rights: The Strategies of Global Brands. *Beijing Law Review*, **13**, 429-448. (2022)

<sup>14</sup> Zou and Guo. China's Food Security Evaluation Based on Factor Analysis. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, **5**, 447-456. (2015)

<sup>15</sup> Martin-Shields, & Stojetz. Food security and conflict: Empirical challenges and future opportunities for research and policy making on food security and conflict. *World Development*, **119**, 150-164 (2018).

<sup>16</sup> Hou et al. New knowledge and regional entrepreneurship: the role of intellectual property protection in China. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice*, **21**(3), 471-485. (2023).

<sup>17</sup> Shehata and Eldali. Some Economic Aspects of Fish Food Security in Egypt. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, **10**, 351-366. (2022)

<sup>18</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution 217A (III), Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 25 cl. 1(a). (1948).

<sup>19</sup> UN General Assembly, Resolution 2200A (XXI). ICESCR, art. 11 cl. 1(a). (1966).



article also mentions the duty of states to help create the relevant facilities and resources in the implementation of this right. The ICESCR is an essential human rights context as it highlights the right to access food. This right requires access to satisfactory and healthy food for all individuals, and to ensure this right, it is necessary to respect laws regarding agricultural innovation and IPRs.<sup>20</sup> As stated by the Human Rights Framework, IP explains the role of government and the political system regarding IPRs and their protection. IP is essential for innovation, inventions, and the protection of various artistic and scientific works. These rights are important for the marketing of innovations and inventions, as they allow individuals and companies to feel protected in their work, thus encouraging innovation. The government plays a key role in protecting intellectual property rights, and strong laws are necessary to enforce these rights.<sup>21</sup> Increasing public awareness of intellectual property is also crucial so that individuals know how to exercise their rights. Intellectual property is vital for economic development, as it provides the conditions for innovation, productivity, and business growth. Governments support innovation and inventions by ensuring the safety of IPRs and providing financial support for these endeavors. By creating financial support programs and collaborations for innovators and researchers, governments can foster innovation and economic growth.<sup>22</sup> In order to improve international trade relations, it is important to protect international intellectual property rights, as this allows countries to present their products on the international market. Governments should establish mechanisms to resolve violations and complaints of intellectual property rights to ensure their protection. When it comes to food security, the Human Rights Framework discusses political institutions and the role of government in promoting food security.<sup>23</sup> The government should participate in various ways to ensure the health and safety of its citizens. The government plays a substantial role in providing food security by establishing and implementing laws and regulations pertaining to food quality, production, and distribution. Food security is indispensable for public's well-being, economic growth, and social stability. Establishing quality monitoring agencies to protect food safety and increasing public awareness about food security are also essential tasks for the government.<sup>24</sup> By promoting food security, the government can improve the standard of living of its citizens and economic development. Increased food safety results in better population health, productivity, and general well-being. In times of refugees and insecurity, the government should take urgent measures to ensure food security and cooperate with international organizations and other countries to improve food security.<sup>25</sup> By creating food safety policies according to international standards, the government can play a significant role in promoting food security for economic development and the health of individuals. Legislation, monitoring,

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<sup>20</sup> Shepherd. Thinking critically about food security. *Security Dialogue*, 43(3), 195-212. (2012).

<sup>21</sup> Donkor, & Daliri. The Role of Nanotechnology in Agriculture and Food Security. In *Advanced technologies and societal change* (pp. 149–190). (2024).

<sup>22</sup> Temory. Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Household Income in Herat Afghanistan. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 12, 148-166. (2024)

<sup>23</sup> Weston. Human rights. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. (2024).

<sup>24</sup> Selvakumar. Overlap of Trademarks with Other Intellectual Property Rights: The Strategies of Global Brands. *Beijing Law Review*, 13, 429-448. (2022)

<sup>25</sup> Yolchi et al. Impact of Floods on Food Security in Rural Afghanistan. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 112, 104-746. (2024).

public awareness, and food supply networks are crucial ways in which the government can improve food security. Through these efforts, the government can enhance the standard of living of its citizens and contribute to the development of society. IP also plays a crucial role in economic development, innovation, and the competitiveness of a country.<sup>26</sup> By establishing laws and policies to protect IPRs, the government can create a favorable environment for innovators and producers, leading to important achievements in economic and social development.

### ***1.3 IPR in Agriculture and Food Security***

Intellectual property rights (IPRs) in agriculture protect innovations, technologies, and scientific achievements in agricultural production and resource exploitation. These rights include patents, new plant varieties, copyrights for agricultural technologies, and trademarks for agricultural products.<sup>27</sup> Their consequences on food security vary. Intellectual property rights encourage innovation and investment in agricultural technology research, leading to increased crop productivity, climate change and disease resistance, and improved agricultural technologies, ultimately strengthening food security. IPRs in agriculture lead to the concentration of technologies and innovations in multinational corporations, limiting access to essential resources like improved seeds for smallholder farmers and developing countries, negatively impacting food security in these regions.<sup>28</sup> Intellectual property rights impact agricultural product pricing, as companies developing new technologies may raise prices, putting pressure on small farmers and producers. This increases food production costs, negatively impacting food security, especially in low-income countries, and potentially affecting food security.<sup>29</sup> Intellectual property rights decrease agricultural biodiversity by relying too heavily on a few commercial species, potentially threatening agro-ecosystems and long-term food security, as a decrease in biodiversity can be mitigated. Intellectual property rights lead to farmers' dependence on companies, causing them to buy improved seeds annually and cannot save them for future planting. This dependence can hinder farmers' ability to meet their own and community's food needs. Sustainable technologies like drought- and pest-resistant seeds can promote sustainable agriculture, mitigate climate change's effects on food production, and improve food security if distributed fairly.<sup>30</sup> The government can promote innovation and productivity by supporting new agricultural technologies, such as drought- and disease-resistant seeds, which boost agricultural production. This promotes economic growth and sustainable production. Protecting agricultural products through IPR can increase exports and income for farmers, contributing to food security. The government can prevent monopoly by ensuring small farmers have access to necessary resources and technologies. Homogenization of agricultural products can lead to decreased cultivated areas, biodiversity loss, food security issues, import limitations, increased costs,

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<sup>26</sup> Hou et al. New knowledge and regional entrepreneurship: the role of intellectual property protection in China. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice*, 21(3), 471-485. (2023).

<sup>27</sup> Shepherd. Thinking critically about food security. *Security Dialogue*, 43(3), 195-212. (2012).

<sup>28</sup> Ren et al. The Study of Agricultural Intellectual Property and Intelligent Agriculture Development Strategies in China. *Journal of Service Science and Management*, 10, 230-250. (2017).

<sup>29</sup> Selvakumar. Overlap of Trademarks with Other Intellectual Property Rights: The Strategies of Global Brands. *Beijing Law Review*, 13, 429-448. (2022)

<sup>30</sup> Temory. Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Household Income in Herat Afghanistan. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 12, 148-166. (2024)



environmental threats, soil erosion, land degradation, and increased fertilizer use.<sup>31</sup> Genetically modified seeds offer higher productivity but increase economic dependence, increase costs, reduce genetic diversity, and depend on imports. They also threaten food security and local knowledge, making it difficult for farmers to invest in other sectors. The loss of biodiversity and genetic resources in agriculture, exacerbated by changing cultivation patterns and genetically modified crops, poses threats to food security, innovation, and indigenous species extinction. Multinational companies' monopolization of seed production poses a significant threat to agriculture, causing increased costs, reduced diversity, and reduced power, especially in developing nations.<sup>32</sup> Large companies imposing contractual conditions on farmers can lead to economic dependence, food independence, and limited control over resources, reducing local innovations and traditional knowledge. Furthermore, IPR can increase international cooperation in agriculture, leveraging global technologies and knowledge to strengthen food security.<sup>33</sup> Thus, IPR can be a powerful tool for enhancing food security in Afghanistan. Intellectual property rights (IPR) can significantly enhance food security in Afghanistan. Recognizing and utilizing intellectual property rights in agriculture presents challenges. Alternatively, it can lead to improved innovation and enhanced agricultural productivity, and it may lead to unequal access to technologies, increased costs, and reduced biodiversity.<sup>34</sup> To maintain food security, a balance must be struck between supporting innovation and ensuring equitable access to agricultural resources. The government of Afghanistan can support the innovation and sustainable growth of agriculture and improve the food security of citizens by developing and implementing appropriate policies in the field of IPRs.

#### ***1.4 Food Security and IPR in Afghanistan***

The intellectual system of agricultural ownership and food security varies between developed and developing countries. Developed countries rely on mechanized agriculture, while developing countries, like Afghanistan, rely on local farming. Developing countries face economic, social, and environmental challenges that directly impact their sustainable development and food security.<sup>35</sup> One of the biggest challenges in Afghanistan is poverty. Due to political unrest and ongoing wars, a high ratio of the population lives in deficiency. This issue leads to severe economic and social inequalities and limits access to basic resources and services. Afghan farmers primarily depend on traditional farming methods and lack access to modern technologies and resistant seeds. This lack of technology results in

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<sup>31</sup> Donkor & Daliri. The Role of Nanotechnology in Agriculture and Food Security. In *Advanced technologies and societal change* (pp. 149–190). (2024).

<sup>32</sup> Singh et al. Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in India. In *Advances in geographical and environmental sciences* (pp. 199–209). (2024).

<sup>33</sup> Weiler et al. Food sovereignty, food security and health equity: a meta-narrative mapping exercise. *Health Policy and Planning*, 30(8), 1078–1092. (2014).

<sup>34</sup> Sani and Kemaw. Analysis of Rural Households Food Security in Western Ethiopia. *Food and Nutrition Sciences*, 10, 249-265 (2019)

<sup>35</sup> Yolchi et al. Impact of Floods on Food Security in Rural Afghanistan. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 112, 104-746. (2024).

decreased production and productivity, threatening food security.<sup>36</sup> Climate change has negative effects on agriculture, water resources, and ecosystems, especially in vulnerable areas like Afghanistan. Droughts and climate fluctuations can lead to decreased agricultural production and food security. Political and security instability hinder sustainable development in Afghanistan and limit investment in infrastructure and technology. Continuous unrest makes it impossible for farmers to plan effectively and increase their production. The poor educational attainment and ignorance of the most effective farming methods and intellectual property rights reduce productivity and hinder farmers' ability to use new technologies.<sup>37</sup> This issue also impedes the empowerment of farmers and the improvement of their economic conditions. Poor infrastructure, such as roads, storage facilities, and irrigation systems, harms agricultural production and prevents access to markets. These weaknesses lead to a decrease in farmers' income and food security. Weak healthcare systems not only harm the health of farmers but also affect food production and food security. Diseases can lead to a decrease in labor and agricultural production. Food security for Afghans means that all Afghans consume and right to use to satisfactory, nutritious, and proper food constantly, without facing hunger or food insecurity. The problem of food security in Afghanistan is multifaceted and related to economic instability, conflict, natural disasters (such as droughts and floods), and outdated and limited agricultural practices.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, food security for Afghans is not only a matter of production and distribution but also depends on people having the financial means to obtain adequate and nutritious food. The government and international organizations are working to improve food security in Afghanistan, but it remains a significant problem that requires sustainable and comprehensive solutions. The role of IPRs in food safety is fundamental and essential, as intellectual property provides a legal framework for the fortification of innovations, technologies, and inventions. These innovations contribute to the improvement of fresh technologies in agriculture and food production, improved seeds, pesticides, and new methods of food processing, resulting in increased food production and improved food safety.<sup>39</sup> The protection of IPRs ensures that companies, universities, and research institutions can benefit from their innovations and invest in new agricultural technologies. Through these developments, we can increase agricultural production, improve food quality, and ensure global food security. IPRs, such as patents, provide legal protection for agricultural products and food innovations, playing an important role in food security. The role of IPRs in food security in Afghanistan is crucial in the agricultural and economic system of the country, given the obstacles that harm food security.<sup>40</sup> Intellectual property provides a legal framework for innovation and creativity that encourages new technologies and inventions in agriculture and food production. For example, Harvey's methods, soil quality improvement techniques, and improved

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<sup>36</sup> Lee. Reconceptualizing the role of intellectual property rights in shaping industry structure. *Vand. L. Rev.*, 72, 1197. (2019).

<sup>37</sup> Akhtar. The Significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan. *NUIJB*, 3(02), 456–459. (2024).

<sup>38</sup> Dosi & Stiglitz. The role of intellectual property rights in the development process, with some lessons from developed countries: an introduction. *Intellectual property rights: Legal and economic challenges for development*, 1 (2014).

<sup>39</sup> Khurshid et al. Technological innovations for environmental protection: role of intellectual property rights in the carbon mitigation efforts. Evidence from western and southern Europe. *International Journal of Environmental Science and Technology*, 19(5), 3919-3934. (2022).

<sup>40</sup> Yolchi et al. Impact of Floods on Food Security in Rural Afghanistan. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 112, 104-746. (2024).



land use methods. Companies can improve the quality of their products through intellectual property rights. Introducing new crops and seeds designed for higher quality and yield improves food security.<sup>41</sup> Intellectual property rights give investors and companies the assurance that they will benefit from their innovations and inventions. This encourages them to invest in agriculture, improving food production and quality. By protecting intellectual property rights, farmers can obtain financial and technical support for new and improved seeds, pesticides, and other agricultural innovations. This assistance increases food production and provides adequate conditions for security. Application of IPRs is an important task for the government, helping formulate laws and policies for agriculture development. These laws aim to protect innovation, support agriculture, and ensure food security.<sup>42</sup> Enforcement of intellectual property rights provides access to international markets for Afghan farmers and companies. If they have innovations and provide products according to international standards, they can expand in the field of food exports. Food security in Afghanistan is achievable through the implementation and protection of IPRs.<sup>43</sup> These rights are fundamental to innovation, quality, and economic stability in agriculture. If the government and relevant agencies prioritize the protection of IPRs, it will be a significant step for Afghanistan's food security and economic development.

A key framework for the defense and upholding of intellectual property rights globally is provided by the International Agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The TRIPS Agreement ensures Afghanistan's protection of IPRs, allowing access to advanced agricultural technologies and patents.<sup>44</sup> It also facilitates integration with international markets, requiring standardized processes for Afghan products. Compliance with international standards, established by the TRIPS Agreement, boosts the quality and competitiveness of Afghanistan's agriculture and production, thereby enhancing its agricultural sector. The government's role in food security in Afghanistan is essential for improving the economy and social situation of this country.<sup>45</sup> The government should strive to improve food security through various policies, programs, and measures. The government should develop comprehensive policies and strategies for food security, including support for agricultural projects, water management, and key measures for agricultural development. This policy should be adapted to the social and economic situation.<sup>46</sup> The government's duties include establishing a financial support system in agriculture and providing farmers with access to loans and other financial instruments. This assistance will be crucial for agricultural production and food security. The government should implement programs and projects for the development of agriculture. This covers the launch

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<sup>41</sup> Donkor & Daliri. The Role of Nanotechnology in Agriculture and Food Security. In *Advanced technologies and societal change* (pp. 149–190). (2024).

<sup>42</sup> Temory. Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Household Income in Herat Afghanistan. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, **12**, 148-166. (2024)

<sup>43</sup> Haugen et al. Food security and intellectual property rights: Finding the linkages. In T. Wong & G. Dutfield (Eds.), *Intellectual Property and Human Development: Current Trends and Future Scenarios* (pp. 103–138). (2010).

<sup>44</sup> Lee. Reconceptualizing the role of intellectual property rights in shaping industry structure. *Vand. L. Rev.*, **72**, 1197. (2019).

<sup>45</sup> Singh et al. Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in India. In *Advances in geographical and environmental sciences* (pp. 199–209). (2024).

<sup>46</sup> Fan et al. Innovation or imitation?: The role of intellectual property rights protections. *Journal of Multinational Financial Management*, **23**(3), 208-234. (2013).

of novel agricultural technologies, crops, and pesticides.<sup>47</sup> Develop training programs for farmers and agronomists to learn about innovations, technical skills, and best agriculture practices. This will increase food production and enhance food security. The government should create effective food distribution and delivery systems to see the needs of individuals facing starvation and food insecurity.<sup>48</sup> The government should promote the marketing of domestic products and create favorable conditions and policies for food exports. This will improve food security by increasing the value of the produce. The government must cooperate with international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other aid institutions, which will help in creating various aids and resources to improve food security.<sup>49</sup> The government of Afghanistan has a significant role to play in improving food security. With strong policies, financial support, training, and initiatives in agriculture, the government can develop the economy and quality of public’s life. Food security is the basic foundation for Afghanistan's stability and development, and the government should make serious efforts in this area.

## 2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research uses academic articles and literature review to analyze the relationship between IPRs and food safety. The study uses a qualitative research design, analyzing data through a descriptive and content analysis and using the Human Rights Framework to understand government role in implementing laws and policies. The Human Rights Framework provides a inclusive analysis of the association between IPR and food security in Afghanistan, focusing on rights to food, equity, justice, government responsibilities, empowerment, and sustainability.

## 3.0 RESULT

While benefiting from the international system of IPRs under certain conditions, developing countries have to form a special system that guarantees the support of farmers' rights and traditional knowledge. In a world where IPRs are problematic to revoke, it is important to protect the weak rights of farmers and traditional knowledge holders. Weak intellectual property rights in Afghanistan and a lack of protection for innovators in the field of biotechnology call for new laws on intellectual property. For the right to food security, expanding support for farmers and balancing intellectual property and the right to food is necessary. Other related topics are highlighted in the tables below.

**Table 1:** Intellectual Property Rights can Enhance Food Security

IPR Mechanism	Potential Benefits for Food Security	Human Rights Considerations	Recommendations
Patents	Encourage innovation and development of new agricultural technologies	Risk of monopolization by patent holders	Grant compulsory licenses for essential technologies*

<sup>47</sup> Al-Mawali. Intellectual Property Rights and Bilateral Intra-Industry Trade Flows: An Intuitive Framework. *Theoretical Economics Letters*, 4, 716-726 (2014).

<sup>48</sup> Yolchi et al. Impact of Floods on Food Security in Rural Afghanistan. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 112, 104-746. (2024).

<sup>49</sup> Owasa and Fall. Food Security in Developing Countries: Factors and Mitigation. *American Journal of Climate Change*, 13, 391-405. (2024)



Trademarks	Protect brands and reputation of agricultural products	Potential for trademark infringement by counterfeiters	Strengthen enforcement of trademark laws
Copyrights	Protect genetic resources and traditional knowledge	Risk of exploitation of ethnic communities	Ensure fair compensation for traditional knowledge holders*
Geographical Indications (GIs)	Promote local and regional agricultural products	Potential for misappropriation of GIs	Implement strong GI protection measures
Plant Variety Rights (PVRs)	Encourage breeding of new and improved crop varieties	Risk of restricting access to essential seeds	Promote the exchange of genetic material between farmers

Table 1 shows that Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) can enhance food security by promoting innovation in agriculture, protecting local products, and safeguarding traditional knowledge, while addressing risks like monopolization and exploitation.

**Table 2:** Challenges and opportunities to food security and the role of IPRs

Challenge	IPR Intersection	Opportunities
Conflict and Instability	Destruction of agricultural infrastructure	IPRs can incentivize the development of conflict-resistant agricultural technologies
Climate Change	Drought, floods, and temperature extremes	IPRs can protect traditional varieties adapted to changing climates
Poverty and Inequality	Limited access to agricultural inputs and resources	IPRs can promote the development of affordable and accessible technologies
Governance and Corruption	Lack of effective policies and institutions	Strong IPR frameworks can enhance governance and transparency
Limited Access to Markets	Difficulty in exporting agricultural products	IPRs can protect Afghan agricultural products from counterfeiting and piracy
Lack of Agricultural Research and Development	Limited innovation in the agricultural sector	IPRs can encourage research and development of new agricultural technologies
Traditional Knowledge	Risk of exploitation of traditional agricultural practices	IPRs can protect traditional knowledge and ensure fair compensation

Table 2 represents that IPRs can address challenges like conflict, climate change, poverty, and limited market access in agriculture by promoting innovation, protecting traditional knowledge, and enhancing governance and transparency.

**Table 3:** Using IPRs to Promote Innovation and Equitable Access in Afghan Agriculture

IPR Mechanism	Strategies to Promote Innovation	Strategies to Ensure Equitable Access
Patents	Grant incentives for research and development	Implement compulsory licensing provisions
Trademarks	Protect brands and reputation of agricultural products	Promote the use of generic trademarks for essential inputs

Copyrights	Protect traditional knowledge and genetic resources	Make sure that the advantages of applying old knowledge are distributed fairly
Geographical Indications	Promote local and regional agricultural products	Support the development of cooperative associations for GI holders
Plant Variety Rights	Encourage breeding of new and improved crop varieties	Promote the exchange of genetic material between farmers

Table 3 displays that IPRs in Afghan agriculture can foster innovation through patents, trademarks, and copyrights, while ensuring equitable access by implementing licensing provisions, promoting cooperatives, and supporting the exchange of genetic materials.

**Table 4:** Human Rights Implications of IPRs and Food Security

Human Rights	Potential IPR-Related Implications	Addressing the Implications
Right to Food	IPRs can restrict access to essential agricultural inputs and technologies	Implement compulsory licensing provisions for essential technologies
Right to Health	IPRs can limit access to essential medicines derived from agricultural products	Promote the development of affordable generic alternatives
Right to Property	IPRs can protect breeders and the rights of farmers to their innovations	Ensure that IPRs do not disproportionately benefit large corporations
Right to Cultural Heritage	IPRs can protect genetic resources and traditional knowledge	Respect the rights of local communities to their cultural heritage
Right to Development	IPRs can hinder the development of the agricultural sector	Balance IPRs with public interest considerations

Table 4 illustrates that IPRs impact human rights like access to food, health, and cultural heritage, necessitating measures such as compulsory licensing, protection of traditional knowledge, and balancing corporate and public interests.

**Table 5:** Policy Recommendation for Enhancing Food Security through IPRs in Afghanistan

Policy Area	Recommendations
IPR Legislation	Strengthen IPR laws and regulations to support agricultural innovation
IPR Enforcement	Establish effective IPR enforcement mechanisms
Public-Private Partnerships	Foster collaboration between government, research institutions, and private sector
Technology Transfer	Facilitate the transfer of appropriate technologies to Afghan farmers
Access to Finance	Provide financial support for agricultural innovation and development
Capacity Building	Develop the capacity of Afghan farmers, entrepreneurs, and government officials in IPR matters
International Cooperation	Collaborate with other countries and organizations to promote food security through IPRs
Human Rights	Respect human rights in the implementation of IPR policies
Traditional Knowledge	Protect traditional knowledge and ensure fair compensation for its use
Gender Equality	Promote gender equality in the agricultural sector and ensure that women have equal access to IPRs



Table 5 indicates that Policy recommendations for enhancing food security through IPRs in Afghanistan focus on strengthening legislation, enforcement, technology transfer, financial support, capacity building, and ensuring human rights, gender equality, and protection of traditional knowledge.

#### **4.0 DISCUSSION**

Food security and the intersection of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) represents a intricate landscape where innovation, human rights, and agricultural development converge. The tables provided outline various IPR mechanisms and their implications for food security, highlighting both their potential benefits and associated challenges. The potential for IPRs, such as patents and plant variety rights, to drive agricultural innovation cannot be overstated. By encouraging the development of new technologies and improved crop varieties, IPRs can significantly enhance food production and resilience, particularly in regions like Afghanistan, where agricultural challenges are pronounced. However, the risk of monopolization by patent holders poses a significant barrier. Implementing compulsory licenses for essential technologies could mitigate this risk, ensuring that innovations remain accessible to those who need them most. The human rights implications of IPRs are critical to consider. As highlighted in Table 4, the right to health and the right to food can be jeopardized by restrictive IPR frameworks that limit access to essential agricultural inputs and medicines. Addressing these concerns requires a careful balance between protecting innovators and ensuring that the needs of the population are met. The recommendation to promote affordable generic alternatives and to implement compulsory licensing provisions is essential in this regard. The challenges outlined in Table 2 emphasize the multifaceted nature of food security issues. Conflict and climate change, for instance, create urgent needs for resilient agricultural practices. IPRs can play a role in incentivizing the improvement of technologies that withstand such adversities. Additionally, the intersection of poverty and limited access to agricultural resources can be addressed through the equitable dissemination of innovations, ensuring that smallholder farmers benefit from technological advancements. Traditional knowledge and genetic resources are invaluable assets that face the risk of exploitation. The tables underscore the importance of protecting these assets through appropriate IPR mechanisms. Ensuring fair compensation for traditional knowledge holders not only respects cultural heritage but also fosters sustainable agricultural practices. The policy recommendations in Table 5 provide a roadmap for enhancing food security through IPRs in Afghanistan. Strengthening IPR legislation and enforcement mechanisms is crucial to creating an environment conducive to innovation. Furthermore, fostering public-private partnerships can enhance collaboration and resource sharing, leading to more effective agricultural solutions. Capacity building for farmers and government officials in IPR matters is equally important, confirming that stakeholders are prepared to navigate the complications of IPRs. In conclusion, while IPRs hold significant promise for enhancing food security, careful consideration must be given to their implementation. Balancing innovation with human rights, protecting traditional knowledge, and addressing the unique challenges faced by agricultural sectors in developing countries are paramount.

By adopting a holistic approach that integrates these considerations, stakeholders can work towards a more secure and equitable food future.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

The tables highlight how Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) can enhance food security, especially in Afghanistan. Key IPR mechanisms such as patents, trademarks, copyrights, geographical indications (GIs), and plant variety rights (PVRs) can promote innovation in agriculture, protect local products, and safeguard traditional knowledge. However, there are concerns about monopolization, exploitation of indigenous knowledge, and restricted access to seeds and technologies. To address these issues, recommendations include granting compulsory licenses, strengthening trademark enforcement, ensuring fair compensation for traditional knowledge, and promoting equitable access to innovations. Policy recommendations emphasize stronger IPR legislation, public-private partnerships, technology transfer, capacity building, and ensuring human rights and gender equality in the agricultural sector. I propose several recommendations for Afghanistan's agricultural sector, including strengthening intellectual property rights, implementing compulsory licenses for necessary technologies, protecting local products, protecting trademarks and brands, respecting human rights, facilitating technology transfer, providing financial support for agricultural initiatives, and ensuring equal access to the agricultural sector for women. These recommendations aim to reduce restrictions on food access, protect local products, and promote cultural heritage and traditional knowledge. Future research should focus on protecting Afghanistan's traditional agricultural knowledge and innovations through intellectual property rights and strengthening the legal framework in this area.

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## Political Cartelization and the Empty Ballot Box Phenomenon in Regional Elections

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**Article history:** Received: 17 October 2024, Accepted: 12 November 2024  
Published: 13 November 2024

**Abstract:** The phenomenon of "empty box" ballots in Indonesia's regional head elections (Pilkada) reflects public dissatisfaction with single candidates endorsed by political party coalitions. This highlights challenges within the local democratic system, which may hinder political participation and contribute to social instability.

**Purpose:** This research aims to understand how the phenomenon of "empty box" ballots reflects the practice of political cartelization in Indonesia, as well as to explore the factors contributing to the emergence of single candidates and large coalitions in elections.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The methodology employed in this research includes a qualitative analysis of national and local political dynamics, as well as an observation of voter behavior in the context of regional elections (Pilkada). The study also examines the implications of the "empty box" phenomenon for democratization and political representation at the regional level.

**Findings:** The research findings indicate that the "empty box" phenomenon is not merely a matter of failed elections but also reflects a crisis of public trust in political institutions. Deep dissatisfaction with the available candidates has the potential to trigger radicalization and protest movements. Furthermore, the dominance of major political parties in candidate nomination disregards local

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aspirations, creating conditions where the nominated candidates fail to reflect the diversity of the community.

**Originality/value:** This research offers new insights into the relationship between the "empty box" phenomenon and political cartelization practices in Indonesia, emphasizing the need for electoral system reforms to create a more inclusive space for public participation. By enhancing political awareness and strengthening smaller political parties, it is hoped that public dissatisfaction can be reduced, and the legitimacy of the political system can be improved.

**Keywords:** Empty box; Pilkada; Democracy; Political cartelization

**Paper Type:** Article-Research

## **Introduction**

The phenomenon of the "empty box" in Indonesia's regional head elections (Pilkada) has garnered increasing attention in recent years. The term "empty box" does not refer to an actual empty ballot box, but rather to an option on the ballot that allows voters to reject the sole candidate pair running in the election (Indarto and Fikri 2022). The existence of the empty box was introduced as a solution regulated by the Constitutional Court (MK) for situations where only one candidate pair registers and no other candidates emerge after the registration is reopened. Since its introduction in the 2015 Pilkada, this trend has continued to rise, reflecting the complex dynamics of local politics and the presence of dominant forces in the nomination process (www.bbc.com 2024).

The origin of the "empty box" can be traced to a Constitutional Court (MK) ruling addressing an impasse in the electoral system. In situations where only one candidate pair registers, the MK ruled that elections should not be canceled outright. To ensure the continuity of the democratic process, the "empty box" option was provided on the ballot as an alternative for voters who do not wish to support the sole candidate. This allows the election to proceed even if only one candidate participates. According to data from Perludem (Perkumpulan untuk Pemilu dan Demokrasi), the number of elections featuring

the empty box increased from three cases in 2015 to 25 cases in the 2020 Pilkada, indicating that this phenomenon is becoming more prevalent in local Indonesian politics (Ratnaningsih 2024).

The emergence of the "empty box" phenomenon is often the result of large coalitions formed by political parties at the regional level (www.bbc.com 2024). When the majority of political parties decide to unite and support a single candidate pair, the remaining smaller parties are often unable to nominate their own candidates because they do not meet the nomination threshold. Other factors contributing to the rise of the empty box include cartel politics, where parties or potential candidates choose not to run, perceiving the dominant candidate as already certain to win. The high political costs and the low likelihood of victory serve as disincentives for smaller parties or independent candidates to compete, further reinforcing the empty box trend.

Despite the Constitutional Court's recent ruling, Decision No. 60/PUU-XXII/2024, which lowered the nomination threshold for regional head elections (Fikri 2024a), the "empty box" phenomenon remains widespread. This reduction in the threshold was expected to facilitate political parties in independently nominating candidates without relying on large coalitions (Fikri 2024a). However, in practice, political parties appear not to have fully utilized this policy to empower their cadres, resulting in the continued prevalence of the "empty box" trend. This reflects the challenges political parties face in organizing nominations and competition at the local level.

The consequences of an "empty box" victory carry significant implications for regional governance. In cases where the "empty box" option secures more than 50% of the valid votes, the regional election must be rescheduled for the next electoral cycle (Mutiarasari 2024; Junaidi 2023; Hirmawan 2022). During this interim period, regions without a definitive head of government are administered by an interim official (Pj) (Yantomi 2022). While the primary purpose of appointing an interim official is to maintain the continuity of governance, there are concerns regarding the potentially extended tenure of such officials, which can last up to five years if a re-election is not conducted in a timely manner. This raises significant questions about the legitimacy and

effectiveness of long-term regional leadership under interim officials. A particularly notable case of an "empty box" victory occurred during the 2018 mayoral election in Makassar (Harianto, Darmawan, and Muradi 2020). In this instance, the sole candidate pair, Munafri Arifuddin and Andi Rachmatika Dewi, failed to win the election after their opponents were disqualified by the Supreme Court. Consequently, the "empty box" option garnered the majority of votes, resulting in the appointment of an interim official to govern the city until the re-election in 2020 (Harianto, Darmawan, and Muradi 2020). This case serves as a critical precedent in understanding the legal and political ramifications of the "empty box" phenomenon.

The "empty box" phenomenon highlights significant challenges within local democracy in Indonesia. While this option is intended to preserve public participation and democratic processes, there is a risk that the "empty box" reflects unhealthy political practices, such as oversized coalitions and political cartels. On the other hand, the "empty box" provides a platform for the public to express dissatisfaction with the single candidate backed by a coalition of political parties. Therefore, it is crucial for political parties to make more serious efforts in strengthening cadre development and fostering healthier competition in regional elections. Only through these efforts can the "empty box" become part of a more transparent and accountable democratic system.

This study aims to understand how the "empty box" phenomenon in regional elections reflects political cartelization practices in Indonesia. By exploring the factors that lead to the formation of oversized coalitions and single candidates, as well as analyzing the connections between national and local political dynamics, this research seeks to provide insights into the implications of this phenomenon on democratization and political representation at the regional level. Through this investigation, the study aims to contribute to the development of strategies that promote healthier and more democratic political competition at the local level.

### **Methods**

The methodology employed in this research includes qualitative analysis of national and local political dynamics, as

well as observations of voter behavior in the context of Pilkada. This study also examines the implications of the "empty box" phenomenon for democratization and political representation at the regional level.

### **Discussion and Findings**

#### **The "Empty Box" Phenomenon in Regional Elections: A Reflection of Political Cartelization Practices in Indonesia**

The existence of the "empty box" reflects the dilemma of local democracy in Indonesia, where candidate options are often limited by dominant political forces. This phenomenon first emerged in the 2015 regional elections after the MK ruled that in situations where only one candidate pair is registered, the election should not be canceled. To ensure the continuity of the democratic process, the MK mandated that ballots in regional elections include the "empty box" as an alternative for voters who do not wish to support the sole candidate pair. This measure was taken to guarantee the availability of an option for voters, even though the expected political competition has not materialized ideally. In a broader context, the "empty box" reflects the failure of the local political system to present a healthy and competitive political pluralism (Fikri 2024b).

According to data from Perludem, the number of regional elections featuring the "empty box" option has steadily increased from three cases in 2015 to 25 cases in the 2020 elections (Ratnaningsih 2024). This trend indicates that the phenomenon is not merely a temporary occurrence but rather a widespread symptom within local politics in Indonesia (Putranti 2021). This increase is closely linked to several factors, particularly those related to political dynamics at the local level, including the formation of large political party coalitions, the dominance of local political power, and the high political costs associated with participating in regional elections (Yunus 2018). One of the primary causes of the "empty box" phenomenon is the practice of political cartelization occurring at the local level. Political cartelization refers to the collusion among political parties to form large coalitions that support a single candidate pair, thereby complicating the ability of smaller parties or independent

candidates to compete. When the majority of political parties in a region form coalitions, smaller parties often lack the necessary resources or support to field their own candidates. Consequently, only one candidate pair emerges, leaving the public with a severely limited choice: either to support the sole candidate or to opt for the "empty box" (Zulfiqar 2019). This practice of cartelization introduces several problems into the local democratic process (Ammelia and Kosandi 2020). First, cartelization undermines healthy political competition. Democracy should provide a space for diverse entities to compete fairly, offering a range of choices to the public. However, when political cartels form, competition becomes imbalanced. The coalition parties tend to monopolize the nomination process, reducing the likelihood of alternative candidates emerging for voters. This not only poses representation issues but also constrains the dynamics of local democracy. Second, cartelization escalates political costs. To participate in regional elections, candidates must possess substantial resources, both financial and political. Large political coalitions typically demand significant material support from the candidates they endorse, resulting in high nomination costs. Smaller parties or independent candidates lacking such resources become reluctant to participate, given their slim chances of winning. These high political costs represent a substantial barrier to the democratization process at the local level.

In a broader context, the "empty box" phenomenon reflects fundamental issues within the local political system in Indonesia, where political power tends to be concentrated among certain groups with significant influence (Panjaitan and Hulu 2021). When the majority of political parties in a region unite to support a single candidate pair, this reflects an oligarchic political structure, wherein access to power is restricted to a handful of political elites (Hannan and Munari Kustanto 2024). This situation contradicts the principles of democracy, which should provide equal opportunities for all parties to participate. The reduction of the nomination threshold as stipulated in Constitutional Court Decision No. 60/PUU-XXII/2024 aims to address this issue. By lowering the threshold, it is hoped that political parties can more easily field candidates without the need to form large coalitions.

However, in reality, political parties remain reluctant to leverage this policy to empower their cadres. The prevalence of the "empty box" option remains high, as political parties tend to prefer securing victories through large coalitions rather than facilitating more open competition.

The phenomenon of the "empty box" generates debate regarding the quality of democracy in Indonesia. On one hand, the empty box option provides a choice for the public who are dissatisfied with the sole candidate presented by political party coalitions (Lestari 2019). This can be viewed as an important form of political participation, where citizens can actively reject candidates they deem unworthy. However, on the other hand, the high number of local elections featuring empty boxes indicates a crisis within the political nomination system at the local level. The dominance of political party coalitions in the nomination process reduces options for voters, leading to dissatisfaction that is ultimately expressed through the empty box. To address this issue, more serious efforts are needed from political parties to strengthen cadre development and create healthier competition in local elections. Political parties must take a more active role in nurturing potential candidates who can compete independently without relying on large coalitions. Strong cadre development can ensure that more options are available for voters in local elections, so that the empty box no longer becomes the primary solution for dissatisfied citizens with the sole candidate. Additionally, reforms in the local election nomination system are necessary to prevent the occurrence of political cartel practices. One measure that can be taken is to strengthen regulations concerning coalition formation and nomination thresholds, thereby making it more difficult for political parties to easily form large coalitions that obstruct competition. Simultaneously, efforts must also be made to lower political costs, allowing smaller parties and independent candidates greater opportunities to participate in Pilkada.

#### **Factors Contributing to the Formation of Large Coalitions and Single Candidates in Pilkada**

The phenomenon of large coalitions and single candidates in local elections (Pilkada) in Indonesia reflects the complex dynamics of politics that involve the interaction between party

strength, community aspirations, and the underlying social structure (Mara 2018). It is essential to explore the various factors that contribute to the formation of large coalitions and the presence of single candidates, as well as the implications they have for the democratic system at the local level. Democracy often becomes trapped in a dualism between power and the aspirations of the people. Large coalitions typically emerge from the need to maintain power, where major parties congregate to eliminate the risk of losing votes (Rishan 2020). In an effort to achieve political dominance, these parties collaborate to create a strong candidate pair, which is expected to secure victory. This process can be interpreted as a form of power consolidation, where a shared goal fosters a collective aspiration, even at the expense of the diverse aspirations that should be an integral part of democracy.

This large coalition creates a situation where smaller parties, which possess different ideas and visions, are marginalized. They are confronted with the reality that their voices go unheard, and in many cases, these smaller parties struggle to advance as candidates. In many respects, they lack sufficient resources to compete with the larger parties, which possess financial strength, networks, and support from various societal elements (Ahmat Sholihin and Heri Kurnia 2022). With high nomination thresholds, they often choose not to participate, believing they have little chance of winning.

Cartel political practices also serve as a major driver behind the formation of large coalitions, wherein political cartels refer to agreements among major parties to mutually support each other in elections, resulting in a single candidate deemed most competitive. In this context, political agreements blur ideological boundaries and produce candidates that are more products of political consensus than representations of diverse voices within society. When large parties opt to collaborate, they create an atmosphere in which the willingness to offer alternatives diminishes. Consequently, the single candidate emerges as a symbol of dominance, and the existence of limited choices generates dissatisfaction among voters (Yunus 2018). The process of forming large coalitions and single candidates is also influenced by practical considerations regarding political costs. Gaining votes

in elections requires significant investment in terms of time and financial resources. Smaller parties are often hindered by their inability to bear the costs necessary to campaign for their candidates. In contrast, larger parties find it easier to shoulder these expenses and mobilize the resources needed to achieve victory. As a result, smaller parties become alienated, and opportunities to advocate for their ideas continue to shrink.

Furthermore, it is essential to consider the social and cultural dimensions influencing large coalitions and single candidates. Society often prefers to vote for a single candidate rather than having multiple options that could potentially split the vote. This phenomenon reflects a pragmatic viewpoint among the public, where they are more inclined to support a candidate perceived to have a higher chance of winning. In other words, in situations where voters are faced with a single candidate, they tend to go with the flow, abandoning the courage to choose alternative options. This creates a cycle in which the single candidate is further reinforced, while the diversity of voices is neglected. However, despite the strategic appeal of large coalitions and single candidates, the long-term implications of this phenomenon are detrimental to the health of democracy. With a single candidate, voters are trapped in a limited choice, creating the risk that the public will feel increasingly unrepresented. The phenomenon of empty boxes that arises in local elections illustrates the dissatisfaction of the public with the existing system, where they feel they have no viable options. In this context, the empty box becomes not only a symbol of protest but also a reflection of the failure of the political system to create a climate of healthy competition. Based on observations of various local elections, it is evident that this situation exacerbates public trust in the political process. When voters feel that their choices are extremely limited, especially when there is only one candidate, feelings of apathy and distrust toward political institutions emerge. In the long run, this phenomenon can lead to a decline in voter participation, as the public feels their voices no longer matter. Such dissatisfaction may culminate in social disintegration, where people feel alienated from the political

process and increasingly distanced from the very goals of democracy itself.

It is important to remember that the phenomenon of large coalitions and single candidates is not merely a result of political party actions but also reflects broader social conditions. Public dissatisfaction with existing leaders and the powerlessness of smaller parties create an environment where large coalitions can easily thrive. In this context, society needs to be given space to participate in a broader political process, ensuring that their aspirations are effectively represented. Despite the complex challenges, there are opportunities to improve this situation. Reforms in the political system, including lowering the thresholds for candidacy and strengthening smaller parties, can create avenues for alternatives to emerge in elections. Larger parties must recognize their responsibility to foster an inclusive political climate where the voices of various societal elements can be heard and valued. Only by creating a more open and transparent political atmosphere can we avoid being trapped in a cycle of large coalitions that limit public choice. Large coalitions and single candidates in local elections in Indonesia reflect profound challenges within the democratic system. Various factors, including power consolidation, political costs, and voter culture, contribute to the emergence of this phenomenon. While large coalitions may be seen as efforts to ensure victory, it is crucial not to overlook that diversity of voices and fair representation are key elements of a healthy democracy. If we continue to allow large coalitions and single candidates to dominate the political arena, we risk losing the essence of democracy itself, where every voice should be valued, and every aspiration deserves to be pursued. Thus, collective efforts are required to improve this situation and create a more just and inclusive political system, where every citizen has the opportunity to participate and cast their vote in determining our shared future.

### **The Interconnection between National Political Dynamics and the Emergence of the Empty Box Phenomenon at the Local Level**

The national and local political dynamics in the context of elections in Indonesia are often inseparable. The relationship between the existence of large coalitions at the central level and

the empty box phenomenon at the local level reflects how this complex political structure shapes the interaction between societal aspirations and existing power (Romli 2018). To understand this relationship more deeply, it is essential to explore the various layers surrounding the political process in Indonesia, from the national to the local level, as well as the implications it has for democracy and political participation. On one hand, the presence of large coalitions at the central level is often viewed as a political strategy aimed at creating stability and securing power (Rishan 2020). These coalitions are formed in response to the need for broad support, particularly in the context of increasingly fierce competition in the political arena. The parties within these coalitions tend to prioritize pragmatic interests over ideology, resulting in the voices of the people often being overlooked, and political decisions being based more on calculations of power and influence than on the genuine aspirations of society (Prihatmono and Nugroho 2021). This dynamic extends to the local level, where local elections become arenas of power struggles that reflect broader interests. The empty box phenomenon, wherein voters lack adequate choices, leading to the absence of suitable candidates (Nurhalimah 2019), is often a direct consequence of the influence of large coalitions at the central level. When large parties unite in a coalition, they frequently disregard the voices of smaller parties that should represent various segments of society. Consequently, in many local elections, voters are confronted with extremely limited options, often resulting in a single candidate or even situations where no candidates are available at all.

On the other hand, large coalitions also create a deeper impact on smaller and independent parties at the local level. When large parties dominate the political arena, smaller parties are often forced to either form coalitions or become marginalized. In many cases, they feel compelled to support candidates from large parties to ensure their political survival. This creates a situation in which available choices become homogenized, and the potential diversity of voices within society is buried beneath the pragmatic interests of the large parties. Consequently, the public faces increasingly narrow choices, where their aspirations are poorly represented, and only candidates aligning with the coalition's

broad outlines can advance. It is crucial to understand that the empty box phenomenon is not merely a result of the absence of candidates but also a manifestation of public dissatisfaction with the existing political system. When voters perceive that there are no suitable choices, they begin to feel that their voices are undervalued. This dissatisfaction can lead to apathy, where the public is reluctant to participate in the electoral process because they believe that the outcomes have already been predetermined by non-transparent political dynamics. In this context, the empty box becomes a symbol of the community's powerlessness in determining their own fate, reflecting the failure of the political system to create space for diverse voices and aspirations (Romli 2018).

This phenomenon can be viewed from the perspective of the relationship between power and legitimacy. When the public is confronted with candidates deemed unrepresentative, the legitimacy of power gained through elections becomes questionable (Rumesten RS 2016). As a result, voters feel that the candidates put forward by large coalitions do not reflect their needs and aspirations. This creates a gap between leaders and the community, where leaders are perceived as figures detached from the realities of everyday life. Consequently, political legitimacy becomes increasingly fragile, and public trust in political institutions declines.

At the local level, the phenomenon of the empty box illustrates how local politics cannot be separated from the context of national politics. When large coalitions at the central level decide to support specific candidates in regions, these decisions are often based on broader political considerations. Such decisions frequently overlook local dynamics, and the aspirations of the local community are often neglected. This creates an imbalance between national and local political interests, where the needs of the community are not represented in the political decision-making process. This interconnection can also be observed in the context of the influence of political elites who play a role in determining candidates. Political elites at the central level play a crucial role in determining candidates who are put forward at the local level. They often utilize their networks to control the

nomination process, disregarding small parties and independent candidates who may be more representative of the community. In this context, the voices of the public are again marginalized, and the political process becomes centered around elite interests.

In facing these political dynamics, it is crucial to consider efforts to create a more inclusive and representative political system. Political reforms, including lowering nomination thresholds, strengthening small parties, and enhancing transparency in the political process, can open up space for the emergence of more diverse alternatives. The community needs to be given the opportunity to participate in the political process, ensuring that their aspirations are effectively represented. Only by fostering a more open political atmosphere can we avoid getting trapped in a cycle of dissatisfaction and apathy that leads to the phenomenon of the empty box. It is important to understand that political dynamics are an evolving process, and the challenges faced cannot be addressed instantly. A collective commitment from all stakeholders is required to bring about positive change. Large coalitions at the central level must recognize their responsibility to listen to voices from the regions and create space for small parties to participate. In this context, a new paradigm in politics is necessary, one where the diversity of voices and aspirations of the community is valued as an integral part of the democratic system. The interconnection between national political dynamics and the phenomenon of the empty box at the local level reflects the complexity of the interaction between power, community aspirations, and the existing political structure. Large coalitions at the central level often contribute to the limited choices available at the local level, creating a situation where the voices of the community are marginalized. To create a healthier political system, collective efforts are needed to improve these conditions and provide space for diverse voices. Only then can we ensure that every individual has the opportunity to participate in shaping their political future, upholding the democratic values that should serve as the foundation of every electoral process.

### **The Impact of the Empty Box Phenomenon on Democratization and Political Representation at the Local Level**

At its most fundamental level, the empty box phenomenon highlights a gap between voters and the candidates available. When the community fails to find candidates deemed suitable, qualified, and representative of their interests, it fosters a sense of despair and disappointment with the political process. The empty box serves as a reflection of deep dissatisfaction with the existing political elite (Tanjung and Saraswati 2020). This disappointment can be systemic, where the public perceives that all available candidates are merely representatives of specific interest groups, rather than true representations of the people's voice. Consequently, this can lead to low voter participation rates, with many individuals opting not to vote at all, thereby diminishing the legitimacy of the democratic process.

From a democratization perspective, the empty box phenomenon has the potential to hinder the development of democracy itself (Tanjung and Saraswati 2020; Rumesten RS 2016; Romli 2018). A healthy and functioning democracy requires active participation from the community. When the available choices do not reflect the diversity of opinions and aspirations within society, participation is likely to decline. The empty box serves as a reminder that democracy is not only about voting but also about providing meaningful choices. A community that feels unrepresented may become apathetic and skeptical toward political institutions, thereby diminishing their trust in the system. This is a perilous condition for the health of democracy, as the legitimacy of the government is threatened without trust and participation.

Furthermore, the empty box phenomenon can have implications for political representation at the local level (Mamonto and Setiyono 2021). Effective representation requires channels for the aspirations of the community to be translated into concrete public policies. When voters are faced with an empty box, they lack the means to express their needs and hopes. This creates a situation where their voices are ignored, and in the long term, it can lead to the marginalization of certain groups that are unrepresented in the political process. Ultimately, the empty box

phenomenon reinforces the existing dominance of political elites, as they are able to maintain power without adequately addressing the needs of the community.

As a result of the dissatisfaction generated by the empty box phenomenon, there emerges the potential for radicalization or broader protest movements. When communities feel that their voices are not being heard, they may seek alternative means to express their discontent, whether through social actions, demonstrations, or even in the form of alternative political movements. This indicates that the empty box is not merely a failure of the electoral process but has the potential to create political and social instability. When communities are compelled to take action outside the existing formal channels, this can weaken the political institutions that are supposed to represent the people. The empty box phenomenon can also be viewed as a reflection of the challenges faced by political parties and the electoral system in Indonesia. In many cases, large political parties tend to dominate the electoral arena, sidelining smaller parties and independent candidates. When large coalitions at the national level dominate the nomination process, they often neglect local aspirations, creating conditions in which the candidates put forward do not reflect the diversity and complexity of the local community. Consequently, the empty box phenomenon serves as a warning sign that if the political system fails to provide space for diverse voices, the legitimacy and sustainability of the system itself will be threatened (Tanjung and Saraswati 2020). Considering that the democratization process is heavily influenced by social and cultural contexts, the empty box phenomenon also reflects the realities of everyday life for the community. The dissatisfaction that arises is not solely rooted in politics but also stems from the economic, social, and cultural conditions that underlie it. When communities feel marginalized in the political process, this is often related to social injustices and dissatisfaction with existing public policies. Therefore, addressing the empty box phenomenon requires a holistic and inclusive approach, where community voices are heard and considered in political decision-making. Changing the perspective on politics and elections is also key to understanding the impact of the empty

box phenomenon. A healthy democracy should provide space for the community to explore various options and produce candidates that reflect the existing diversity. To achieve this, political parties need to be more responsive to the needs of the community and open channels for diverse aspirations. Additionally, electoral reforms that prioritize principles of fairness and inclusion need to be implemented so that the candidates produced are more representative and have stronger legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

From a philosophical perspective, the phenomenon of the empty box can be viewed as a reflection of a crisis of trust in political institutions. When communities do not feel represented, they lose faith in the system's capacity to meet their needs. This creates a negative cycle in which dissatisfaction breeds apathy, which in turn reduces political participation and legitimacy (Hannan 2023). To break this cycle, a genuine effort is required to rebuild trust and provide space for communities to actively participate in the political process.

The importance of political education and public awareness in addressing the phenomenon of the empty box cannot be overlooked. Communities need to be encouraged to better understand the political process, identify viable candidates, and engage in elections in a more proactive manner. By enhancing political awareness, it is hoped that communities can become active agents of change, participate in the electoral process, and advocate for more representative candidates. In this context, the phenomenon of the empty box can be seen as a call to awaken the collective awareness of society regarding the significance of their role in determining the political direction of their regions. The empty box phenomenon has a significant impact on the process of democratization and political representation at the local level (Ishak 2020). This phenomenon reflects public dissatisfaction with the available choices, hampers participation, and reinforces the dominance of existing political elites. As a symbol of the failure of the political system to provide adequate representation, the empty box serves as a reminder of the importance of creating inclusive spaces for all voices and aspirations of the community. With the right reforms and increased political awareness among the

populace, we can hope to improve this situation and ensure that every individual has the opportunity to contribute to a healthier and more sustainable democratic process.

### **Conclusion**

The phenomenon of the empty box in Pilkada in Indonesia serves as an indicator of public dissatisfaction with the existing political system. This phenomenon arises when voters choose not to cast their ballots for the available candidates, often as a form of protest against leaders and political parties that are perceived to not represent their aspirations. The existence of the empty box, as regulated by the Constitutional Court, provides an opportunity for the public to express their dissatisfaction when only one pair of candidates is running. The empty box phenomenon reflects significant challenges in local democracy, where the dominance of large coalitions often overlooks the voices and aspirations of local communities. This creates a situation where the candidates presented do not represent the diversity and complexity of the local populace. This dissatisfaction is rooted not only in unhealthy political practices but also in the underlying social, economic, and cultural conditions. When communities feel alienated from the political process, they risk becoming trapped in a cycle of dissatisfaction and apathy, which may lead to radicalization or broader protest movements. To address the empty box phenomenon, reforms in the political system are needed to create space for smaller parties and independent candidates. The public needs to be encouraged to enhance their political awareness and actively participate in the electoral process. By fostering a more open and inclusive political environment, it is hoped that dissatisfaction can be reduced and the legitimacy of the political system can be improved. The empty box phenomenon is not merely a sign of a failed election, but also a reflection of a crisis of trust in political institutions. Therefore, it is crucial to rebuild public trust and ensure that every individual has the opportunity to contribute to a healthier and more sustainable democratic process. Thus, the empty box phenomenon can serve as a call for positive change within the Indonesian political system.

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*Political Cartelization and the Empty Ballot Box  
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## ***Legal Responsibilities' of Water Purification Companies in Afghanistan its impact on Climate Change***

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### ***ABSTRACT***

*The article aimed the rise of water purification companies in Afghanistan, which use chemical-based methods to purify natural water sources. These companies distribute purified water to the local community, reducing the need for deep well excavation in residential and governmental areas. This practice is crucial for health promotion and ensuring safe and reliable water resource utilization, ultimately safeguarding the well-being of individuals. The research methodology employed in this study is characterized as a field-based descriptive research approach. To analyze the collected data, a questionnaire was administered to gather the perspectives of two distinct groups: university professors and health workers. Subsequently, the comments provided by these individuals were subjected to thorough analysis. The research findings indicate that when these companies operate in remote areas encompassing rivers and water bodies, particularly by implementing surface water purification measures, the preservation of underground water sources can be achieved. Furthermore, this approach leads to a reduction in human expenses related to water management. Consequently, these companies can fulfill their responsibilities to both individuals and the government in a manner that promotes public health, while also contributing to climate-conscious water conservation efforts. Afghanistan's water purification companies are tackling issues like contaminated drinking water, health concerns, water scarcity, and climate change by promoting clean water, responsible usage, and sustainable resource use. Companies should adhere to water purification regulations, collaborate with government for sustainable management, implement conservation measures, reduce environmental impact, increase public awareness, invest in research, and improve operations.*

***Keywords:*** *Chemical-based approaches, Health promotion, Safe utilization of water resources, Surface water purification, Water purification companies*

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**For Citation:**

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**Shahmahmood Ehsas & Imranullah Akhtar, 'Legal Responsibilities' of Water Purification Companies in Afghanistan its impact on Climate Change', (2024) Special Issue on SDGs, JSS Journal for Legal Studies and Research, 164-177, <https://www.jsslawcollege.in/jsslc-online-journal/>**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

In Afghanistan, the prevalent practice of utilizing contaminated drinking water from wells and substandard reservoirs has resulted in the emergence of numerous societal health issues and ailments. However, with the advent and integration of industrial and technological machinery within the country, certain individuals have embarked upon activities that are regarded as forms of social and public service. These activities not only hold economic significance for these individuals but have also gained substantial traction in Afghanistan due to the evolving political, economic, and social relations between Afghanistan and other countries worldwide. Consequently, this concept has witnessed significant growth and continues to flourish within Afghanistan. The rapid pace at which this process is unfolding has led to a considerable number of individuals engaging in these water purification companies throughout the country, actively pursuing their endeavors. The central focus of this discussion and article pertains to the legal obligations incumbent upon these companies with regard to individuals, society, and the climate in Afghanistan. These legal responsibilities necessitate the provision of clean water to individuals within the society, thereby prompting the adoption of necessary measures for water conservation and storage. Concurrently, these companies' activities have engendered noteworthy climate-related changes, curbing the unnecessary consumption of water while promoting the utilization of clean water within the prevailing climate conditions. Consequently, the Afghan environment has witnessed improvements characterized by cleanliness and orderliness. Another noteworthy aspect is the populace's protection against the use of impure water, wherein water sources are judiciously employed, and purification involving chemical substances such as sodium, potassium, and other agents is undertaken to ensure the delivery of quality water services to citizens. These companies bear the responsibility of diligently attending to their obligations, thereby fulfilling their legal duties within society while simultaneously upholding their climate-related responsibilities. In times of water scarcity, they store a substantial quantity of water, which is subsequently utilized by individuals across households, hotels, shops, markets, stores, offices, and other settings, thereby significantly contributing to the mitigation of water scarcity concerns within the climate.

### ***1.0 Water Purification Companies***

Water purification companies in Afghanistan have legal obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill the right to water, as derived from national legal orders and international human rights treaties. These obligations are separate from the responsibility of state governments and should not undermine state obligations to observe the human right to water. Corporations can play a role in the realization of the right to water by ensuring access to clean and safe water, avoiding activities that deny access to water or increase water prices without warning. The responsibility of corporations can be based on national law, international human rights treaties, and corporate codes of conduct<sup>3</sup>. Water purification companies in Afghanistan have legal obligations to ensure that their activities do not contribute to climate change. The Principles on Climate Obligations of Enterprises provide a set of legal principles that articulate clear obligations for enterprises to address climate change<sup>4</sup>. Climate change in Afghanistan has adverse effects on water resources, agriculture, forests, and the environmental landscape, making it crucial for water purification companies to mitigate these impacts<sup>5</sup>. The outdated water treaties in Afghanistan need to be renegotiated to reflect changing international water law and establish scientific understandings in light of climate change<sup>6</sup>. New water law in Afghanistan has been developed to address sustainable water use, but treaty negotiations are yet to begin due to past failures and water constraints<sup>7</sup>. It is important for water purification companies to comply with these legal frameworks to ensure environmental sustainability and avoid conflicts related to water resources<sup>8</sup>. Water purification companies in Afghanistan can reduce their carbon footprint and contribute to climate change mitigation through several methods. Firstly, conducting a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) can help quantify the environmental impacts of water treatment plants and identify areas for improvement<sup>9</sup>. This assessment can highlight the stages of the life cycle that contribute the most to carbon emissions, such as the construction stage<sup>10</sup>. Secondly, implementing renewable energy sources, such as solar energy, can reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and decrease

<sup>3</sup> Akhtar, I. (2024). The Significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan. *Nangarhar University International Journal of Biosciences*, 3(02), 456–459.

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin, L. (2021). Principles on Climate Obligations of Enterprises by the Expert Group on Global Climate Change (2nd edn). *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law*, 40, 397 - 402.

<sup>5</sup> Mehrad, A.T. (2020). Assessment of climate change impacts on environmental sustainability in Afghanistan. *E3S Web of Conferences*.

<sup>6</sup> Shroder, J. F. (2014). Afghanistan Water and Climate Change. *Natural Resources in Afghanistan*, 504–522.

<sup>7</sup> Wegerich, Kai. 2010. The Afghan water law: a legal solution foreign to reality? *Water International*, 35(3):298-312.

<sup>8</sup> Islam, Md. (2022). Environmental Obligations in International Watercourse Law and South Asian Practice. *Dhaka University Law Journal*. 132-151.

<sup>9</sup> Benjamin, L. (2021). Principles on Climate Obligations of Enterprises by the Expert Group on Global Climate Change (2nd edn). *Journal of Energy & Natural Resources Law*, 40, 397 - 402.

<sup>10</sup> Mehrad, A.T. (2020). Assessment of climate change impacts on environmental sustainability in Afghanistan. *E3S Web of Conferences*.

carbon emissions<sup>11</sup>. Additionally, exploring alternative scenarios, such as using grid electricity or improving end-of-life waste treatment, can further reduce environmental impacts<sup>12</sup>. Finally, promoting transparency and cooperation in trans-boundary water management can help avoid conflicts and promote sustainable water use in the face of climate change<sup>13</sup>. By implementing these strategies, water purification companies in Afghanistan can play a crucial role in reducing their carbon footprint and contributing to climate change mitigation.

### **3. Materials and Methods**

This study adopts a field-based on qualitative and descriptive approach, employing 69 interview questionnaires to gather the perspectives of two distinct segments of society: university professors and health workers. These collected opinions were subsequently subjected to descriptive and content analysis to derive meaningful insights.

### **4. Results**

#### ***4.1 Legal responsibilities of water purification companies toward the government.***

The legal obligations of water purification companies towards the government are a subject of importance and inspection. The Constitution of Afghanistan, 2004, Article 15 Environment mandates the state to implement measures to protect forests and the environment<sup>14</sup>. These companies bear distinct legal responsibilities to both the government and individuals within various regions, and their involvement in addressing climate change has been the subject of investigation. Firstly, a majority of academics hold the view that water purification companies have legal obligations towards the government. Compliance with these obligations would serve as a significant contribution to environmental protection and the preservation of the vital resource of water. Adherence to laws and regulations, particularly those encompassed within the environmental protection law, assumes a critical role in safeguarding the Afghan environment. Consequently, these companies are expected to conduct their activities in accordance with the provisions outlined in this legislation. Secondly, these companies play a pivotal role in raising public awareness regarding the importance of clean water. By providing purified water, the need to utilize other water sources that may be contaminated with microbes is eliminated. Beyond their commercial pursuits, these companies actively engage in initiatives aimed at promoting awareness of the benefits of using treated water. The Environmental Law of Afghanistan, 2007, article 34 mandates the protection, conservation, development, use, control, and management of water resources, emphasizing the

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<sup>11</sup> Zaryab, et al., (2023). Groundwater Environment and Management in Kabul, Afghanistan.

<sup>12</sup> Whitehead, Dr. Paul. Minimizing Environmental Impacts of Water Purification. | *ELGA LabWater*. (2024).

<sup>13</sup> Akhtar, I. (2024). The Significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan. *Nangarhar University International Journal of Biosciences*, 3(02), 456–459.

<sup>14</sup> Afghanistan. Const. art. 15, (2004)



importance of protecting aquatic ecosystems and reducing pollution and degradation<sup>15</sup>. This multifaceted approach serves to increase public consciousness and encourage the widespread adoption of clean water practices. Thirdly, the coordination of the state in mitigating water wastage is a crucial aspect to consider. Currently, the usage of water in various establishments such as mosques, madrasahs, schools, markets, and factories lacks proper monitoring and regulation, resulting in indiscriminate and unquantified utilization. In cases where excessive water usage and wastage are observed in specific locations, it is imperative for these companies to promptly inform the government to address the issue and prevent further wastage. Such wastage can have detrimental consequences for both the water levels of these companies and the overall environment, leading to numerous defects and damages. Fourthly, the timely payment of government taxes adopts paramount importance for these companies. By operating officially and playing a crucial role in climate-related matters, it is essential that they fulfill their tax obligations to the government. This enables the government to assess the quantity and quality of services provided by these companies, determining their effectiveness in benefiting society. In return, the government can offer necessary facilities to support these companies, allowing them to carry out their activities unhindered and transparently, without facing any legal repercussions. Fifthly, it is advisable for these companies to maintain a government guarantee in a bank. Some of these companies may be temporary in nature and lack stability. Therefore, it is prudent for them to secure a government guarantee, providing reassurance to stakeholders and ensuring their financial viability. By holding a government guarantee in a bank, these companies can enhance their credibility and instill confidence among their partners and customers. Sixthly, it is crucial for water purification companies to establish and maintain large-scale water storage facilities. This is particularly important due to the adverse effects of climate change, such as reduced rainfall and snowfall, which can lead to a decline in water levels. By ensuring they have the necessary infrastructure and resources, these companies can prevent delays or disruptions in their services and ensure the timely delivery of water to the citizens. Seventhly, given the significance of water in the context of climate-related issues, it is imperative for these companies to collaborate with the government in areas such as water filter materials, accessories, and environmental initiatives. By actively cooperating and responding to government requests, these companies can contribute to the overall efforts in addressing water-related challenges. Eighthly, if government departments require treated water from these companies for their various activities, it is important for these companies to provide the services at the appropriate price and within the specified timeframe. Moreover, their services should adhere to established standards and principles

<sup>15</sup> Afghanistan Environmental Law, art 34 (1-2). (2007)

set by the competent authorities to ensure quality and consistency. Ninthly, while water purification companies often deliver their services to institutions and other entities based on demand, it is essential for the government to fulfill its obligation of providing necessary transportation. Adequate transportation infrastructure is necessary to ensure the timely and efficient delivery of services by these companies. A survey conducted among health workers have examined the legal obligations of water purification companies towards the government. The following obligations were identified: Firstly, Government-established laws and regulations are crucial for companies in the water purification industry to ensure safety and efficiency in their operations. Secondly, it is imperative that the chemicals utilized in water purification processes are applied in appropriate quantities. This ensures that water is effectively treated without causing any harm or adverse effects to the environment or public health. Thirdly, water purification facilities should maintain an environment that is not excessively complex or confined. The facilities should provide adequate ventilation, entertainment options, and maintain cleanliness. These factors contribute to a healthy and conducive environment for both workers and the treated water. Fourthly, the water supplied to the market for customers should be fresh and not stored for an extended period. This ensures that customers receive water that meets quality standards and is free from potential contaminants. Fifthly, water purification companies must pay close attention to the requirements imposed by government supervision. This includes adhering to hygiene practices, such as using clean utensils, to prevent the transmission of diseases and maintain public health standards. Compliance with these requirements is essential for ensuring the safety and well-being of consumers. In analyzing the perspectives of scholars, it is observed that they have expressed opinions on the legal responsibilities of water purification companies, which are elucidated as follows: Firstly, scholars emphasize the critical significance of water as a vital resource for humanity. They assert that these companies, being actively engaged in water-related activities, bear a heightened responsibility towards its protection and preservation. Scholars argue that these companies should prioritize cleanliness and hygiene, as these aspects are considered fundamental components of faith and play a crucial role in meeting the urgent societal need for clean water. Neglecting these aspects not only undermines the societal need but also contradicts the principles and values associated with these companies' involvement in water purification. Secondly, scholars highlight the importance of avoiding extravagance in water usage. They emphasize that this issue extends beyond mere commercial considerations and carries religious implications, as extravagance is prohibited in all legitimate actions. Therefore, scholars in this field assert that the use of clean utensils not only contributes to personal character and integrity but also promotes cleanliness within society at large. In summary, scholars emphasize the significance of water and its protection, urging water purification companies to prioritize cleanliness and hygiene.



They also emphasize the prohibition of extravagance in water usage, emphasizing the importance of using clean utensils to enhance personal character and integrity while fostering a clean society.

#### ***4.2 Legal responsibilities of water purification companies to individuals***

The Environmental Law of Afghanistan, 2007, article 7, establishes and registers civil society organizations that promote sustainable resource management, environmental conservation, and rehabilitation<sup>16</sup>. The companies bear responsibilities towards individuals as their services directly impact people's lives. In the analysis conducted, academics examined the legal obligations of these companies towards individuals. The findings are as follows: Firstly, it is the responsibility of these companies to provide purified water to individuals at a reasonable and affordable price. The aim is to ensure equal access to clean water for all individuals, without discrimination based on factors such as abundance or scarcity. The quantity of materials used in water purification should dictate the size and shape of water supply. Prioritizing the health and well-being of individuals is of utmost importance, and practical actions should be taken to fulfill this obligation. Secondly, the companies have an obligation to extract water from rivers, streams, groundwater sources, and other natural reservoirs in a manner that instills confidence in individuals regarding the natural origin of the water. Additionally, measures should be implemented to protect these water sources to ensure their sustainability and availability. Thirdly, it is a significant obligation for these companies to value the thoughts and opinions of members of society. By taking into account the constructive feedback and suggestions from individuals, positive changes can be made in the companies' activities that benefit society as a whole. In summary, water purification companies have legal responsibilities towards individuals. These include ensuring equitable access to purified water at an affordable price, extracting water from natural sources while implementing protective measures, and actively incorporating the feedback and opinions of individuals to improve their operations in a manner that benefits society.

As well, The Environmental Law of Afghanistan, 2007, Article 9, mandates the National Environmental Protection Agency to perform specific functions and powers such as government is responsible for maintaining environmental integrity, promoting sustainable resource use, and coordinating environmental affairs at local, national, and international levels. They develop policies, manage services, implement agreements, and coordinate monitoring programs<sup>17</sup>. A notable proportion of health workers, comprising and hold, the view that water purification companies bear significant and healthy responsibilities towards the public. These responsibilities encompass the

<sup>16</sup> Afghanistan Environmental Law, art 7, cl. 2. (2007)

<sup>17</sup> Afghanistan Environmental Law, art 9. (2007)

following aspects: Firstly, it is imperative for these companies to conduct medical examinations to assess the usage of chemical substances. Such examinations are crucial in preventing potential harm to individuals, as the consumption of contaminated liquids can facilitate the transmission of diseases. By ensuring the safety of the chemical substances used, the risk of adverse health outcomes can be mitigated. Secondly, a key consideration for individuals is the provision of employment opportunities within these companies. This allows qualified professionals, particularly those who have graduated from medical departments, to contribute their expertise. The testing of water quality by these professionals prior to its distribution in the market assumes paramount importance. Furthermore, raising public awareness regarding the significance of clean water usage is an essential obligation. Many individuals still rely on polluted water sources, highlighting the urgent need for education and awareness campaigns. Thirdly, it is crucial for water purification activities to be conducted in close proximity to people's residences and households, while minimizing disruptions to their daily lives. This approach fosters community confidence and trust in the operations of these companies. Additionally, efforts should be made to provide employment opportunities to those individuals who currently lack work prospects, thereby enabling the creation of new avenues for economic participation. In summary, a substantial proportion of health workers assert that water purification companies possess crucial obligations towards the public. These include conducting medical examinations to ensure the safety of chemical substances, providing employment opportunities for qualified professionals, raising awareness about clean water usage, conducting activities in close proximity to residences, and creating job opportunities for individuals in need.

#### ***4.3 The role of water purification companies in climate change***

A considerable portion of the scholars participating in this study have expressed their views on the contribution of these companies to the field of climate change. Thus far, these companies have been operational in Afghanistan, employing methods that are not considered professional or standard, particularly in areas where the water level is lower than that of rivers and reservoirs. This exacerbates the issue as it is known that rising temperatures are closely associated with climate change. Consequently, water scarcity worsens, leading to increased drought conditions, and ultimately, irregular heavy rainfall and floods, which serve as evident manifestations of climate change in Afghanistan during the 21st century. Moreover, these companies play a significant role in the purification of groundwater, effectively purifying it before distributing it to the citizens for various purposes. Consequently, there is no lack of water within the community. The absence of adequate water resources can have severe repercussions on Afghan society, given that Afghanistan is one of the most vulnerable countries on the continent. An alternative approach that can be adopted by these companies is to utilize water from rivers, springs, and canals instead of relying solely on



groundwater sources. By subjecting this water to the purification processes, these companies can partially mitigate the risk of water scarcity in the region. This strategy is advantageous as underground water sources are relatively safer, while flowing water has undergone a natural purification process. Additionally, it is crucial for these companies to align their operations with the public policies and regulations set forth by the country to effectively control and prevent waste, ensuring that their activities do not have detrimental environmental impacts. The issue of climate change is a contemporary and significant concern, given the prevailing global trends of rising temperatures and water scarcity. Afghanistan, being a mountainous country, frequently experiences significant rainfall during the summer season. Hence, if these companies prioritize the use of snow as an alternative to groundwater during the summer months, it would help maintain a healthy water supply throughout the season, prevent a decline in water levels, and minimize adverse effects on the surrounding air quality. These companies bear significant responsibility in addressing climate-related concerns by ensuring the provision of clean water to the community, thereby safeguarding individuals from diseases, pollution, and the use of contaminated water. Furthermore, if these companies extend their operations to coastal areas of the city, the community would be relieved of the challenges associated with accessing clean water through groundwater sources. Moreover, these companies play a substantial role in addressing climate issues by promoting the use of water bottles as a means to reduce excessive water consumption, this cultural shift toward minimizing water waste would help prevent unnecessary water usage in public spaces. Additionally, these companies have a role to play in raising awareness about the transmission of diseases through the use of water containers and providing guidance to offices, shops, and other government and private institutions. Encouraging the use of water bottles, instead of water containers, is essential in the context of climate change, as they should actively promote the proper and responsible use of water among people from all walks of life. According to the conducted survey, the health workers expressed the belief that these companies employ chemical-based approaches in water purification to address the impacts of climate change and provide treated water to the community. It is crucial for these companies to ensure the cleanliness and regularity of the water bottles used by citizens to prevent the occurrence of diseases. In the context of climate change, it is advisable for these companies to carry out their activities away from residential areas. This precautionary measure is important as the contamination of these companies' wells by the wastewater of nearby households can lead to the spread of incurable diseases, causing significant harm to society. Moreover, these companies have a responsibility to promote hygiene and provide instructions to the public during the distribution of their services. Water is a fundamental resource for human survival, and it is imperative to emphasize

its importance. These companies should also store an ample supply of water to avoid disruptions in their operations during periods of water shortage. This ensures that there is sufficient clean water available within the community. Health workers should handle and use the chemicals elements by these companies, such as sodium, potassium, magnesium, and other materials involved in water purification, in a safe and appropriate manner. Neglecting this aspect or failing to use standard materials or clean straws (rudimentary form of water bottles) can result in the transmission of diseases. Another critical consideration is that these companies should hire competent employees and personnel committed to maintaining cleanliness standards. Their diligence in this regard is crucial for ensuring the provision of safe and healthy water to the community. In the present study, it was found that the scholars acknowledge the crucial role of water purification companies in addressing climate-related challenges, which is evident across various domains. Hence, it is imperative to prioritize the cleanliness of these companies and ensure meticulous attention to the use of chemical substances. The quantity and quality of these materials should be carefully monitored to maintain optimal purification outcomes. When the environment of such companies is clean and well-maintained, it enhances people's confidence and trust in their operations. These companies should uphold principles of sincerity, honesty, and integrity in the provision of their services pertaining to climate issues. Demonstrating sincerity requires not only fulfilling immediate needs but also considering the long-term requirements associated with climate change. By doing so, these companies can proactively address potential problems that may arise in the future, thus fulfilling their societal responsibilities. Moreover, it is paramount for these companies to recognize that society has the right to expect them to care for and protect every substance and element essential for survival. Taking necessary precautions to ensure the sustainability and well-being of these resources is essential. By fulfilling their obligations in this regard, these companies can contribute to the overall welfare and resilience of human society. In Afghanistan, contaminated drinking water from wells and substandard reservoirs has led to health issues. The integration of industrial and technological machinery has prompted the establishment of water purification companies as social and public services. These companies have experienced significant growth and engagement, fulfilling their legal obligations to provide clean water, adopt water conservation measures, and promote clean water usage in prevailing climate conditions. Their activities have resulted in climate-related changes, reducing unnecessary water consumption and improving environmental cleanliness. They protect the population from impure water by judiciously using water sources and using chemical substances for purification. These companies also store significant amounts of water during water scarcity, contributing to water scarcity concerns in various settings. The result of the activities of these water purification companies in Afghanistan has been the provision of clean water,



improvements in environmental cleanliness and orderliness, protection against impure water, and the mitigation of water scarcity concerns. Water purification companies in Afghanistan have legal responsibilities towards the government, individuals, and the environment. These include complying with laws, raising public awareness about clean water, and coordinating with the government to reduce water wastage. They must also pay taxes and maintain a government guarantee. Large-scale water storage facilities are essential for timely delivery, especially in climate change. Collaboration with the government is crucial in areas like water filter materials and environmental initiatives. Companies must provide services to government departments at the right price and within specified timeframes, adhering to established standards. Transportation infrastructure is also required. Scholars emphasize the importance of cleanliness, hygiene, and avoiding excessive water usage. Water is a vital resource, and companies must protect and preserve it. The legal responsibilities of water purification companies in Afghanistan include compliance with regulations, raising awareness about clean water, coordinating with the government, paying taxes, maintaining storage facilities, collaborating on water-related initiatives, providing quality services, and emphasizing cleanliness and hygiene. Water purification companies have legal responsibilities to ensure equitable access to purified water at affordable prices. They should extract water from natural sources while implementing protective measures. Feedback from individuals is crucial for improving company operations and benefiting society. Medical examinations are essential to assess chemical safety. Employment opportunities and public awareness about clean water usage are important obligations. Conducting water purification activities near residences fosters community confidence and trust. Creating job opportunities for those in need contributes to economic participation. The legal responsibilities of water purification companies towards individuals include providing equitable access to affordable purified water, protecting natural water sources, incorporating feedback, conducting medical examinations, providing employment opportunities, raising awareness, conducting activities in proximity to residences, and creating job opportunities. Water purification companies play a crucial role in addressing climate change by using professional methods, particularly in areas with lower water levels. They should use water from rivers, springs, and canals to mitigate water scarcity risks. Aligning operations with public policies and regulations helps prevent environmental impacts and control waste. Prioritizing snow as an alternative to groundwater during summer helps maintain a healthy water supply. Companies must provide clean water, protect individuals from diseases, promote water bottle usage, and raise awareness about responsible water use. Maintaining cleanliness, promoting hygiene, and storing ample water supplies are essential considerations. Competent employees are essential for providing safe water. Demonstrating

sincerity, honesty, and integrity in addressing climate-related challenges enhances public trust. Companies should prioritize long-term climate change requirements and ensure water resource sustainability. Water purification companies have a role in addressing climate change by employing professional methods, utilizing alternative water sources, aligning with regulations, promoting responsible water use, and ensuring the cleanliness and safety of water supply.

### **5. Discussion**

It revolves around the legal obligations of the water purification companies and their impact on individuals, society, and the climate in Afghanistan. It highlights the importance of clean water provision, water conservation, and storage. It also emphasizes the positive climate-related changes brought about by these companies, such as reducing water consumption. It emphasizes the responsibility of the companies to fulfill their legal duties and climate-related responsibilities simultaneously. Additionally, it acknowledges the significant contribution of these companies in mitigating water scarcity concerns during times of scarcity. The focuses on the legal obligations of water purification companies towards the government, emphasizing their role in environmental protection and water preservation. It also highlights the importance of raising public awareness, coordinating with the government to mitigate water wastage, and fulfilling tax obligations. The text stresses the need for infrastructure, government collaboration, adherence to standards, and transportation support. Scholars emphasize the significance of cleanliness, hygiene, and avoiding extravagance in water usage, highlighting the responsibility of these companies in protecting water resources. Overall, it emphasizes the importance of legal compliance, environmental stewardship, and societal well-being in the context of water purification companies in Afghanistan. The legal obligations of water purification companies towards individuals, emphasizing the importance of equal access to clean water at an affordable price. It emphasizes the need to protect natural water sources and incorporate feedback to improve company operations. The paper also emphasizes the significance of conducting medical examinations to ensure the safety of chemical substances used in water purification. Providing employment opportunities for qualified professionals, raising public awareness about clean water usage, and conducting activities near residences are considered crucial. The paper also stresses the importance of creating job opportunities for individuals in need, contributing to economic participation and societal well-being. Overall, the paper emphasizes the legal responsibilities of water purification companies towards individuals, focusing on access, safety, employment, awareness, and community trust. The paper emphasizes the contribution of water purification companies to addressing climate change. It highlights the need for professional and standard methods, particularly in areas with water scarcity. Utilizing alternative water sources and aligning with regulations are suggested strategies. The paper also highlights the importance of



promoting responsible water use, raising awareness, and ensuring the cleanliness of water bottles. The paper emphasizes the role of these companies in safeguarding individuals from diseases and providing a reliable water supply. It stresses the need for activities to be conducted away from residential areas, promoting hygiene, and storing an adequate water supply. The paper also emphasizes the importance of competent employees and maintaining cleanliness standards. Demonstrating sincerity, honesty, and integrity in addressing climate-related challenges is considered essential for public trust. The discussion concludes by highlighting the importance of fulfilling long-term requirements, protecting water resources, and contributing to the welfare and resilience of human society. Overall, the paper underscores the role and responsibilities of water purification companies in addressing climate change and providing safe water to the community.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

Based on the conducted research, the following conclusions have been drawn regarding water purification companies in Afghanistan and their legal responsibilities towards the government, individuals, and development, as well as their role in climate change. These findings are outlined as follows: Private water purification companies operating in Afghanistan are obligated to fulfill their financial responsibilities to the relevant government entities within specified deadlines. Water purification companies must obtain an official license from the government to legitimize their activities and contribute value to society. Companies involved in wastewater purification are obliged to organize and conduct their operations in accordance with government laws and regulations that govern their field of work. It is crucial for these companies to ensure the timely provision of purified water to the public, while also prioritizing the health and well-being of individuals. Recognizing that individuals play an essential role in maintaining a clean environment, efforts should be made to promote public health. During their operations, water purification companies should utilize chemicals that do not pose future harm to human health and society. Medical examinations and the analysis of chemical substances used in water purification should be conducted by these companies to prevent the spread of diseases and safeguard human health and the environment. Water purification companies have a responsibility to contribute to climate protection, including the responsible use of water resources. The activities of wastewater purification companies should encompass various geographical areas, including cities, deserts, mountains, and wetlands. Priority should be given to the purification of water that flows on the ground, such as rain, snow, and melting snow, as this contributes significantly to the protection of the climate and the preservation of vital water resources. In summary, water purification companies in Afghanistan bear legal responsibilities towards the government, individuals, and development, and they play a vital role in addressing

climate change challenges.

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# Kardan Journal of Engineering and Technology (KJET)

ISSN: 2706-7815 (Print and Online), Journal homepage: <https://kardan.edu.af/KJET>

## Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education: Mitigating Risks, Embracing Opportunities, and Shaping the Future

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**To cite this article:** I. Akhtar, " Artificial intelligence in higher education: Mitigating risks, embracing opportunities, and shaping the future," *Kardan Journal of Engineering and Technology*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 1-13, Dec 2024.  
DOI: 10.31841/KJET.2024.35.

**To link to this article:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.31841/KJET.2024.35>



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Published online: 30 December 2024



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# Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education: Mitigating Risks, Embracing Opportunities, and Shaping the Future

Kardan Journal of Engineering and  
Technology 6 (1) 1– 13

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Kardan Publications

Kabul, Afghanistan

DOI: 10.31841/KJET.2024.35

[https://kardan.edu.af/journals/CurrentIssue.aspx?j=](https://kardan.edu.af/journals/CurrentIssue.aspx?j=KJET)

KJET

Received: 28 July 24

Revised: 27 Oct 24

Accepted: 09 Dec 24

Published: 30 Dec 24

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## Abstract

**Objective:** This study aims to investigate the use of artificial intelligence (AI) by students in higher education, focusing on the opportunities, risks, and strategies that universities can adopt. The goal is to investigate using AI in students' learning-based activities. The goal is to determine whether artificial intelligence can effectively be integrated into higher education to maximize its benefits while minimizing potential risks and addressing them.

**Methods:** The study examined the implementation of artificial intelligence in higher education through interviews and literature reviews. The applied research was conducted, and 73 semi-structured interviews with IT instructors were conducted to collect data. Descriptive and content analysis methods were used to analyze the qualitative data using a discourse approach and sociotechnical systems theory framework.

**Findings:** The findings inform the development of recommendations for higher education institutions to effectively integrate artificial intelligence into the educational ecosystem while addressing its ethical implications. Artificial intelligence can positively change the higher education sector if used correctly. This extensive study examines the potential effects of artificial intelligence on higher education. It discussed many hazards, offered advice, and presented a strong ethical framework for its application and use in educational settings. It also emphasizes the need to adopt a comprehensive strategy that fully exploits artificial intelligence's benefits while overseeing its moral and practical applications.

**Implications:** According to this study, different stakeholders in higher education universities, legislators, and educators must work together to develop innovative artificial intelligence-driven learning resources, encourage innovation, and change teaching methods to maximize the advantages of artificial intelligence while also successfully managing any risks that may arise.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Higher Education, Integration, Opportunities

## 1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming various aspects of life; however, there are concerns about its potential misuse in higher education by students and its widespread popularity. This study explores the role of artificial intelligence in higher education, highlighting its potential to personalize learning experiences and improve

teaching effectiveness, highlighting the digital age's shift towards higher education. This paper discusses risk mitigation, embraces opportunities, and shapes the future of AI in education, particularly the use of artificial intelligence in educational systems and their influence on learning outcomes. This research examines the dual impact of AI in higher education, aiming to create a sustainable framework for informed decision-making, enhancing educational outcomes while safeguarding ethical values.

The study explores the use of Artificial Intelligence in higher education, highlighting its potential applications, ethical implications, and future trends while providing a framework for sustainable integration. The goal was to bridge the gap in understanding AI mitigation risks, embrace opportunities, and shape the future of education. How can AI be effectively integrated into higher education to maximize its benefits for students while minimizing potential risks and addressing them?

Successful integration of artificial intelligence into higher education outcomes, improvement of self-efficiency, and contribution to the overall development of self-improvement, provided appropriate strategies are implemented to address challenges related to infrastructure, digital literacy, Personalized Learning and Adaptive Technologies, and ethical consideration. There is a significant gap in the research and practical implementation of using artificial intelligence in higher education that students are using artificial intelligence. Existing studies have primarily focused on developed countries, with limited attention to specific challenges and opportunities in low-resource contexts.

Since 2010, AI integration in higher education has included AI tools, chatbots, virtual assistants, automated grading, plagiarism detection, curriculum recommendation systems, and modelling complex educational processes, accessible worldwide in 2022 November[1]. AI has emerged as a revolutionary power that has altered multiple education sectors, such as the educational environment[2]. The latest progress in AI has significantly influenced various areas of life, including education. This progress has completely changed our thought processes, learning methods, daily activities, and success in a world becoming smarter and more connected[3].

Technological advancements have significantly influenced educational practices, particularly in AI, with generative artificial intelligence (GAI) emerging as a sophisticated digital content generation framework that uses deep learning[4]. AI technology has the potential to significantly enhance education by enriching learning and pedagogical experiences, particularly in essay grading, according to the scientific literature[5]. AI has undergone significant advancements, its roots dating back to 1952 and 1964. However, the recent arrival of AI and other AI tools in education highlights the weakness of educational systems in anticipating and understanding technological change compared with other sectors[6]. Based on the literature review, AI can significantly improve training quality in higher education, with the goals of increased outcomes, access, retention, cost reduction, and completion time reduction[7].

AI revolutionizes human life by transforming social interactions and introducing new teaching and learning solutions. AI is currently under trial and restructuring in various contexts[8]. This requires advanced infrastructure and innovators, paving the way for a new learning era. Big data and digitalization leave individual information footprints, leading to ratification in education[4].

In developed countries, AI tools have the potential to personalize learning experiences, automate administrative tasks, reduce workloads, offer instant feedback, tailor courses to individual progress, enhance student engagement, and optimize decision-making[2], [3]. Advanced infrastructure and innovators are crucial for paving the way for a new era of learning[1]. In higher education, artificial intelligence holds promise in addressing significant challenges and driving innovation in teaching and learning practices[2], [9]. The use of AI technologies in educational settings is rising, encompassing intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, chatbots, automated grading systems, and data analytics tools[9], [10].

### *1.1 AI in Education*

Sociotechnical Systems Theory (STS) offers a strong framework for analyzing AI's role in higher education, focusing on risk mitigation, opportunity exploitation, and future strategic planning[11]. STS emphasizes the interconnectedness of technical and social systems, emphasizing the importance of understanding AI's impact on students, faculty, and staff for successful integration[12]. During the last decade, especially since the launch of AI in late November 2022, AI has become a hot topic for teachers and students, raising concerns, challenges, and a wave of controversies.

The investigation aims to analyze the scientific production of AI's applications in higher education using the methodology of bibliometric studies and the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses protocol. AI can solve major educational challenges, innovate teaching and learning practices, and advance SDG rule 4 if used positively. Nonetheless, swift technological developments inevitably generate several risks and challenges. AI enables computers to think and react like humans, recognize patterns, solve problems, make predictions, and learn from mistakes by relying on massive amounts of data and algorithms[5].

Integrating AI into higher education presents numerous opportunities to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes, like enhancing student-learning experiences, personalizing instruction, and supporting teachers. In this order, STS promotes stakeholder involvement in technology design and implementation, especially in AI opportunities, to enhance student engagement, streamline administration, and identify beneficial AI features. AI tools have been shown to significantly influence student engagement levels, with a universal appeal across demographics[13]. AI-driven adaptive systems personalize learning experiences by analyzing individual strengths and weaknesses, adapting content to students' pace and needs, and fostering engagement, motivation, comprehension, and retention[14].

While AI offers personalized learning, improved student outcomes, increased engagement, enhanced accessibility, and data-driven instruction, AI tools may hinder student's creative and analytical skills development. STS advocates for ethical AI adoption in education, focusing on transparency, fairness, and accountability. It suggests clarifying data usage, addressing biases, and maintaining accountability structures[10]. AI tools like essay writing and translation can lead to educational injustice and ethical violations, allowing students to free themselves from their original work. AI technologies and chatbots offer prospects for boosting student engagement, providing opportunities for personalized learning experiences and information dissemination, and addressing concerns and challenges associated with their integration[12].

AI's ease of learning can decrease self-confidence and mental health, leading to stress, anxiety, and reduced self-confidence among students who heavily rely on it. Furthermore, AI methodologies such as deep learning and natural language processing can analyze and interpret student feedback data to categorize the types of engagement valued by students, offering critical insights into pedagogical practice and decision-making in higher education[5]. AI technology could potentially compromise students' data privacy and deviate from their educational goals, as it may provide quick answers instead of deep study.

Overall, integrating AI in higher education enhances student engagement and improves learning outcomes and educational experiences, emphasizing the importance of aligning AI applications with educational objectives and continuously improving AI implementation to complement the human aspects of education[13]. STS recommends balancing AI's technological functions with human oversight, ensuring human involvement in decision-making, supporting judgment and empathy, and implementing clear policies to prevent misinterpretation or overreach[15]. It also helps in intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, automated grading, plagiarism detection, virtual assistants, and educational analytics.

AI can personalize student learning experiences by leveraging machine learning, natural language processing, and data analytics to tailor educational content, provide adaptive assessments, and offer customized feedback and recommendations based on individual students' needs, learning styles, and abilities[12]. By generating learning materials in various styles and formats, AI can engage students more effectively, increase their study time, and enhance their comprehension, especially for those struggling with specific topics[13], [16]. Additionally, AI-driven solutions can automate learner profiling, recommend personalized learning resources, and facilitate real-time assessment, ultimately optimizing educational outcomes and fostering deeper engagement and accessibility in personalized learning environments[17].

However, responsible deployment of AI in education requires addressing challenges such as privacy concerns, ethical considerations, and the need for adequate infrastructure and teacher training to maximize the benefits of AI-supported educational strategies[12], and ethical considerations, data privacy, digital divide, and ensure a human-centred approach are the challenges. AI can automate and democratize personalized adaptive learning, reducing learning gaps and increasing learning abilities[18]. This can drive student success by attracting students, fostering lifelong relationships, and promoting global collaboration.

Integrating AI in education requires addressing challenges such as adapting to educators' changing roles, providing adequate training, and fostering ongoing dialogue among participants[19]. Furthermore, concerns about equity issues, technical limitations, and the necessity of aligning AI applications with educational objectives to complement rather than replace the human aspects of education must be considered[20], [21]. Even though the potential benefits of AI in evaluation and reviewing are critical, it is additionally imperative to consider its viable applications and impact on understudy results[22].

For example, the positive influence of computerized evaluation and belief in the understudy's character and scholarly execution. Moreover, examining AI-driven evaluation and input has uncovered positive impacts on students' learning results[18]. In this setting, learning analytics empower higher education to back the learning

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environment at different levels[20], [23]. Integrating AI into educators' professional development ensures future guidelines and improved teaching quality, focusing on back and personalized learning resources[24]. The full potential of AI in higher education is achieved through intelligent virtual learning environments, AI-driven curriculum development, and personalized career guidance, requiring ethical access and ethical use of AI resources. However, there is a need for flexible sociotechnical systems, especially in higher education, to ensure AI's relevance and responsibility over time, requiring ongoing assessment and iteration.

### *1.2 AI in Administration*

AI can perform administrative tasks in higher education, universities, and other institutions. Academicians spend considerable time grading exams, accessing homework, and providing guidance to students[18]. This means that AI is useful in increased efficiency, reduced costs, improved decision-making, enhanced data security, and better resource utilization. Automated grading systems can reduce time and costs and allow for other important tasks[25]. Many software companies are developing Learning Management Systems (LMS) to improve grading methods for written answers and essays[12], [17]. In teaching and learning, AI can empower academics and researchers and reimagine campus resources, thus enabling a modern and secure experience such as streamlining administrative tasks, improving efficiency, and optimizing resource allocation. It also empowers researchers in flexible computing environments[17].

Integrating AI into higher education presents numerous risks and challenges that must be addressed for successful implementation. These considerations include ethical considerations, such as safeguarding data privacy and upholding academic integrity[16], [21], as well as the need to mitigate algorithmic biases and ensure transparency in AI algorithms[5]. The future of AI in Higher Education will be shaped by key factors, such as personalized learning experiences through AI-driven adaptive systems[26]. The integration of generative AI tools such as artificial intelligence for teaching and learning[15] and the potential for AI to revolutionize how students learn and educators instruct[27] issues should be considered, as well as admissions processing, financial aid management, student records, scheduling, facilities management, HR, and data analytics that AI helps in administration[25]. Implications for educators and administrators include the need for comprehensive support in integrating AI tools, addressing ethical concerns and data privacy issues, and preparing students for future technological challenges[28].

AI holds promise for enhancing educational experiences. Educators and administrators must navigate challenges related to resource limitations, ethical implications, and the effective integration of AI tools to leverage their full benefits in the educational sector, automation of routine tasks, predictive analytics for strategic planning, and AI-powered decision support systems[15], [27]. Experts warn of potential dangers in AI development, including chatbots becoming smarter than humans, fake information generation, discrimination, and election influences. Some researchers have suggested stopping further research and encouraging discussions on AI's potential dangers[26] because the challenges of data privacy, job displacement, algorithm bias, and resistance to change in administration are considered. In the future, AI will transform learning by providing personalized learning experiences tailored to individual needs and abilities[25].

## 2. Materials and Methods

This study examined the use of AI in higher education and analyzed both challenging and successful opportunities using interviews for data collection and descriptive and content analysis approaches with the sociotechnical systems theory framework. The applied research was conducted, and a purposive sampling approach was used for 73 semi-structured interviews with IT instructors, who were selected based on IT for data collection. The interview highlighted AI's potential benefits and challenges in higher education and its potential for addressing risks, identifying opportunities, and shaping the future.

## 3. Results

AI personalizes learning by fitting elements to students' requirements and improving their arrangement and maintenance. Powerful forms are more productive through mechanization, decreasing capacity, and errors; AI benefits rapidly consider great datasets. The tendency towards AI calculations may lead to the development of inconsistencies. High practice costs can be recognized for professional AI in higher instruction. Ethical and security concerns emerge with information collection and utilization, which require severe inaccuracy. Modernization, including machine learning, ensures progressive personalization.

Collaborative AI devices enhance collaboration and information sharing. Creating approaches and joysticks pledges AI's ethical and sustainable utilization of AI in lessons. Colleges meritoriously developing AI have advanced with the results of the understudy. AI promotes unapproachable and hybrid learning, increasing the vulnerability of lessons. AI has revolutionized higher education by enhancing learning, streamlining processes, and personalizing skills – familiarity with and managing potential risks. The results were drawn from a literature review of content, descriptive analysis, and semi-structured interviews with relevant university professors.

Table 1  
Opportunities of using AI in higher education

Opportunity	Description
Personalized Learning	According to empirical studies, AI technologies can analyze large datasets and create personalized learning experiences, enhancing student engagement, academic achievement, and retention rates.
Enhanced Teaching and Administrative Procedures	AI streamlines administrative tasks, allowing faculty to focus on strategic initiatives, enhances instructional design, improves learning outcomes, and aids examinations and interviews.
Improved Student Support Services	AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants can provide 24/7 student support, enhancing course enrollment, academic advice, career counselling, and special education support, thereby increasing student satisfaction and achievement.
Advanced Learning Analytics	AI can analyze student data to understand learning behaviours, performance trends, and cognitive inclinations, aiding curriculum design, optimizing learning trajectories, creating adaptable classrooms, and enhancing student outcomes.

AI-boosting research	AI is expected to enhance higher education research by analyzing complex data, identifying trends, and assisting in literature review while streamlining the research process.
AI tool skills	AI tools enhance students' skills to work via AI, learn various skills as courses, and close the skills gap.
Curriculum Planning and Development	AI helps develop and modernize curricula by analyzing educational trends, student performance data, and learning gaps.
Secure and Decentralized Learning Systems	Education manufacturing is transporting swift modernizations with AI but is often apprehended back by data security, alterable data convenience, outdated documentation developments, etc.

Table 1 shows that AI can revolutionize higher education by improving pedagogy, optimizing administrative operations, and enhancing research capacities through seamless integration.

Table 2  
Challenges of AI in higher education for students.

Challenges	Description
Weak personal skills	Students may rely heavily on AI tools, which hinders the development of their creative and analytical skills.
Educational injustice	AI tools like essay writing and translation can lead to academic competition unfairness and potential ethical and scientific violations for students.
Data privacy	The use of AI technology may endanger the privacy of students' personal information, leading to the loss of their privacy.
Effects on mental health	The excessive use of AI can lead to stress, anxiety, and reduced self-confidence in students, particularly those who heavily rely on it.
Negative impact on social relationships	Using AI tools may negatively impact students' social and group relations, as they may prioritize AI tools over research and discussion.
Deviation from educational goals and core learning	AI tools may detract students from their primary educational objectives by providing quick and easy answers instead of requiring deep information study.
Ethical and scientific violations	The use of AI tools, like essay-generating technologies, may encourage students to commit ethical violations like plagiarism and non-original work.
Negative impact on personal effort	AI simplifies learning, potentially reducing students' self-confidence and reducing their self-effort.
Stop students' creativity.	Students can do anything while AI is doing it.

Table 2 shows that AI integration in higher education presents ethical challenges, including privacy concerns, faculty adoption, and responsible use of technology.

Table 3  
Mitigating Risks of Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Bias in AI algorithms	AI tools are systematically tested for bias through diverse training datasets, the use of educators and ethicists in tool development, and regular audits for fairness.
Privacy concerns regarding student data	Transparent data collection practices, explicit student consent, anonymity, and robust data security measures are important.
Overreliance on AI for assessment and feedback	The importance of human oversight of AI-generated assessments and feedback emphasizes AI's role in enhancing critical thinking skills in education.
Lack of transparency in AI decision-making	Provide clear explanations of how AI systems arrive at their decisions. Make it easy for students to challenge or appeal AI-based decisions.
Displacement of educators' jobs	The focus should be on using AI to enhance educators, not replace them by enhancing their skills to work effectively with AI tools.

Table 3 presents the mitigating risks of artificial intelligence in higher education, such as bias in AI algorithms, privacy concerns regarding student data, overreliance on AI for assessment and feedback, lack of transparency in AI decision-making, and displacement of educators' jobs.

Table 4  
Opportunities to embed AI with examples in higher education for students.

Category	Description	Example
Personalized Learning	AI tutors can provide individualized instruction and student feedback regarding strengths and weaknesses.	Generative AI tutors can answer questions, check student understanding, and offer suggestions tailored to the student's progress.
Accessibility and Inclusivity	AI can translate materials, create closed captions, and offer alternative learning formats for students with disabilities.	Text-to-speech and speech-to-text tools can remove language barriers and allow students of different learning styles to access information.
24/7 Student Support	AI-powered chatbots can answer frequently asked questions, troubleshoot technical difficulties, and connect students with relevant resources.	AI assistants can provide basic information, enabling human staff to handle more complex issues.
Increased Efficiency	AI can automate administrative tasks like grading multiple-choice questions, scheduling, and plagiarism detection.	This affords faculty and staff time to focus on higher-level tasks like curriculum development and student mentoring.
Data-Driven Decisions	AI can analyze student data to identify at-risk students and provide targeted interventions.	This allows institutions to support students experiencing problems and improve student success rates proactively.

Content Creation and Design	AI can be used to create personalized learning materials, such as quizzes and interactive simulations.	This can make learning more engaging and effective for students.
Automated Assessment	AI can streamline grading processes, freeing faculty time for more in-depth student interaction.	Students can save time and learn new skills.

Table 4 highlights the potential benefits of incorporating AI in higher education, including personalized learning, accessibility, 24/7 support, increased efficiency, data-driven decisions, content creation, and automated assessment.

Table 5  
AI in Higher Education: Shaping the Future

Aspect	Using AI	Potential Benefits
Learning Environments	Personalized learning paths and adaptive courseware	Students receive a more tailored education that meets their needs and learning styles.
Teaching and Learning	AI-powered tutors and intelligent feedback systems	Enhanced student engagement and support using AI tools that provide additional guidance and feedback outside class time.
Administration	Automated tasks and data-driven decision-making	Streamlined administrative processes allow educators to focus on teaching and student interaction. Data analysis can inform strategic planning for program development and resource allocation.
Accessibility and Inclusion	AI-powered translation tools and adaptive learning technologies	Educational opportunities are open to a wider range of students, including those with disabilities and non-traditional backgrounds.
Developing AI Literacy	AI in education provides personalized learning, but challenges emerge in ensuring equitable access to resources and developing AI literacy skills.	Embedding AI literacy in the curriculum can equip students with the skills to understand, use, and evaluate AI responsibly.
Collaboration between Educators and Developers	Collaboration between educators and AI developers bridges the gap between pedagogical expertise and technological innovations, aligns AI resources with curriculum, and promotes continuous learning.	Educators and AI developers must work together to ensure AI tools are pedagogically sound and meet the specific needs of higher education.
Ethical Considerations	AI-powered educational tools raise ethical concerns such as algorithmic bias, privacy, responsible data collection, and societal implications like equitable access, inclusive	Proactive discussions and clear guidelines are needed to address ethical concerns surrounding AI use in education, such as student surveillance and algorithmic decision-making.

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design, and teacher  
displacement.

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Table 5 explores AI in Higher Education, focusing on learning environments, teaching, administration, accessibility, inclusion, AI literacy, collaboration, and ethical considerations.

#### 4. Discussion

The development of education and administrative affairs through artificial intelligence has a positive effect, but the negative effects cannot be ignored. The use of AI systems in higher education, on the one hand, provides personal and effective education to students; on the other hand, there are also problems with privacy and a lack of human relationships. In order for the benefits of AI to be effectively achieved, it is necessary to take appropriate measures for ethical principles, data security, and equal access to all classes of students. Improper use of artificial intelligence (AI) in education and administration can threaten both. The widespread use of AI is expected to change human life and social relations greatly. This means that traditional work structures will likely be disrupted, as AI systems can replace some repetitive tasks. This will change the shape of the labour market and workforce and force people to learn new occupations and skills.

With the development of AI, the relationship between man and machine may also change, such as with the advent of autonomous taxis, which may eliminate human drivers and thus create a lack of human interaction in some areas. Such changes can affect social functions and human relationship needs. Artificial intelligence is revolutionizing educational institutions, especially providing personalized learning for students, deep learning, and data analysis, automating administrative tasks, and facilitating collaborative learning. These technologies provide students with specialized learning tailored to their needs, objective suggestions, assessments, and immediate feedback, and help teachers and students identify their areas of need. These systems analyze large amounts of student-generated data and provide policymakers with an overview of student and teacher activities, participation, and learning patterns.

#### 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the research provides an in-depth analysis of integrating AI into higher education, focusing on the opportunities, risks, and strategies universities can adopt to harness AI's transformative power while addressing connected challenges effectively. Artificial intelligence (AI) in education offers benefits like personalized learning but raises privacy and human relationship issues. Ethical principles, data security, and equal access for all students are necessary to benefit fully. AI integration in higher education offers the potential for personalized learning, administrative efficiency, feedback, support systems, and data analysis, transforming university teaching and learning methods.

This study highlights the transformative potential of AI in higher education, emphasizing its ability to personalize learning experiences, improve teaching effectiveness, and streamline administrative processes. However, concerns about potential misuse and job displacement due to AI's increasing popularity have also been raised, underscoring the need for careful consideration and proactive measures in integrating AI into educational settings.

AI-driven adaptive systems can personalize learning experiences, improve educational outcomes, and foster deeper engagement and accessibility in personalized learning environments. However, the responsible deployment of AI in education requires addressing challenges such as privacy concerns, ethical considerations, and the need for adequate infrastructure and teacher training to maximize the benefits of AI-supported educational strategies. Furthermore, AI presents numerous benefits and challenges in higher education and addressing ethical complexities and potential risks is crucial for its successful integration. The outcomes inform the improvement of recommendations for higher education institutions to efficiently integrate AI into the educational ecosystem while addressing its ethical implications.

Integrating AI into higher education offers numerous opportunities for personalized learning, enhanced teaching and administrative procedures, improved student support services, advanced learning analytics, and research capabilities. However, it also presents challenges such as faculty and staff preparedness, equity and access issues, cost and implementation barriers, ethical and legal concerns, and the need to mitigate the risks associated with AI algorithms and privacy issues. Despite these challenges, AI has the potential to revolutionize higher education by shaping the future of learning environments, teaching and learning practices, administration processes, accessibility, and inclusion while also requiring a focus on developing AI literacy and addressing ethical considerations. I leave a future gap for research: How can higher education institutions develop effective policies, governance frameworks, and faculty/staff training programs to guide the strategic adoption of AI technologies?

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## The Legal Imperative of Bawaslu's Oversight in Enforcing Verdict Compliance

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### Article History:

Submitted:

03-12-2024

Received:

06-12-2024

Accepted:

12-01-2025

### Keywords:

elections; bawaslu;  
follow-up of decisions  
supervision; legal  
certainty

### Abstract

Election is a democratic means to elect leaders and representatives of the people, where Bawaslu has a strategic role as an election supervisory institution. Bawaslu is tasked with ensuring that each stage of the election is in accordance with laws and regulations, with the legal basis listed in Law No. 7 of 2017. As a quasi-judicial institution, Bawaslu has the authority to issue decisions that are final and binding. However, in practice, the implementation of follow-up to Bawaslu decisions often faces challenges, such as disobedience or suboptimal implementation by the KPU and related parties. This study aims to examine the urgency of legal certainty in supervising the implementation of Bawaslu decisions and to determine the ideal model of supervision to fulfill the principle of legal certainty. The method used is normative juridical with a legislative approach, with primary and secondary data sources. The results of the study show that there is a legal vacuum that hinders the optimal implementation of the decision. Therefore, this study emphasizes the urgency of an integrated supervision model with strict evaluation and sanction mechanisms, which can increase compliance with Bawaslu decisions and ensure the implementation of elections in accordance with legal provisions.

## 1. Introduction

As an implementation of the idea of people's sovereignty, the running of the democratic system must ensure that the people have full involvement in the process of planning, regulating, implementing, and participating in supervising and providing assessments related to the implementation of power functions.<sup>1</sup> Based on the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia or called the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, sovereignty is in the hands of the people or it can be interpreted if the people have sovereignty, rights, and obligations in determining the choice of leaders who will later carry out government duties as well as take care of and serve the Indonesian people through the next General Election called elections.

Political parties as an important point in elections are needed as a bridge between the government and the people as a form of the work of democracy because without political parties, the implementation of democracy is impossible.<sup>2</sup> At this time, elections have a crucial position because elections are the most important mechanism in the implementation of representative democracy to elect people's representatives. Elections can also serve as indicators of a democratic country. In the perspective of Schumpeterian in Haryanto<sup>3</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Jimly Asshidiqie, "Membangun Konstitusionalitas Indonesia," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 13 (2016).

<sup>2</sup> Jimly Asshidiqie.

<sup>3</sup> Haryanto, *Klanisasi Demokrasi Politik Klan Qahhar Mudzakkar Di Sulawesi Selatan* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Polgov, 2014).

democracy is a "political method" that masters theories related to democracy, so in this case elections are part of the success of a country's democracy. In this perspective, it is clear that Schumpeterian explained that if the state wants to achieve the success of democracy through elections, the existence of modern political institutions, political participation, and power restrictions during the election process are the most important parts.<sup>4</sup>

Elections themselves in Article 22 E of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia or called the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia are held every 5 (five) years and are held directly, publicly, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of the election is to elect the President and Vice President who are considered by the public to be able to carry out the function of government power and to elect the people's representatives, including members of the House of Representatives, members of the Provincial House of Representatives, and members of the Regency/City Regional House of Representatives. As a form of people's sovereignty, elections are present as a tool in fulfilling democratic constitutional rights for all Indonesian people.<sup>6</sup> According to Yusup Kurnia in Firda A<sup>7</sup>, elections are part of an effort to realize "direct democracy" which is carried out by capturing the participation of the people in the process of determining public policies as well as efforts to implement the party's political aspirations into state policies. There are organizing institutions that help in the success of the election consisting of the General Election Commission (KPU) as the technical organizer, the Election Supervisory Agency (Bawaslu) as an institution in the supervision and enforcement of administrative violations and disputes over the election process, and the Election Organizer Honorary Council (DKPP) which has the authority to adjudicate violations related to violations that lead to the code of ethics of election organizers, the three election organizers have a position which is national, independent and independent.

Based on Article 1 number 7 of Law No. 7 of 2017, Bawaslu is tasked with supervising the entire process of holding elections in Indonesia. In carrying out these duties, Bawaslu is required to maintain independence, which means that the existence of Bawaslu is independent and free from various other parties or related to the implementation of its duties and authorities in the entire election process.<sup>8</sup> The existence of Bawaslu in the implementation of elections is a form of checks and balances or a control tool in the implementation of governance. In this case, it can be interpreted that Bawaslu is a balance to the KPU as the

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<sup>4</sup> Haryanto.

<sup>5</sup> Lusin Tammu and Zulkifli Aspan, "DOKTRINA : Journal of Law" 6, no. 2 (2023): 118-39, <https://doi.org/I:https://doi.org/10.31289/doktrina.v6i2.10023>.

<sup>6</sup> Firda Arifatuzzahrah, Irham Bashori Hasba, "Legal Certainty Of The Decision Of The Honorary Council Of Election Organizers On Violations Of The Code Of Ethics Of Election Organizers", *Usm Law Review* Vol 7.1 (2024), 70-83. <https://doi.org/10.26623/Julr.V7i1.7997>

<sup>7</sup> Yusup Kurnia, *Keadilan Dalam Penegakan Pelanggaran Etika Penyelenggara Pemilu*, *Jurnal Keadilan Pemilu*, Vol. 2, 2020. Hlm. <https://doi.org/10.55108/jkp.V1i2.175>

<sup>8</sup> Az Zahra, Zain Auralia, And Hanni Ambarasti, "Kekuatan Eksekutorial Putusan Badan Pengawas Pemilu Dalam Penyelesaian Pelanggaran Administrasi Pemilu" 1, No. 2 (2022): 81-99, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.59066/Jmi.V1i2.102>. <https://doi.org/10.59066/Jmi.V1i2.102>

technical organizer of the election.<sup>9</sup> The duties, authorities, and obligations of Bawaslu have developed not only in supervision but also in prevention, supervision, and enforcement where these changes are in line with various changes in regulations related to elections. The duties and authority of Bawaslu itself, in addition to being regulated in Law No. 7 of 2017, are strengthened again in the Bawaslu Regulation, or called Perbawaslu as in Article 465 of Law No. 7 of 2017. According to Robert A. Carp, as quoted by Syafrijal Mughni Madda<sup>10</sup>, the establishment of the judiciary aims to strengthen democracy and protect human rights, especially in vulnerable political situations. Political constituencies and close competition in the implementation of elections can trigger election administrative violations, election violations/crimes, disputes over the election process, disputes over election results, and ethical violations of election organizers.<sup>11</sup> In the electoral system in Indonesia itself, each law enforcement for violations and disputes in the election process will be handled by the institution depending on the type of violator. Regarding the decision of the Bawaslu decision which is final and binding, which means that the decision is mandatory to be held as stipulated in Article 462 of Law No. 7 of 2017, emphasizing that the decision must be implemented in accordance with the order of the law. The meaning of the word "mandatory" in this article shows the imperative nature, namely the order that must be obeyed by the intended party as stipulated in the provision.<sup>12</sup> The KPU's compliance as an *addressat* is to follow up on the Bawaslu decision through the KPU Decree and report to the Bawaslu through a Minutes and/or Decree or (SK) within 3 (three) days after the Bawaslu decision is read. If it is found that there is a delay and/or non-follow-up of the Bawaslu decision, Bawaslu needs to evaluate the results of its supervision. Supervision itself is all efforts to carry out preventive measures, in this case, prevention by using supervisory duties by all election supervisors or by involving election participants, namely the public, and using the media as a means of publication and supervision of forms of action on violations and disputes of the election process in order to ensure that starting from the preparation process to the implementation of the election in accordance with existing regulations.

According to Jimly Asshidiqie<sup>13</sup>, every country certainly has a legislative apparatus, so that supervision of every act or behavior of government institutions and citizens can be effective so that later the goals of the state can be pursued at a level of success. Bawaslu Regulation Number 5 of 2022 concerning Supervision of the Implementation of General Elections (hereinafter referred to as Perbawaslu No. 5 of 2022) only regulates election supervision and supervision procedures through coordination and control. The urgency of this form of supervision is becoming even clearer considering the Bawaslu decision regarding

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<sup>9</sup> Okvita Sekar Fadhilah, "The Role Of The General Election Supervisory Body ( Bawaslu ) In Overcoming And Acting On General Election Violations : A Review Of Law And Practice" 06, No. 1 (2024): 53-64.

<sup>10</sup> Syafrijal Mughni Madda, "Problematika Pengawasan Tindak Lanjut Putusan Bawaslu Dan Dkpp Dalam Penegakan Hukum Pemilu The Problems Of Supervision Of Follow-Up On Bawaslu Decisions And Dkpp Decisions In The Election Law Enforcement System" 19 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1948>. <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1948>

<sup>11</sup> Madda.

<sup>12</sup> Madda.

<sup>13</sup> Jimly Asshidiqie, "Building Indonesia's Constitution," *Constitutional Journal* Vol. 13 (2016).

violations and election disputes that are not properly followed up during the implementation process by the KPU. It can be seen that this situation shows that there are shortcomings in the election law enforcement system that must be overcome immediately and question how legal certainty is. In fact, legal certainty can be interpreted as certainty of law because there is a concrete force in the law. If there is no improvement, there is a risk that the number of violations in the presidential election will increase and the image of Indonesia's democracy will deteriorate. Indonesia as a country of law makes the rule of law a strong foundation in ensuring that the power of a government institution is limited by law and to ensure that every action taken by a government institution is in accordance with and obeys the rules that are still in force.<sup>14</sup> For example, supervision between election organizing institutions to enforce checks and balances. Bawaslu can still be considered to not have adequate authority in supervising the implementation of follow-up on its decision. This can create a legal vacuum that has the potential to create problems and uncertainty in law enforcement.

From the introduction written by the author regarding "The Legal Imperative Of Bawaslu's Oversight In Enforcing Verdict Compliance". Examining how the urgency of this form of supervision becomes increasingly clear considering that Bawaslu's decisions regarding election violations and disputes are not properly followed up during the implementation process by the KPU. It can be seen that this situation shows that there are deficiencies in the electoral law enforcement system that must be addressed immediately and question how legal certainty is. Legal certainty can be interpreted as the certainty of the law due to the concrete strength of the law.<sup>15</sup> If there is no improvement, there is a risk that the number of future election violations will increase and the image of Indonesian democracy will deteriorate. From the results of this study, the author focuses more on the urgency of supervising the follow-up of Bawaslu's decision and analyzing the ideal model of Bawaslu's supervision of the follow-up to its decision. Perbawaslu 5 Year 2022 has not regulated how Bawaslu's authority in terms of enforcement or coercion against defiance in the form of delayed or not followed up by Bawaslu's decision by the KPU so that it can disrupt legal certainty.<sup>16</sup> This section describes research that is interrelated with the author's research in order to add references for researchers. The following are related scientific works, among others: In Mada's research<sup>17</sup> in his research entitled "Problematics of Supervision of Follow-up to Bawaslu and DKPP Decisions in Election Law Enforcement" using qualitative research which is descriptive-analytical with normative juridical and empirical juridical or legal sociology approach methods. The research has similarities in highlighting Bawaslu's role in overseeing the implementation of elections and the importance of clear law enforcement. Bawaslu's role in supervision and how Bawaslu's final and binding decision must be implemented by the KPU

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<sup>14</sup> M.Si. Dr. H. Amiruddin, S.H. Et Al., *Hukum Tata Negara Dan Pengawasan Terhadap Kekuasaan Eksekutif* (Medan: Pt Media Penerbit Indonesia, 2024). P. 18

<sup>15</sup> Jamaluddin, "The Settlement Of Election Disputes By Bawaslu Reviewed From The Indonesian Justice System," 2022, 521-31.

<sup>16</sup> Budi Purwanto, Dina Puji Wahyuni, and Ahmad Rafiq Jatihusodo, "Unmasking Electoral Turmoil : The General Election Supervisory Agency ' s Battle Against Disputes in Indonesia ' s Democracy Introduction," *Indonesian State Law Review* 6 (2023), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15294/islrev.v6i1.68228>.

<sup>17</sup> Mada.

within three days. As for the differences, there are explanations related to the practical challenges faced by Bawaslu, especially related to the enforcement of decisions that are not properly implemented by the KPU, which creates a legal vacuum and uncertainty in law enforcement. Novembri Yusuf Simanjuntak's research<sup>18</sup> on Monitoring in the Election Implementation Process has a similar focus in this study regarding the role of supervision of the elections, but the approach is different. Where the approach in this study focuses on the empirical aspects of monitoring, this study is more directed to the normative aspects regulated in legislation, such as Law No. 7 Year 2017 and Perbawaslu. Simanjuntak focuses more on monitoring in the process of organizing elections, it can be seen that he examines more deeply the monitoring mechanisms carried out by related institutions, such as Bawaslu, KPU, and DKPP, in overseeing and controlling the implementation of elections and emphasizes a thorough analysis of the monitoring process, as well as the challenges faced by supervisory institutions in carrying out their duties. In addition, Simanjuntak also explores the practical obstacles faced in carrying out election monitoring in the field, which may involve difficulties in sanctioning violations and resolving disputes that arise during or after an election. Yusrizal's research<sup>19</sup> "The Urgency of Bawaslu's Decision in Resolving General Election Process Disputes" also raises the same issue, namely the importance of Bawaslu's decision in ensuring the holding of elections that are fair and free from fraud. However, Syaputra's research focuses more on analyzing the direct effect of Bawaslu's decision in resolving election disputes and the application of law to administrative violations and the election process. Meanwhile, this study highlights the legal imperative and challenges faced in ensuring that each Bawaslu decision is implemented by the KPU, as well as broader supervision of the implementation of the decision in order to maintain the validity and legal certainty of the election. Both have similarities in examining the effectiveness of Bawaslu's supervision, but this study adds a perspective on the legal vacuum that arises if there is no further enforcement of the decisions that have been issued.

## 2. Methods

This study uses normative legal methods by relying on primary and secondary legal sources through literature studies. Primary legal sources include laws and regulations, decisions (*beschikking*), and rulings from authorized institutions. Meanwhile, secondary legal sources include books, journal articles, papers, and tertiary legal materials such as information from the internet. This research also applies a statute approach to explore information related to the issues discussed.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. The Urgency of Legal Certainty in Supervising the Implementation of Bawaslu Decisions

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<sup>18</sup> Novembri Yusuf Simanjuntak, "Pemantauan Dalam Proses Penyelenggaraan Pemilu" 3, No. 3 (2017): 305–458, [https://doi.org/10.24054/issn.2443-2539.3\(3\)](https://doi.org/10.24054/issn.2443-2539.3(3)).

<sup>19</sup> Muhammad Yusrizal And Adi Syaputra, "Urgensi Putusan Bawaslu Dalam Penyelesaian Sengketa Proses Pemilihan Umum," *Hukum Tata Negara & Hukum Administrasi Negara* 1 No 1 (2022): 52, <https://ejournal.grondwet.id/index.php/gr/article/view/5>.

The implementation of elections cannot be separated from irregularities or violations of election rules that will create election disputes. Topo Santoso in Triningsih<sup>20</sup> argued that disputes in the implementation of elections in Indonesia generally arise from violations of election administration or dissatisfaction with decisions taken by election organizers. Based on Article 94 of Law No. 7 of 2017, Bawaslu can provide preventive measures for election violations and election disputes. Bawaslu itself can also take action on violations and decide disputes over the election process. Election administrative violations stem from findings or reports of violations during elections. Reports on alleged election administrative violations and election violations must have the signature of the Reporter or his or her attorney which is given in the form of 7 (seven) copies containing 1 (one) original duplicate sheet and 6 (six) copies of soft files or digital formats which are also accompanied by valid supporting evidence at least 2 (two).<sup>21</sup>

Article 461 paragraph (1) of Law No. 7 of 2017 states that, "Bawaslu, Provincial Bawaslu, Regency/City Bawaslu receive, inspect, review, and decide on election administrative violations". The authority of Bawaslu as a supervisory institution by monitoring all stages of the election. In supervising the election process, Bawaslu will directly supervise all stages of the election, starting from the candidate registration stage, the implementation of each candidate's campaign, the voting process which is the core process of the election, to the peak of the election process, namely the announcement of election results. The supervision is of course carried out to ensure that every stage of the election is carried out to maintain the validity of the election.<sup>22</sup>

Within the authority of Bawaslu who can decide disputes over the election process, Bawaslu will consider evidence during the examination hearing. The Bawaslu decision reflects the value of justice and provides legal certainty for the parties so that Bawaslu can impose sanctions on the party who commits the violation. But in its implementation, there is still disobedience to the Bawaslu decision that has been postponed or even not followed up by the KPU which can be questioned about the legal certainty. The authority of Bawaslu as an institution that has *constitutional importance* in law enforcement is mandated in Article 93 Letter B of Law No. 7 of 2017. Bawaslu, as a quasi-judicial institution, plays an important role in resolving various problems that arise during the election process through final and binding decisions that contain legal certainty.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the nature of Bawaslu's decision in handling administrative violations has broad implications for the implementation of elections.

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<sup>20</sup> Anna Triningsih, Meyrinda Rahmawaty H, And Alia Harumdani W, "Komparasi Mekanisme Penyelesaian Sengketa Pemilu Di Beberapa Negara Penganut Paham Demokrasi Konstitusional," 2022. [Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.31078/Jk936](http://dx.doi.org/10.31078/jk936)

<sup>21</sup> Zahra, Auralia, And Ambarasti,

<sup>22</sup> Fadhilah, "The Role Of The General Election Supervisory Body ( Bawaslu ) In Overcoming And Acting On General Election Violations : A Review Of Law And Practice [ Peran Badan Pengawas Pemilihan Umum ( Bawaslu ) Dalam Mengatasi Dan Menindak Pelanggaran Pemilihan Umum : Tinjauan Hukum Dan Praktik ]."

<sup>23</sup> Ruslan Husen, "The Existence Of Bawaslu In Dispute Resolution In The Election Process, Tadulako University, No. 1 (2022).

According to Lawrence M. Friedman<sup>24</sup>, the success of law enforcement is influenced by 3 (three) supporting components consisting of legal substance, legal structure, and legal culture. Referring to Friedman's opinion in Muhammad Yusrizal<sup>25</sup>, Bawaslu's position is in the position of a legal structure in the general election. The position of Bawaslu in the legal structure in Indonesia, although with a different scope, can still be said that the enforcement of election laws by Bawaslu still has a function similar to other legal structures such as the Police, the Prosecutor's Office, and the Supreme Court. As part of the law enforcement agency, the right decision-making by Bawaslu is urgently needed in the process of adjudicating the dispute being examined. Bawaslu is required to be able to process the data and evidence obtained during the trial until the verdict is handed down based on the principles of responsibility, professionalism, and justice. Based on the theory in the judicial power in deciding disputes, the most important is the conclusion that is based on the facts that have been revealed during the trial process and does not deviate from the existing legal rules.<sup>26</sup>

Article 462 of Law No. 7 of 2017 states that the KPU is required to follow up on the decision issued by Bawaslu with the deadline given is 3 (three) working days after the date the decision is read to take action in accordance with applicable regulations. The word "mandatory" in Indonesian itself has the meaning of "must be done and must not be abandoned" so it has sanctions if it is not done. The sanction itself in the article refers to election organizers who postpone or do not follow up on Bawaslu's decision in the form of ethical sanctions.

The KPU which has an obligation to follow up on Bawaslu's decision can be considered a form of appointment of integrity and professionalism because the KPU and Bawaslu are a unit in the election as election organizers.<sup>27</sup> The 3 (three) day deadline for the KPU to follow up on the Bawaslu decision is an effort to ensure legal certainty. Legal certainty itself is the main component in the formation of legal rules which is the basis for the creation of certainty of a legal rule. Without legal certainty, a person or an institution will not understand what to do until finally there is uncertainty which makes violence (chaos) caused by the absence of legal certainty. That legal certainty refers to how the enforcement of laws that are not vague clear and consistent or even if influenced by subjective circumstances wherever the implementation of the law will not be able to be influenced.<sup>28</sup> Perbawaslu 5 of 2022 has not regulated how Bawaslu's authority in terms of enforcement or coercion against disobedience in the form of postponement or non-follow-up of Bawaslu's decision by the KPU, in which

<sup>24</sup> Teddy Lesmana, Sh, "The Thoughts Of Lawrence Meir Friedman; The Legal System In The Perspective Of Social Sciences," Nusa Putra University, 2021, <https://Nusaputra.Ac.Id/Article/Pokok-Pokok-Pikiran-Lawrence-Meir-Friedman-Sistem-Hukum-Dalam-Perspektif-Ilmu-Sosial/>.

<sup>25</sup> Yusrizal Adi Syaputra, Muhammad. 2022. "Urgensi Putusan Bawaslu Dalam Penyelesaian Sengketa Proses Pemilihan Umum". *Grondwet* 1 (1). <https://Ejournal.Grondwet.Id/Index.Php/Gr/Article/View/5>. Hlm. 43

<sup>26</sup> Yusrizal And Syaputra, "Urgensi Putusan Bawaslu Dalam Penyelesaian Sengketa Proses Pemilihan Umum."

<sup>27</sup> Rian Adhivira Prabowo Muhlisina, Luqman Hakimb, "Pertautan Yang Legal Dan Yang Etis : Pemaknaan Regulasi Kpu Dan Bawaslu Dalam Putusan Dkpp" *Jurnal Tata Kelola Pemilu Indonesia* 4 No. 1 (2022): 121-41, <https://doi.org/10.46874/tkp.v4i1.546>.

<sup>28</sup> Mario Julyano Et Al., "Konstruksi Penalaran Positivisme Hukum" *Jurnal Crepido*, Vol. 01 (2019): Hlm. 15. <https://doi.org/10.14710/crepido.1.1.13-22>

case Bawaslu only has the right to report to the DKPP if the KPU has committed an ethical violation.<sup>29</sup> The existence of a legal vacuum related to how the Bawaslu must take action or how the Bawaslu acts in monitoring or supervising the implementation of the decision causes the urgency of the formation of a Bawaslu Regulation which is made specifically related to supervision so that every Bawaslu decision remains standard as regulated in the Law.

### 3.2. Model of Supervision of Bawaslu Decisions on Follow-up Decisions to Meet Legal Certainty

According to Suyamto, as quoted by Angger Sigit<sup>30</sup>, supervision is an effort or act to find out and assess the actual reality of responsibility in the implementation of duties whether it is in accordance with what it should be. The purpose of supervision itself in a narrow sense is the suitability of whether the tasks carried out are appropriate with the predetermined benchmarks. The purpose of supervision is to ensure that the implementation of tasks is in accordance with the standards or benchmarks that have been determined. Supervision is also a tool to compare "*Das Sollen*" (what should happen according to plan) and "*Das Sein*" (reality or implementation that occurs), so that it can be known whether there are irregularities or inconsistencies that need to be corrected.

In the implementation of elections, supervision is carried out in all processes from planning, and preparation during implementation to evaluation. All of which are an important and inseparable part of achieving fairness in elections<sup>31</sup>. Santoso as cited by Simanjuntak<sup>32</sup> that election monitoring should involve a wide range of parties, including community leaders, cultural figures, artists, and the mass media. This is because the tasks of monitoring and supervising elections have the same great responsibility, namely to ensure that elections take place honestly and fairly. The supervisors who have been appointed by Bawaslu will certainly be given legal protection and security-related protection from the Indonesian Government in the process of monitoring and collecting information during the follow-up process to Bawaslu's decision.<sup>33</sup>

Supervision itself is divided into two types based on how it is implemented. First, is direct supervision, which is supervision carried out with the direct presence of a supervisor at the place where the activity takes place. This allows supervisors to see the situation on the ground directly and immediately deal with any issues that arise. Second, indirect supervision, is supervision that is carried out without the need to be physically present, but only through reports, documents, or other data collected to monitor the implementation of tasks.<sup>34</sup> From a legal perspective itself, supervision has the meaning of a process in observing whether an activity has been carried out in accordance with the rules. Bawaslu in Indonesia comes with

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<sup>29</sup> Mada.

<sup>30</sup> S.H. Angger Sigit Pramukti, S.H. Dan Meylani Chahyaningsih, "Pengawasan Hukum Terhadap Aparatur Negara" (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Yustisia, 2016), [https://books.google.co.id/books?id=Mrvieaaaqbaj&pg=Pa1&source=Gbs\\_Toc\\_R&cad=1#v=OnePage&q&f=false](https://books.google.co.id/books?id=Mrvieaaaqbaj&pg=Pa1&source=Gbs_Toc_R&cad=1#v=OnePage&q&f=false).

<sup>31</sup> Novembri Yusuf Simanjuntak, "Pemantauan Dalam Proses Penyelenggaraan Pemilu" *Jurnal Bawaslu* 3, No. 3 (2017): 305-458. Issn 2443-2539, 3(3), 305- 321

<sup>32</sup> Simanjuntak.

<sup>33</sup> Simanjuntak.

<sup>34</sup> Angger Sigit Pramukti, S.H. Dan Meylani Chahyaningsih, "Pengawasan Hukum Terhadap Aparatur Negara."

the task of supervising the entire process of holding elections as well as deciding violations and disputes in the election process.<sup>35</sup> Regarding the duties and authority of Bawaslu regarding supervision, it can be found in Perbawaslu No. 5 of 2022 in Articles 5 to 8 which directs how to supervise the scope of the stages of implementing the election. Article 10 of Perbawaslu No. 5 of 2022 provides more explanation regarding supervisory procedures through coordination and control, which in its implementation is still based on Perbawaslu which more specifically regulates the form or pattern in the relationship and procedures of election supervisors. Meanwhile, regarding how Bawaslu makes coercive efforts or enforcement efforts against its decisions that are postponed or even not followed up, the KPU is still not contained in the Perbawaslu, but Bawaslu is only authorized to report as a form of ethical violation.

Regarding Bawaslu supervision, it will be in the form of supervision that is carried out directly (direct control) by going into the field to supervise all stages of the election as well as indirect supervision or (indirect control) obtained from the form of reports.<sup>36</sup> The method of supervision that is carried out directly is with the presence of direct personnel from Bawaslu who carry out monitoring both in the field and on a modern basis by utilizing technology with the initial rarity of compiling a monitoring letter after 3 (three) working days after the Bawaslu decision is issued. It is known that the KPU is following up on the Bawaslu decision by issuing a KPU Decision which is submitted through a letter. However, with decisions that have been postponed or not followed up, Bawaslu does not have a standard related to the Standard Operation Service (SOP) regarding the supervision of its decisions, which makes the existence of legal loopholes that can be used as a reason for law enforcement in the purpose of seeking justice.

#### 4. Conclusions

The importance of legal certainty in monitoring Bawaslu's decisions in the implementation of elections is very clear, especially in relation to the follow-up of decisions issued. Bawaslu has the authority to take action against violations and resolve election disputes, but in practice, there is still non-compliance with decisions that have been issued, both by the KPU and other related parties. This indicates a legal gap that affects legal certainty in the electoral process. Bawaslu is tasked with ensuring that the implementation of elections runs honestly and fairly, in accordance with applicable law. Supervision can be carried out directly (going to the field) or indirectly (through reports and data). However, there are still shortcomings in terms of supervision procedures, especially related to the enforcement of decisions that have not been followed, which have not been regulated in detail in Perbawaslu, causing uncertainty in law enforcement. Therefore, Bawaslu needs to develop clearer regulations regarding supervision procedures and actions that can be taken if decisions are not implemented in accordance with applicable provisions. Thus, legal certainty in the implementation of elections can be guaranteed, and the integrity and professionalism of

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<sup>35</sup> Andi Intan Purnamasari, "Redesigning The Handling Of Administrative Election Results Redesain Penanganan Pelanggaran Administratif Di Bawaslu Pasca Penetapan Hasil Pemilu," 2023, /<https://doi.org/10.57235/Aurelia.V2i2.755>.

<sup>36</sup> Mada.

election organizers, especially the KPU, can be maintained. The establishment of more detailed and firm regulations will help create more transparent, accountable, and transparent elections.

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# ISRG Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (ISRGJAHSS)



**ISRG PUBLISHERS**

Abbreviated Key Title: ISRG J Arts Humanit Soc Sci

**ISSN: 2583-7672 (Online)**

Journal homepage: <https://isrgpublishers.com/isrgjahss>

Volume – III Issue-I (January- February) 2025

Frequency: Bimonthly



## The Deployment of Military Robots and the Principle of Distinction in International Humanitarian Law: Balancing Human Protection or Emerging Challenges

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| **Received:** 14.01.2025 | **Accepted:** 20.01.2025 | **Published:** 28.01.2025

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this study is to examine the use of military robots in light of the principle of distinction of international humanitarian law. The article seeks to answer the question of whether military robots can protect civilians during conflicts and whether they raise new ethical and legal challenges. The study is based on a qualitative analysis, in which the relevant principles of international humanitarian law, the technical capabilities of military robots, and their practical experience during conflicts are assessed. In addition, an in-depth study of existing literature and legal regulations was conducted to better understand the topic. The study shows that military robots can be useful in protecting civilians, but their decisions are based on artificial intelligence, which sometimes makes mistakes. In addition, the implementation of the principle of distinction cannot be fully guaranteed. Military robots are a new tool for saving human lives on the battlefield, but their use has raised a number of legal and ethical challenges for international humanitarian law. Recommendations include creating specific laws and regulations for military robots, designing AI systems to enforce distinction, ensuring human supervision, and conducting further scientific and legal research.*

**Keywords:** Civilians, IHL, Military Robots, Protocol I 1977, the Principle of Distinction

## INTRODUCTION

The development of military technology, especially robots, has brought about a major change in the nature of warfare. The use of military robots emerged in the 20th and 21st centuries in light of technological developments aimed at reducing human casualties and increasing the effectiveness of warfare. Furthermore, the principle of distinction, within the framework of international humanitarian law (IHL), is a fundamental part of the protection of civilians during hostilities. The relationship between this principle and technological developments is a contemporary and significant issue. The development and use of military robots is an important part of the development of new technologies that have not only changed the battlefield, but also posed serious challenges to international law and ethics. In this regard, plans have been made for the widespread use of robotic technologies by the armies of various countries, including China, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. The widespread use of these technologies has led robotics experts to develop appropriate definitions and standards for this new technology. The use of military robots has a direct impact on the nature of warfare, raising questions: Does this technology protect human life or lead to increased civilian casualties and an unjust escalation of hostilities? The principle of distinction is a fundamental part of IHL, and analyzing military robots in light of this principle is important for human rights and international security. The study explores the development and use of military robots, their legal implications, their potential impacts, and the need for a balance between human life protection and technological advancement. This study is a fundamental resource for legal scholars, legal institutions, and military strategists. It helps to understand new technological challenges within the framework of international law and provides practical and theoretical recommendations in this regard. The main problem of the use of military robots is whether this technology is fully compatible with IHL and the protocol 1 1977. The principle of distinction, which maintains a balance between preventing harm to civilians and military advantage, is under pressure in the light of technological developments in the current era. While the use of military robots offers new opportunities for the precision of warfare and the protection of human life, on the one hand, it also creates new problems and legal challenges for the implementation of the principle of distinction.

### *Concept, Robots and IHL*

There are many definitions of robots, but in general, a robot is a machine that performs specific tasks based on remote control or programmed patterns. In the use of these machines, called "robotic weapons" or "unmanned weapon systems", there is also a third level of control, which is related to the degree of autonomy of the robot.<sup>1</sup> The principle of distinction is a fundamental rule of IHL that emphasizes that a clear distinction must be made between military objectives and civilians in all hostilities. This principle is considered a fundamental part of the laws of war under Article 48 of Protocol I.<sup>2</sup> There are three types of robot autonomy: Remote control (controlled by a human), semi-autonomous (where the human is the observer), fully autonomous (where the human is absent and the robot performs autonomous operations).<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Kumar, "Ethical Concerns in Military Robotics: A Comprehensive Analysis."

<sup>2</sup> Simon, "Military Robotics."

<sup>3</sup> Mahendra, "Military Robots - Artificial Intelligence +."

widespread use of military robots has led to serious legal and ethical challenges with the use of technology. The use of robots is particularly problematic with the Geneva Convention protocols on the use of "unnecessary damage" and "indiscriminate weapons" in war.<sup>4</sup> These rules emphasize that weapons must not be inhumane and must not cause harm that is contrary to the laws of war. Key principles of the laws of war include: Distinction, there must be a distinction between military and civilian targets, and only military targets may be attacked. Proportionality, there must be a balance between military advantage and civilian casualties, meaning that civilian casualties should be minimized as much as possible. Responsibility, actions taken by robotic weapons must be properly attributed to a human.<sup>5</sup> The legal situation regarding the use of robotic weapons remains particularly complex, especially with the development of this technology. It is important to ensure that these weapons comply with the rules of international law. Article 16 of Protocol I states that each State must ensure that new weapons of war are in accordance with international law.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, there is also concern about the use of robotic weapons, which must be clarified in order to ensure that these weapons comply with the rules of the law of war. Given the widespread use of robotic weapons, it is necessary to develop specific standards and rules in the field of international law. To this end, it will be necessary for the international community to work together to establish rules on the use of robotic weapons that are consistent with human rights and the laws of war. The use of robotic weapons as a new technology will bring about a major change in the battlefield. However, the use of this technology must be examined in the light of international law and ethics, so that it does not violate human rights and does not lead to significant changes in the laws of war. The development of this technology must comply with international legal regulations to reduce the risk of civilian casualties in international conflicts. The use of military robots raises important issues of IHL and the protection of civilians. According to humanitarian law, in times of war, the distinction of armed forces must be strictly observed to protect civilians, and combat must be conducted only against military objectives. Thus, the use of military robots requires a critical point to avoid harming civilian life and civilian infrastructure.

### *The Principle of Distinction, Civilians and Military Targets*

A major challenge for military robots is that they must be able to accurately distinguish between civilians and military targets on the battlefield.<sup>7</sup> If robots succeed in this area, it will be a significant advance in the implementation of IHL, as they will work to protect civilians in war situations. It is important that robots are used only to fulfill military objectives, and do not pose any risk to the lives of civilians. Advanced robotic systems, such as advanced cognitive technologies, may accurately distinguish between military and civilian targets, but this process still requires human supervision. In complex combat environments, robots may make incorrect

<sup>4</sup> Shaw, "Geneva Conventions | International Humanitarian Law, Protections & History | Britannica."

<sup>5</sup> Tinkler, "Does International Humanitarian Law Confer Undue Legitimacy on Violence in War?"

<sup>6</sup> Protocol additional to the Geneva conventions of 12 august 1949, and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (protocol I), of 8 June 1977, *article 16*.

<sup>7</sup> Shaw, "Geneva Conventions | International Humanitarian Law, Protections & History | Britannica."

decisions based on changing conditions, and human intervention is required for this. Human reason and judgment may be able to correct the shortcomings of the robot system and technological errors. IHL should regulate the use of robots in situations that prevent harm to civilians. If robots cause harm to civilians, this would be a violation of IHL, which would give rise to legal and moral responsibilities. Although robots can help implement IHL in some wars, their use should still be subject to the supervision of human rights and international law. The use of military robots should only be when it is ensured that they are used exclusively for military purposes and that there is zero likelihood of harm to civilians. Any errors or violations in this regard should give rise to legal, moral and political responsibilities. Advances in robotic technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) may increase their capabilities to protect civilians in armed conflicts and be used solely for military purposes. However, this development should be in the light of international law, human rights and moral standards because technological advancement alone is not enough, its proper use and monitoring is essential for the protection of human rights.

### ***The Principle of Distinction***

The principle of distinction and its application raise a wide range of issues in international law, which refer to the protection of civilians in war situations and the precision of the identification of military objectives. The principle of distinction is a fundamental principle of international humanitarian law, which states that in war, civilian life and property must be protected, and that war must be waged only against military objectives.<sup>8</sup> The principle of distinction is an important legal requirement for both parties to a war, according to which armed attacks against civilians and civilian objects are prohibited. Also, attacks on military objectives must be carried out with due care to avoid harming civilians. This principle, in fact, strikes a balance between the need for self-defense and the protection of human rights. Article 18 of Additional Protocol I, requires both parties to a war to distinguish between civilians and military objectives at all times.<sup>9</sup> This article, in fact, guarantees the morality of war and the protection of human rights. The implementation of this article is essential to ensure that civilians are protected from harm in the battlefield. Article 25 of Protocol I, on military objectives, states that only those objectives which, by their nature, location, purpose or use, can be the object of an attack.<sup>10</sup> This article states that in a war situation, only those objectives which are essential to the military or the war effort may be destroyed. It states that the process of warfare must be conducted in such a way as to achieve military advantage only, and that civilians or their infrastructure must not be affected. Article 23 of Protocol I, on the protection of civilians, emphasizes that full protection must be ensured against the dangers of military operations against civilians and objects in the battlefield.<sup>11</sup> According to this article, indiscriminate attacks in which civilians are harmed are prohibited. This article defines indiscriminate attacks and puts an end to such operations, as indiscriminate

<sup>8</sup> Bugnion, “Just Wars, Wars of Aggression and International Humanitarian Law.”

<sup>9</sup> *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 18.*

<sup>10</sup> *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 25.*

<sup>11</sup> *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 23.*

attacks are considered the most serious violation of human rights. Although the principle of separation is clearly stated in legal texts, its application in practice is fraught with difficulties. In war, people are always confronted with situations that make it difficult to apply the principle of separation between civilians and military objectives. These issues are so complex that even trained and experienced officers sometimes find it difficult to apply the principle of distinction. A prominent example is the “participation in hostilities” of civilians, which, according to Article 23, prohibits targeting civilians unless they are directly participating in hostilities. However, defining “participation in hostilities” in practice is a serious challenge, especially when the conflict takes the form of unconventional or resistance warfare, in which armed forces are hidden among civilians, making distinction operations more difficult. The use of military robots is consistent with the principle of distinction, and this consistency depends on the type of robot and the degree of its use. Unmanned systems that operate under human supervision and whose operators are generally outside the battlefield have fewer problems implementing the principle of distinction. However, there are some differences, such as the decision-making ability of robots and how their area of use is regulated. When robots operate without human supervision in combat, serious risks and problems in implementing the principle of distinction can arise, as robots may have shortcomings in terms of accurate target recognition or protection of civilians.

### ***Challenges in Applying the Principle of Distinction***

The problems with implementing the principle of distinction of arms and autonomous weapons, two important aspects have been presented: The first aspect is the technological capabilities of unmanned systems, and the second is the complexity of autonomous weapon systems.<sup>12</sup> Unmanned systems (such as drones) have great capabilities on the battlefield, especially in that they can monitor a location for several hours and collect information before attacking. Despite these capabilities, the use of these systems has given rise to much debate regarding the increased civilian casualties. In particular, US drone strikes have shown high civilian casualties in several cases, which raises difficult issues for implementing the principle of distinction. The past twenty years of war in Afghanistan have killed a large number of civilians in US drone strikes. Between 2016 and 2020, 3,977 civilian casualties in Afghanistan were caused by airstrikes, with international forces responsible for the majority (62% – 1,309 of 2,122).<sup>13</sup> An important aspect is that the “targeted attack” strategy, which targets individuals associated with terrorist activities, works on the basis of information. But this information is often superficial and imprecise. In one particular attack, a person was killed simply because their hair color and height resembled bin Laden. This example illustrates the fact that the information from unmanned systems is not always sufficient and accurate to implement the principle of distinction. Autonomous weapons systems (which can make their own decisions automatically) pose further difficulties in implementing the principle of distinction.<sup>14</sup> Two basic situations are presented in these systems: First, when the

<sup>12</sup> Kumar, “Ethical Concerns in Military Robotics: A Comprehensive Analysis.”

<sup>13</sup> Jones, “40% of All Civilian Casualties from Airstrikes in Afghanistan – Almost 1,600 – in the Last Years Were Children.”

<sup>14</sup> Bakhsh, “Compatibility between international humanitarian law and Islamic law or war (jihad).”

user is present in the battle, the soldier is familiar with the battle situation and interprets the system's information to understand which targets are military and which are civilian. Second, when the user is outside the battlefield, this situation is more complicated, because the user only has access to the system's information, the accuracy of which may be low and it becomes very difficult to distinguish between civilian and military targets. For autonomous weapons, it is necessary that these systems work based on precise identification marks, such as the recognition of military outfit or specific characteristics. Although with the development of technology, these systems may be able to better distinguish between military and civilian, in the absence of "identification marks" in wars, this distinction remains difficult. A key challenge in the field of autonomous robots is that these devices must be able to understand the environment in which they operate as well as human intentions, such as combat-related objectives and conditions. According to opponents, robots are usually incapable of doing this, because they cannot understand not only the environment but also human intentions. Overall, this discussion shows that although technology is advancing, the implementation of the principle of distinction has many problems in practice. The accuracy of information from unmanned systems and autonomous weapons and the difficulty of identifying their signatures still pose a major challenge in distinguishing between military and civilian targets. The issue of identifying civilians is a fundamental challenge for autonomous weapon systems. Although these devices can accurately target enemy forces, it is difficult to distinguish civilians. The definition of civilians is affected by the complex circumstances of war. For example, a soldier may be a collateral casualty, making it difficult to judge whether he is acting in accordance with the laws of war. The principle of doubt and skepticism is an important issue in war. Article 23(3) of Protocol I, which deals with the benefit of the doubt in relation to human beings, emphasizes under international law that doubt must be given to the individual, in order to ensure his safety in life.<sup>15</sup> This issue is particularly complex for autonomous weapons systems, as robots will not be able to deal with the same skepticism as humans, which in turn prevents the killing of innocent people in war. It is not enough to simply program ethical constraints such as "do not shoot civilians" for autonomous weapons systems. These systems must be able to identify civilians, and if they do not, it is up to the human commanders to decide. By putting in place ethical rules to enforce this, this issue becomes even more complex. Humans generally make judgments based on emotions, analysis, and the situation, while robots or systems do not have the capacity to feel and think. The difference in the level of skepticism and analysis is evident in that humans use this capacity to determine legitimate targets in war, but it is difficult for robots to make decisions based solely on information, because they lack skepticism and analysis. Concerns have been raised by human rights observers about the weaknesses of autonomous weapons systems, in particular the lack of emotions and compassion that humans have that can prevent them from killing civilians. It is essential to ensure that robots, in place of these shortcomings, have legal, ethical and human rights guarantees. Although some have their own laws that allow the use of autonomous weapons, this is only possible in cases where the systems have the ability to differentiate. If the system is unable to differentiate, then its use is considered illegal. This point is useful

<sup>15</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 23(3).

for law enforcement in the event of a suspension of use, if those devices do not have the ability to differentiate legally.

#### ***Application of the Principle of Distinction by Military Robots***

The application of the principle of distinction to military robots and remotely controlled devices is an important issue of IHL. The principle of distinction emphasizes that in war, a clear distinction must always be made between military objectives and civilian persons or property. The purpose of this principle is to protect the lives and property of civilians so that they are not harmed during hostilities. Article 48, this article states that all parties to a conflict must at all times distinguish between military and civilian objects, and must direct their attacks only against military objectives.<sup>16</sup> Article 51 (2), this article states that, in order to protect civilians, civilians may never be the object of direct attacks.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, actions that indirectly harm civilians must be strictly prohibited. Remotely controlled equipment remain under direct human control, which facilitates the application of the principle of distinction. For example, if operations are carried out with the help of drones, it is up to the human decision-making power not to attack civilian targets. The use of autonomous robots raises serious concerns for the application of the principle of distinction, since these devices cannot assess and distinguish between combat situations. According to the principles of Article 57 (2), any action must be focused on the protection of civilians in advance, which autonomous devices still have shortcomings in this regard.<sup>18</sup> Attacks that do not respect the principle of distinction are considered war crimes under the Statute of the International Criminal Court. In this regard, Article 8 makes it clear that carrying out attacks that intentionally cause harm to civilian life or property is a crime.<sup>19</sup> Example, an attack on a munitions factory where civilians are working, although considered a military objective, violates the principle of distinction if the attack disproportionately harms civilians. As the International Criminal Court report (1991) shows, distinguishing between military and civilian targets in war situations, especially in the use of autonomous means, is a major challenge.<sup>20</sup> Article 57, this article emphasizes that any attack must be carefully planned to avoid harm to civilians and property. The principle of distinction is an important foundation for the protection of civilians in war.<sup>21</sup> The application of this principle, especially in the use of military robots, must ensure accuracy and responsibility in accordance with international law. Any attack that violates the principle of separation is considered a violation of international law and must be strictly prevented.

#### ***The Issue of Liability, Military Robots and Principle of Distinction***

<sup>16</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 48.

<sup>17</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 51(2).

<sup>18</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 57(2).

<sup>19</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 8.

<sup>20</sup> Tinkler, "Does International Humanitarian Law Confer Undue Legitimacy on Violence in War?"

<sup>21</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 57.

The issue of liability for the use of military robots can also be analyzed in light of the principle of distinction in IHL. The principle of distinction is recognized as a fundamental rule of IHL that refers to the importance of regulating hostilities to protect civilians during hostilities. According to Article IV of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Article 57 of the Protocol I of 1977, any action taken in the use of military robots must be assessed with due regard to the protection of civilians.<sup>22</sup> These articles adhere to the principle of distinction, which states that neither side in the conflict should harm civilians or civilian objects during hostilities. The principle of distinction becomes particularly important when determining responsibility for the use of military robots. Whether a robot is semi-autonomous or fully autonomous, responsibility for its actions must be clearly attributed to a relevant person, such as a commander or a state. This distinction helps to resolve the issue of who is responsible if a robot takes unlawful action against civilians. According to Article 36 of the Protocol I, technology used in warfare must comply with the principles of humanitarian law.<sup>23</sup> These principles, through the principle of distinction, ensure that technology is used in a way that includes appropriate measures to protect civilians and does not violate the essential laws of war. The principle of distinction also clarifies who is responsible. If a commander is unaware of the use of an autonomous or semi-autonomous robot or does not have certain information about its actions, his responsibility remains in any case. This distinction refers to the principle of military responsibility, which requires a commander to use his or her best efforts to protect civilians in the use of equipment under his or her command. If a robot causes harm to civilians due to technical defects, this raises the issue of liability of the manufacturer or designer based on the principle of distinction. It states that technical errors or poor design of a robot are the responsibility of those who built or designed it, not the person who used it on the battlefield. The use of military robots and state responsibility are linked to the principle of distinction in IHL. The principle of distinction is a fundamental principle in IHL that distinguishes between civilians and combatants in times of war. This principle protects the life, dignity, and security of civilians in combat operations. According to the principle of distinction, if a robot acts with complete autonomy, its actions must be controlled by humans to prevent any risk to civilians. If a robot makes decisions without the control of a commander, then the determination of responsibility under the principle of distinction becomes more complicated. In the application of the principle of distinction, the actions of the robot must be distinguished from those of civilians. The International Law Commission has defined "force majeure" in Article 23, the principle of force majeure is related to the principle of distinction, because if the actions of a robot violate the rules of war due to unforeseen technical problems, the defense of force majeure may lead to the exclusion of liability.<sup>24</sup> However, according to the principle of distinction, preventive measures must be taken in such cases so that the lives of civilians are not endangered. According to the principle of distinction, the commander must have control over the actions of his forces. If he knew or should have known about the operation of the robot that civilians would be harmed as a result

<sup>22</sup> *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 4 and 57.*

<sup>23</sup> *Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 36.*

<sup>24</sup> *International Law Commission, article 23.*

of the use of this device, his responsibility is determined. According to the principle of distinction, any action that violates the laws of war and the principles of protecting civilians must be redressed by the commander or his subordinates. According to the principle of distinction, robots are not considered human beings who commit crimes.<sup>25</sup> Responsibility for the actions of a robot should rest with the humans who control or program it. The purpose of the principle of distinction is to ensure that civilians are protected from harm in war operations. According to the principle of distinction, a state must accept full responsibility for the use of a robot, and if the robot commits an act that violates human rights, the state must correct it. State responsibility should not be limited to the use of military equipment under its control, but should also apply to the stages of the creation and development of the robot. In light of the development of technology, in accordance with the principle of distinction, necessary measures should be taken to protect civilians in the context of the use of robots. If the rules of war are violated due to a technical defect of the robot, responsibility should lie with those involved in the creation, development, and control of the robot. Schmidt's view is an extension of the principle that if a robot commits war crimes, responsibility should lie with the humans who decide to program or use the robot.<sup>26</sup> Thus, Schmidt argues in light of the principle of distinction that if a robot commits an unlawful act against civilians during a war, the robot's creator or those who use it should be held responsible, not just the robot, because the robot itself is not human and responsibility for its actions should lie with humans. Thus, according to the principle of distinction, responsibility for the actions of a robot should lie with the humans who program or choose to operate it. This is based on the fact that a robot is merely a tool that humans control and program. According to this concept, if a robot commits war crimes, responsibility should lie with the humans who decide to use, build, and operate the robot, not with the robot's autonomous actions. Thus, the principle of distinction is essential to ensure that the laws of war are fully observed in war operations, and that humans should be held responsible for crimes. However, the principle of distinction of powers is a fundamental legal framework for the use of military robots, which plays an important role in protecting civilians and determining state and command responsibilities. The division of responsibility based on the autonomy of the robot, the power of the commander, and the technical shortcomings is necessary to ensure that the principles of war and human rights are respected.

## METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

The study uses qualitative analysis to examine the principles of distinction of IHL, the technical capabilities of military robots, and the legal legitimacy and ethical aspects of their use. It evaluates the distinction between civilians and combatants, evaluates the artificial intelligence of military robots, and examines available technical information and legal sources.

## RESULT

The study found that, the use of military robots is not fully compatible with Protocol I of 1977 and International Humanitarian Law (IHL), although technology offers solutions to some problems

<sup>25</sup> Shaw, "Geneva Conventions | International Humanitarian Law, Protections & History | Britannica."

<sup>26</sup> Goetz, Kiesler, and Powers, "Matching Robot Appearance and Behavior to Tasks to Improve Human-Robot Cooperation."

on the battlefield through development and innovation. This technology offers some opportunities for the protection of civilians, but in practice it raises issues of its compatibility with IHL and Protocol I. Protocol I of 1977 focuses on the principle of separation, according to which combatants must be separated from civilians during hostilities. Military robots, which have autonomy, can carry out operations on the battlefield, but protecting the safety of civilians during these operations is difficult without careful monitoring of the activities of the robots. The use of this technology must be in accordance with the principle of separation, which in practice depends on a careful assessment of the activities of the robots and the responsibility of humans. The issue of responsibility for the use of military robots is complex. Protocol I of 1977 emphasizes the responsibility of states, but in view of the autonomy of robots and the development of technology, changes in international law are needed to fully distribute this responsibility. According to Schmidt's theory, responsibility for the operation of military robots should lie with humans, not just with the robots themselves. Protocol I of 1977 emphasizes the need to implement universal principles for the protection of civilians. The use of military robots must be in accordance with these principles. There must be precise rules for the operation of robots and appropriate mechanisms for human oversight. Protocol I of 1977 emphasizes the direct role of humans in implementing humanitarian law. It is necessary to maintain a balance between the autonomy of robots and human values. Although robots have autonomy of operation, it is necessary to take into account the ethics of war and humanitarian law. Thus, the use of military robots requires not only technological advancements, but also the development of laws to ensure proper coordination with the principles of IHL, in particular the 1977 Protocol I, and the assurance of human oversight. The use of this technology must be consistent with the protection of civilians, the division of responsibilities, and humanitarian values in war situations.

## DISCUSSION

From the result, that the principle of distinction emphasizes the importance of and the urgent need for the use of technology to protect civilians. The distinction of combatants from civilians in the field of war is a fundamental principle of humanitarian law, and that the operation of military robots must be conducted in the light of this principle is an important reminder. The principle of distinction emphasizes the limitation of the autonomy of robots, but the details of technological means that could improve distinction are not provided. Could the development of AI be a solution to this problem? No explanations or evidence have been provided. The Schmitt's theory reflects well that responsibility should remain in the hands of humans, and that the autonomy of technology without human supervision is dangerous. The division of responsibility calls for changes in international law in light of technological developments, but it does not explain how and in what form these changes should occur. The lack of practical proposals for changing legal and ethical frameworks is a significant gap. The operation of robots should be consistent with the principle of the protection of civilians, which is important for the implementation of humanitarian law. However, this section is stated in general terms, and it is not explained how military robots can be used to protect civilians. For example, can technological developments in robots, such as precision targeting systems, improve the protection of civilians? The principles make a reasonable argument that the autonomy of technology should be monitored under the umbrella of human values. These points are

particularly relevant for the ethics of war. However, no practical guidance or procedure is provided for implementing the balance between human values and technology. The lack of proposals for international laws, technical standards, and frameworks for controlling robotics to address this issue is a weakness. The killing of civilians by the US in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria after the September 11 attacks through drone strikes, military robots, and autonomous weapons is in no way consistent with the principle of distinction.

## CONCLUSION

The study reveals that military robots while offering some battlefield solutions, are not fully compatible with Protocol I of 1977 and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The principle of separation, which requires combatants to be separated from civilians, is difficult to protect without careful monitoring of robot activities. Responsibility for using military robots is complex, and changes in international law are needed to distribute this responsibility. Schmidt's theory suggests that responsibility for robot operation should lie with humans, not just the robots themselves. The use of military robots requires technological advancements and laws to ensure proper coordination with IHL principles and human oversight. The principle of distinction emphasizes the importance of technology in protecting civilians, particularly in the field of war. It calls for changes in international law to adapt to technological advancements but lacks practical guidance on how to implement these changes. Schmitt's theory suggests that responsibility should remain in human hands, and technology autonomy without human supervision is dangerous. The principle also calls for a balance between human values and technology, particularly in the ethics of war. However, the lack of proposals for international laws, technical standards, and frameworks for controlling robotics is a significant weakness. The recommendation is for developing specific laws and regulations for military robot use, human oversight to prevent errors, advancement in artificial intelligence systems to protect civilians, thorough ethical research to clarify their use, and international cooperation to establish comprehensive international laws and standards. Military robots pose practical and ethical challenges, necessitating further exploration for improved civilian safety during conflicts and special research to address the ethical issues surrounding human killing.

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## The International Humanitarian Law and AI Deployment in Afghanistan's War: A Just War Theory (2001-2021)

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### Article Info

**ISSN (online):** 2582-7138

**Volume:** 06

**Issue:** 01

**January-February 2025**

**Received:** 09-12-2024

**Accepted:** 10-01-2025

**Page No:** 1193-1200

### Abstract

The aim of this study is to find a balance between the widespread use of artificial intelligence (AI) and the elucidation of the just theory of war with international human rights principles. The study examines the expansion of airstrikes and drones by US forces in the war in Afghanistan, taking into account human rights, the rules of war, and the need to protect civilians. The study is based on a qualitative analysis, in which the rules of war, international human rights, and the use of artificial intelligence are analyzed. In addition to a review of existing literature and legal documents, reports on the impact of drone strikes in Afghanistan were evaluated. The study shows that drone strikes based on artificial intelligence have often increased the number of civilian casualties, which is in conflict with international law and the rules of war. The widespread use of artificial intelligence on the battlefield has created challenges in upholding the principles of human rights, which is contrary to the requirements of the just theory. The international community's efforts should focus on reassessing the impact of drone strikes and establishing stricter rules of engagement, especially for the protection of civilians.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.54660/IJMRGE.2025.6.1.1193-1200>

**Keywords:** Afghan War, AI, International Humanitarian Law, Just War Theory, Drone Strike

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### Introduction

Over the past two decades, Afghanistan has been the center of protracted wars and conflicts. The use of advanced technologies, especially artificial intelligence (AI), in this war has brought about a significant change in war strategies. Using drones, surveillance systems, and other advanced tools has paved the way for new approaches on the battlefield. International Humanitarian Law (IHL) guarantees the protection of civilians during armed war, respect for human rights, and adherence to the rules of war. The use of AI tools during the war in Afghanistan raises questions regarding compliance with or violation of IHL and Just War Theory, which require research and analysis. The importance of this topic lies in the fact that it is a valuable step in filling the academic gap in the field of IHL and AI. This research provides international institutions with new approaches and recommendations for improving IHL frameworks. Afghanistan is an exceptional case with unique experiences of war that are of particular importance for learning about and applying international law. Furthermore, the use of AI technology during war is initiating and developing new debates in politics, ethics, and international law. The purpose of this study is to analyze in depth the IHL and Just War Theory aspects of the use of artificial intelligence tools during the Afghan war. The study shows the using of AI within the framework of IHL and Just War Theory. In addition, the impact of AI tools on the protection of civilians and the humanitarian aspect of war has studied. This study considers the experiences of the Afghan war to be valuable for the reform of international law. In addition, the legal and ethical controversies of the use of AI technology has examined to present a comprehensive IHL framework for this technology. With the help of this study, it has determined how the use of AI tools during the Afghan war is consistent with the principles of IHL and Just War Theory and in which cases these principles have been violated. What new lessons does the Afghan war offer in IHL, and how can these lessons inform the development and

improvement of IHL frameworks for the protection of civilians during war? The selection of topic is important because the use of AI tools in war opens up a new chapter in legal and ethical debates. The Afghan war has unique characteristics for the analysis of international humanitarian law, such as the use of advanced technologies, the impact on the lives of civilians, and the challenges of applying international law in war. This topic offers new avenues for the development of IHL that are useful for protecting the human aspects of war. This research has the potential to have significant implications for international institutions, researchers, and victims of war. Furthermore, the Afghan war is considered an invaluable resource for developing new approaches and reforms to international law.

### Overview of the Afghan War (2001-2021)

From 2002 to 2021, Afghanistan was engaged in a long and complex war. The war involved various parties and international actors, with wide-ranging implications for security, human rights, and international relations. The conflict began during the Taliban regime and took on a new form with the intervention of the United States and NATO forces at the end of 2001. After the fall of the Taliban regime, the Afghan government was formed under the auspices of international support, but the root causes of the war and the Taliban's resistance continued. In 2001, following the terrorist attacks of September 11, the United States and the NATO coalition launched a military intervention in Afghanistan<sup>[1]</sup>. The intervention toppled the Taliban government in Afghanistan, but the war continued. The Taliban found their own ways to resist and expanded their presence in various parts of Afghanistan. The Taliban resistance was a major component of the Afghan war from 2001 to 2021. During the war, international forces made efforts to ensure security and stability, particularly in Afghanistan's reconstruction and development of government institutions. Although government-building and reconstruction programs were implemented, these efforts remained limited due to the expansion of the war against the Taliban and the insecurity in the region. Throughout the war, US and NATO forces conducted operations against the Taliban and terrorist networks using unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) and smart devices<sup>[2]</sup>. This technology changed the tactics of war and improved the effectiveness of many military operations. However, it also posed significant challenges in terms of civilian casualties, human rights violations, and the implementation of international law. In August 2020, a historic agreement was signed between the United States and the Taliban, in which American forces committed to withdrawing from Afghanistan<sup>[3]</sup>. This agreement began the process of international forces withdrawing from Afghan soil, and finally in 2021, the Taliban launched their final offensive against the Afghan government, capturing all of Afghanistan's provinces and Kabul in a matter of months. The war in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2021 had a devastating impact. Human rights violations, atrocities against civilians, massive displacement, and the Afghan economy and society have suffered from fear,

and Protocol I, Article 75, all human beings, not taking part in hostilities, have the right to be treated with respect and dignity, and to be free from torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment<sup>[4]</sup>. The ill-treatment of prisoners, particularly in Guantanamo and Bagram prisons, is a clear violation of this principle. In addition, physical and psychological violence against civilians is contrary to the principles of IHL. Protocol I, Article 52, Civilian institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and water and electricity installations, must be protected from attack<sup>[4]</sup>. Healthcare facilities and educational institutions have been targeted by the war, which is a clear violation of humanitarian law. Protocol I, Article 77, Children shall be particularly protected, and special attention shall be paid to their survival, education, and development<sup>[5]</sup>. The victimization of children during the war, the restrictions on their access to school, and the use of children as combatants were clear violations of these principles. Protocol I, Article 35 (3), Means and methods of warfare shall not be such as to cause serious or long-term damage to the environment<sup>[6]</sup>. Protection of the environment during conflicts is essential to ensure that human life and living systems are not adversely affected. The war has also created serious threats to international security in the region, in particular the spread of terrorism and extremism. Thus, the war in Afghanistan has been a major challenge not only for the people of this country but also for the international community. The analysis of this war is a valuable topic for international humanitarian law and the principles of war. The war in Afghanistan is a major international tragedy in terms of human toll, not only devastating the lives of Afghans but also creating lasting instability in the region. More than 432,000 civilians have been killed in conflict since 2001. The vast majority of this is due to the intensity and duration of the conflict, which has claimed both direct and indirect civilian casualties. This figure is a stark illustration of the scale of the conflict's devastating impact and the human rights violations it has inflicted<sup>[7]</sup>. The UNAMA's 2021 mid-year report shows that civilian casualties increased by 47 percent compared to 2020, with 1,659 people killed and 3,524 injured. This is another illustration of the dire situation for civilians during the war<sup>[8]</sup>. During the 2001 invasion, joint operations by the Northern Alliance and US forces killed at least 2,375 civilians in the first year<sup>[9]</sup>. This incident highlights the failure of international forces' strategies in the early stages of the war and their lack of concern for the lives of civilians. These figures show that war not only causes casualties to warring parties, but civilians are its greatest victims. This situation raises a major moral and legal question for the international community: how can the safety of civilians be guaranteed during wars? This tragedy of war makes it clear that such crises can only be prevented through peace. The weakness of international efforts to end the war and the harm of continuing wars should be a great lesson for future

<sup>1</sup> Hanggarini, Sambuaga, and Anwar, "A History of the Afghan War (2001-2021) from a Defense Diplomacy Perspective."

<sup>2</sup> Leaning, "Was the Afghan Conflict a Just War?"

<sup>3</sup> Imranullah and Hakimuddin, "Strategic Interests and Geopolitical Considerations."

<sup>4</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 52..

<sup>5</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 77.

<sup>6</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 35(3).

<sup>7</sup> Human Costs | Costs of War."

<sup>8</sup> Civilian Casualties Set to Hit Unprecedented Highs in 2021 Unless Urgent Action to Stem Violence – UN Report | UNAMA."

<sup>9</sup> Jones, "40% of All Civilian Casualties from Airstrikes in Afghanistan – Almost 1,600 – in the Last ve Years Were Children."

generations. The war in Afghanistan is a long-running and painful tragedy in terms of human casualties, with a staggering toll on civilian lives. The Watson Institute reports that 13,703 Afghan civilians were killed in the first decade of the war, and the number of wounded is estimated to be at least twice that <sup>[10]</sup>. These figures paint a clear picture of the consequences of the war, showing peaks and troughs in violence each year. In the early years of the war, from 2002 to 2004, civilian casualties were low, but they rose again in 2005 and exceeded 2492 for the first time in 2009. Given this rate of increase, it is clear that the war has become increasingly bloody over time <sup>[11]</sup>. In 2014, when foreign forces withdrew from direct combat and focused solely on training Afghan forces, there was an expectation that violence would subside. But this was not enough to end the war, and civilian casualties continued to rise. From 2015 to 2020, the number of civilian deaths each year exceeded 3,000, reflecting the continuing conflict and violence in the region <sup>[12]</sup>. These figures reveal the long-term impact of the war and raise the question of how much time and resources have been wasted on this bloody tragedy in the name of war. Civilians, who should have been protected during the war, were the greatest victims of this conflict. The consequences of this war have drawn global attention to the need for peace and demonstrate that the continuation of war causes irreparable harm to humanity. Figures released by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (BIJ) paint a stark and disturbing picture of the human cost of drone strikes. Between 2002 and 2020, between 10,000 and 17,000 people were reported killed in US strikes in countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen, of which 800 to 1,750 were civilians. According to the BIJ, the number of US airstrikes in Afghanistan has reached 13,074 as of 2021 <sup>[13]</sup>. This number reflects the length of the war and the increase in US air operations, which have resulted in a large number of deaths and injuries to Afghan civilians and other war participants. The impact of these attacks does not end there, but rather has a major impact on the ongoing war and the security and stability of the region. Since the beginning of the war, the number of civilian casualties has increased with the expansion of such operations by US forces, and has become a major concern for the Afghan people and the international community. According to IHL and the theory of just war, the use of artificial intelligence, such as drone strikes, in warfare by the US in Afghanistan is a violation of these principles and theories. According to these principles, civilian populations should be protected during combat operations and unnecessary casualties should be avoided. However, the widespread use of drone strikes often results in the killing and injury of civilians, which is considered a violation of international human rights and the principles of war.

### Overview of international humanitarian law (IHL)

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is the body of laws and principles that guarantee the protection of human rights in times of war. These laws are designed to protect civilians,

combatants, and prisoners of war during hostilities. The history of IHL begins with the earliest humanitarian principles, but the development and consolidation of these laws on an international scale began in the mid-1900s <sup>[14]</sup>. An important step in the development of IHL dates back to the 1864 Swiss Convention, which was adopted by the International Committee of the Red Cross and established basic principles for the protection of the wounded and sick. The Geneva Conventions, adopted between 1849 and 1949, form the basis of IHL. <sup>[14]</sup> These conventions set out the basic principles for the protection of human rights in times of war. Subsequently, in 1977, Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions were adopted, which added new aspects to IHL and addressed the circumstances of modern warfare <sup>[15]</sup> There are several fundamental principles of international humanitarian law that form the basis of the laws of war. These principles are essential for the protection of human rights and security during hostilities. A distinction must be made during war between civilians and military objectives. Only military objectives should be targeted, and civilians should be protected from attack. Any attack in war must be necessary for the purpose and must not cause excessive harm to civilians or property. That is, the harm caused by war must be proportionate to the military advantage gained. Only those measures that are necessary for the conduct of the war should be taken. This principle prohibits any action that would cause unnecessary harm or violation. This principle of war requires full respect and dignity for all human beings. The aim is to protect all human beings from cruelty and suffering during war <sup>[16]</sup>. The aim of IHL is to protect the human rights of all parties to war. The broad demands of this law are seen in the following areas: The primary aim of IHL is to protect civilians during war. According to this law, civilians must be protected from the harm of war and non-military targets must not be attacked. There are also broad protection principles of IHL for combatants. Combatants who act in accordance with the rules of war and are captured are entitled to protection and reasonable treatment <sup>[16]</sup>. According to IHL, any combatant captured during war must be treated humanely and all human rights must be respected. They must be protected from cruelty and torture in the event of a state of deprivation. With the development of modern warfare, IHL is facing a number of new challenges. The development of new technologies such as drones, artificial intelligence, cyber warfare, and other advanced tools has created new legal and ethical challenges for IHL. Using drones and artificial intelligence, combatants can strike enemy targets without endangering themselves or their forces <sup>[16]</sup>. However, these technologies can be dangerous for civilians and innocent people. Through cyber-attacks, wars can damage critical state infrastructure, such as power grids, banks, and government agencies, at great expense. This also presents a new challenge to IHL in that it is necessary to take measures to minimize civilian casualties. The development of these technologies increases the risk of violations of the principles of IHL. The application of laws to protect combatants and civilians in the war zone has become

<sup>10</sup> Saif, "Afghanistan: 47,600 Civilians Killed in 20 Years of Deadly War."

<sup>11</sup> Civilian Casualties Set to Hit Unprecedented Highs in 2021 Unless Urgent Action to Stem Violence – UN Report | UNAMA."

<sup>12</sup> Jones, "40% of All Civilian Casualties from Airstrikes in Afghanistan – Almost 1,600 – in the Last ve Years Were Children."

<sup>13</sup> Saif, "Afghanistan: 47,600 Civilians Killed in 20 Years of Deadly War."

<sup>14</sup> Shaw, "Geneva Conventions | International Humanitarian Law, Protections & History | Britannica."

<sup>15</sup> Krasniqi *et al.*, "Customary Sources of International Humanitarian Law, Geneva Conventions and Their Relationship with the Second Additional Protocol of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 Relating to the Protection of Victims in the Non- International Armed Conflicts."

<sup>16</sup> Krasniqi *et al.*, "Customary Sources of International Humanitarian Law, Geneva Conventions and Their Relationship with the Second Additional Protocol of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 Relating to the Protection of Victims in the Non- International Armed Conflicts."

increasingly complex with the use of these new technologies. Thus, the need for research into the identification of new technologies for international humanitarian law and their effective application has increased.

### Artificial intelligence and its role in war

Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers new opportunities for technological advancement and effectiveness on the battlefield, but it raises many questions about its compatibility with the principles and rules of international humanitarian law (IHL). The 1977 Protocols to the Geneva Conventions provide a basic framework for the use of AI in armed conflict. Protocol I, Article 48, Parties are obliged to distinguish military objectives from civilians and civilian objects<sup>[17]</sup>. AI systems such as drones or autonomous weapons must distinguish between military objectives and civilians. If AI targets civilians due to inaccurate information or limited recognition, this is a clear violation of IHL. Protocol I, Article 51, Civilians must be protected from direct attacks. AI-based weapons must be designed and controlled to prevent harm to civilians<sup>[18]</sup>. If AI operates autonomously on the battlefield, humans must monitor the legitimacy of those operations. Protocol I, Article 57, in times of conflict, every precaution must be taken to minimize harm to civilians<sup>[19]</sup> AI devices must be programmed to take into account the precautionary principle in planning and conducting attacks. AI autonomy in warfare must be balanced by human supervision and intervention. Protocol I, Article 51(5), any attack that causes disproportionate harm to civilians in relation to the military advantage sought is prohibited<sup>[20]</sup>. AI systems that make decisions on the battlefield should be able to analyze the proportionality of civilian casualties. If AI does not take into account the ethics of war and humanitarian law, its use is in conflict with IHL. Protocol I, Article 36, before introducing any new weapon or technique, the states concerned must ensure that it complies with the principles of IHL<sup>[21]</sup>. Testing of AI weapons should be carried out in accordance with the principles of the Geneva Conventions. The presence of human oversight ensures that AI systems do not exceed legal and ethical limits during hostilities. Protocol I, Article 75, all people have the right to human dignity in times of war, and AI devices must protect these rights<sup>[21]</sup>. AI weapons should be designed so as not to violate human dignity in the face of prisoners of war and other combatants. The use of AI tools to commit torture and inhumane treatment is a clear violation of IHL. Protocol I, Article 35 (3), Equipment's of war must not cause long-term environmental damage. AI tools used in the field of warfare must take into account the principles of environmental sustainability<sup>[22]</sup>. Artificial intelligence offers new ways to increase effectiveness on the battlefield, but its use must be consistent with the 1977 Geneva Conventions. The principles of distinction, precaution, and proportionality must underpin the

design and use of AI. Direct human supervision and intervention are essential to comply with humanitarian law, to prevent unlawful harm and to preserve the ethics of war.

### The IHL framework for the use of artificial intelligence in war

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in warfare is a complex legal challenge in relation to international humanitarian law (IHL). As AI technologies emerge as various tools in warfare, it is important to understand how these technologies comply with IHL principles. The following points explain the legal relationship between IHL and AI technologies: International humanitarian law (IHL) aims to protect those not taking part in hostilities (such as civilians) by regulating warfare and respecting the principles of war<sup>[23]</sup>. AI technologies such as drones, autonomous weapons and other technologies must implement the key principles of IHL according to which warfare must be conducted on the basis of objective and military necessity<sup>[24]</sup>. These principles include: Distinction, Proportionality, Necessity, and Humanity<sup>[25]</sup>. AI technologies should be used in a way that implements these principles and respects international humanitarian law in all areas of warfare. The use of autonomous weapons raises legal issues. The issue of liability arises in the operation of autonomous weapons, such as drones (e.g. the MQ-9 Reaper) and autonomous weapon systems (LAWS). In most cases, the responsibility for AI systems will lie with the humans who deploy and monitor these weapons in combat<sup>[26]</sup>. However, if an AI system acts in a way that is inappropriate, this raises liability issues. Some lawyers and scholars have suggested that AI systems should be held accountable for their actions. However, international law does not currently grant AI legal personality and can be prosecuted for war crimes. These controversies suggest that the use of AI technology requires international law to provide a clear framework that clarifies the relationship between the responsibilities of humans and AI systems. Under international law, only humans (natural persons) are held responsible for war crimes. AI systems do not have legal personality to be prosecuted for war crimes<sup>[27]</sup>. In the use of AI systems, responsibility will lie with the humans who use and supervise the technology. If an AI system commits an unlawful attack, responsibility for that action will lie with the humans supervising that system. If AI systems act autonomously, commanders can be held responsible for the actions of these systems if they do not observe IHL in using these systems. A key principle of IHL is distinction, which dictates that military targets must be distinguished from civilians and civilian objects during hostilities, obliges parties to a conflict to distinguish between combatants and civilians (Protocol I, Article 48)<sup>[28]</sup>. Autonomous weapons and AI technologies that are tasked with making this distinction are sometimes capable of doing so, but they also have some

<sup>17</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 48..

<sup>18</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 51.

<sup>19</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 57.

<sup>20</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 51(5) .

<sup>21</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 75.

<sup>22</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 35(3).

<sup>23</sup> Bugnion, "Just Wars, Wars of Aggression and International Humanitarian Law."

<sup>24</sup> O'Brien and Arend, "JUST WAR DOCTRINE AND THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF WAR."

<sup>25</sup> Shaw, "Geneva Conventions | International Humanitarian Law, Protections & History | Britannica."

<sup>26</sup> Kumar, "Ethical Concerns in Military Robotics: A Comprehensive Analysis."

<sup>27</sup> Simon, "Military Robotics."

<sup>28</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 48.

obstacles: Although AI systems can identify targets with great accuracy, distinguishing between military and civilian targets, especially in asymmetric warfare (such as urban warfare), is still a major challenge for AI. Sometimes, AI systems can make mistakes or biases that violate IHL principles and harm civilians. To implement the principle of distinction, AI technologies must be sufficiently advanced and tested to accurately distinguish between military targets and civilians in all areas of conflict. The principle of proportionality dictates that attacks must be proportionate to the military advantage in relation to the harm to civilians caused by IHL, and the intensity of the attack must be proportionate to the objective and the harm to civilians must not be disproportionate to the importance of the objective (Protocol I, Article 51) <sup>[29]</sup>. AI systems used in combat operations should be programmed to ensure proportionality of attacks, AI systems such as drones or autonomous weapons can automatically assess the military advantage and potential harm. These systems can delay or modify attacks if they determine that proportionality is about to be exceeded. For AI systems, the process of assessing proportionality is difficult, especially when assessing military objectives or the potential for civilian harm. AI may fail to understand the entire strategic and overall environment as humans do. Parties to an attack must take measures to ensure that civilians and civilian objects are not targeted (Protocol I, Article 57) <sup>[30]</sup>. To implement the principle of proportionality, AI must have sophisticated algorithms that accurately analyze the military situation and the relative scale of the attack, in order to comply with IHL principles.

### War in Afghanistan (2001-2021) in light of just war theory

The war in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2021 was waged by the international community, especially the United States and NATO forces, in the name of a war on terrorism <sup>[31]</sup>. The legitimacy and legality of this war can be assessed in light of the following questions according to the principles of Jus ad Bellum: After the attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States and its allies claimed that the purpose of the war was to destroy the Al-Qaeda network and its supporters, the Taliban. This argument was accepted as a legitimate goal internationally. Initially, the war on terrorism could be considered a just cause <sup>[32]</sup>. However, the protracted nature of the war, the civilian casualties, and the use of AI tools, such as drone strikes, raise the question of whether this justification has retained its legitimacy over time. The United States and other countries have argued that the war is necessary for international security. While national security is a legitimate justification, the Taliban's return to power at the end of the war in Afghanistan raises doubts about the effectiveness of this justification. The war claimed to protect Afghan civilians from Taliban atrocities and abuses. Although progress was made in some areas, reports of high civilian casualties during the war challenge the practical application of this justification. Early in the war, the United Nations supported international forces to counter the Taliban regime's support for al-Qaeda. The war began with legitimate

international support <sup>[33]</sup>. However, during the protracted war, the legitimacy of some military actions, particularly the use of AI tools (such as drone strikes), came into question, as some attacks resulted in civilian casualties. The use of AI in the war was largely carried out by international forces, which demonstrated the weak authority of the Afghan government. The Afghan government had limited authority over the strategy of the war, which demonstrated its lack of legitimate authority. The war was claimed to be aimed at eliminating the Taliban and bringing stability to Afghanistan. Despite the claim of peace, the prolonged nature of the war, the widespread use of AI tools, and the civilian casualties suggest that the intent of the war may have been to achieve strategic gains alone. Over the course of the war, the objectives of the United States and its allies expanded, including political and strategic control of the region. The expansion of the war's strategic intent raises serious questions about the justness of the war. The war began without a full examination of negotiations and other peace-seeking avenues. The early days of the war were given little opportunity for negotiation, raising the question of whether war was initiated as a last resort. The use of AI technology, particularly drone strikes, increased the level of violence rather than as a last resort. AI could have been used as a last resort in the early years of the war, but it limited the chances of peace in the long run. The 20-year war in Afghanistan was initially justified under the principles of Jus ad Bellum, but the protracted nature of the war, the unrestricted use of AI tools, and the limited efforts for peace have brought the legitimacy and legality of the war under serious question. An assessment of the consequences of this war shows that the war has lost its legitimacy in international and national principles.

The principles of Jus in Bello were established to ensure a legal and ethical framework for the conduct of war <sup>[34]</sup>. The following issues regarding the use of AI technology are being assessed for the 20-year war in Afghanistan: AI devices, especially drones, are designed with advanced sensors and algorithms to accurately target targets. However, there have been many reports of civilians being targeted during the war. Although AI devices have the ability to discriminate, attacks based on false information in Afghanistan have led to high civilian casualties. This shows that AI devices have not always respected the principle of distinction. Drone strikes targeting wedding ceremonies or civilian homes are serious violations of the principle of distinction. The principle of proportionality assesses the impact of attacks during the war. In Afghanistan, civilian casualties from drone strikes have in some cases outweighed the military benefits. The use of AI devices can in some cases be considered proportionate to achieve desired military objectives <sup>[35]</sup>. However, attacks that have harmed civilians are considered to violate the principle of proportionality. At times, AI-powered attacks have been shown to be disproportionate to the military objectives of the war, raising questions about international humanitarian law. AI tools are designed to accurately identify targets through advanced techniques, but limitations in ground information and poor data sources have led to erroneous strikes. The lack of precautions has led to an increase in attacks on civilians.

<sup>29</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 51.

<sup>30</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 1977, Protocol I, article 57.

<sup>31</sup> Imrannullah and Hakimuddin, "Strategic Interests and Geopolitical Considerations."

<sup>32</sup> Leaning, "Was the Afghan Conflict a Just War?"

<sup>33</sup> Asatiani, "War, Factor of War and Humanitarian Law."

<sup>34</sup> Ali, Rahim, and Bukhari, "The Just War Theory and Human Rights Violations."

<sup>35</sup> O'Brien and Arend, "JUST WAR DOCTRINE AND THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF WAR."

Although AI tools were designed for accuracy, in practice their use has shown signs of not meeting the precautionary principle. The 2019 attacks that resulted in civilian casualties are indicative of a lack of precautions. In Afghanistan, autonomous AI tools (such as drones) have reduced the role of humans in automating decision-making during war. The use of these tools raises questions about whether they have respected the humane principles of war, such as mercy and the intervention of conscience. AI tools have increased the speed and efficiency of warfare, but the lack of human values, especially in decision-making, can be considered a violation of the principles of international humanitarian law. Attacks carried out autonomously, due to the lack of human control, are at odds with the humane ethics of war. The use of AI tools in Afghanistan has raised serious challenges to the principles of Jus in Bello. Although AI tools are designed to increase the accuracy and efficiency of warfare, the principles of distinction, proportionality, and precautions have often been violated. The use of inhumane tools remains a major moral and legal challenge to the humane principles of war.

The Jus post Bellum principle assesses justice, peace, and long-term outcomes in post-conflict situations <sup>[36]</sup>. The following questions are examined regarding the impact of AI technology: The primary goal of AI tools was to increase effectiveness in war, but there has been no documented significant contribution to post-conflict peace building. In post-conflict peacemaking, the use of AI tools was not intended to compensate civilians or rebuild trust. Due to civilian casualties, negative perceptions of AI tools have been created among the public, which has made the peacemaking process difficult. While AI tools have been effective in short-term military operations, their contribution to long-term peace and reconstruction has been limited or non-existent. In Afghanistan, there have been many reports of civilian casualties caused by AI tools, but there has been no transparent accountability process for those affected. There has been little provision for victims of drone strikes to obtain compensation or to pursue justice under international law. Many victims have been forgotten in the opaque context of war, which is at odds with international justice demands.

The harm caused by AI tools has not been adequately addressed in the light of international justice, which poses serious challenges to post-conflict justice standards. The negative impact of AI tools on the mental health of civilians and their quality of life has been serious. The constant fear of drone strikes has negatively affected the mental health of civilians. Some Afghans have seen AI as a symbol of the injustice of the international community. The extensive use of AI tools for war has led to the destruction of infrastructure and the depletion of natural resources in the environment. Land degradation and the destruction of buildings due to drone strikes are damages that have long-term effects. AI technology has led to the prolongation of the war, which has further destabilized the political structure of Afghanistan. The Afghan government has been overly reliant on international forces for AI tools, which has undermined efforts to build an independent political structure <sup>[37]</sup>. The use of AI technology in post-conflict situations in light of the principles of Jus post Bellum has created a number of problems and challenges: There was no significant contribution to peace and reconstruction. There was a

weakness in accountability and justice. It had negative effects on the long-term state of people, the environment, and political structures. The international community and relevant authorities did not take sufficient measures to ensure justice and reparation after the conflict, which indicates a serious weakness in the implementation of international humanitarian law.

### Methods and methodology

This study is based on a qualitative analysis, which analyzes the principles of war, international human rights, and the use of artificial intelligence (AI). Based on this analysis, the application of drone strikes to international human rights principles and the theory of the justice of war is examined. In the process of this study, an in-depth study of existing literature and legal documents was conducted, in particular those international treaties and principles that deal with the protection of civilians in times of war and the fight against the risk of disappearance. For example, according to the Geneva Conventions and the principles of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), serious measures must be taken to protect civilians in the battlefield for all parties involved. This study also includes an assessment of the impact of drone strikes in Afghanistan. The impact of drone strikes has been analyzed based on various reports, such as those published by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism and UNAMA, which show civilian casualties and human rights violations.

### Result

This study found that the use of AI tools (such as unmanned drones and automated weapons) in warfare has created a number of contradictions and synergies between the principles of Just War Theory and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). A detailed analysis of this compatibility is carried out in the light of both theories on the following topics: A key principle of international humanitarian law is that a clear distinction must be made between combatants and civilians during war. Direct harm to civilians is a violation of IHL, unless their harm is an accidental or unintended consequence. The Just War Theory considers the avoidance of civilian casualties as an important condition for the legitimacy of war. AI tools (such as unmanned aircraft) ensure accurate targeting, but the principle of distinction is undermined by potential errors. For example, during the war in Afghanistan, civilians were mistakenly targeted by unmanned vehicles, which is considered a violation of the principle of distinction. The limitations of artificial intelligence in recognition have weakened the ability to distinguish between combatants and civilians. AI tools were not sufficiently accurate to support the principle of distinction. Reports of civilian casualties in Afghanistan suggest that this principle has been violated. The principle of proportionality in IHL states that the benefits of military action must outweigh the harm to civilians and other groups. Proportionality must always be assessed at the time of an attack. The Just War Theory states that war is only legitimate if the measures are proportionate to the violence and damage. While some attacks using AI tools in Afghanistan have adhered to the principle of proportionality, many have caused more civilian casualties than military benefits. Drone attacks that were not targeted based on accurate intelligence are a

<sup>36</sup> Bugnion, "Just Wars, Wars of Aggression and International Humanitarian Law."

<sup>37</sup> Ali, Rahim, and Bukhari, "The Just War Theory and Human Rights Violations."

serious deviation from this principle. In the case of protracted conflicts, the use of AI tools has sometimes been used for strategic purposes, rather than simply to deter threats. The use of AI tools has been accompanied by widespread violations of the principle of proportionality. The increase in civilian casualties is the main reason for this. The precautionary principle of IHL states that all feasible measures must be taken to prevent civilian casualties during hostilities. The availability of transparent, accurate intelligence during attacks is considered essential. The precautionary principle of Just War Theory considers the morality of war and considers it necessary to take all necessary measures to reduce civilian casualties. AI tools are effective when they are based on accurate information, but in Afghanistan, there have been many reports of attacks based on inaccurate intelligence. In some cases, the lack of human review of the conduct of attacks has led to an increase in civilian casualties. The precautionary principle has not been sufficiently respected when using AI tools, as adequate measures have not been taken to prevent civilian casualties. The human control principle of IHL states that the need for human control over decision-making on the battlefield is essential to ensure compliance with the ethical framework of war. Just War Theory states that war should be conducted with human intervention, as human decision-making is better able to take into account ethics and law. The use of some autonomous devices in the Afghanistan war is considered a violation of this principle. The lack of human control has raised doubts about the legality and legitimacy of artificial intelligence decisions. AI devices have not fully respected the principle of human control, which is a violation of the principles of IHL and Just War Theory. An assessment of the compatibility between Just War Theory and IHL shows that the use of AI devices has supported these principles in some areas, but has also led to widespread violations of the principles. In particular, the principles of distinction, proportionality, and human control have not been effectively applied during AI operations. Due to this weak legal framework of the international community, the use of AI devices in war has increased ethical and legal problems. International laws for AI devices are still not clear and complete. The lack of a clear international framework for the operation of drones, autonomous vehicles, and AI technology has created a legal vacuum. The lack of transparency in the use of AI tools in wartime has challenged international law. International organizations such as the United Nations have consistently emphasized the control of autonomous vehicles, but have not developed a comprehensive framework for action. The international community has not developed a unified international response to the use of AI in Afghanistan, which reflects the lack of efforts to implement IHL. The development of AI technology has raised new challenges to the principles of war, and international law should place limits on the expansion of the use of these tools. AI operations are not fully consistent with the principles of Just War Theory and IHL. Ethical and legal problems have arisen in war due to violations of the principles of distinction and proportionality. International law has been insufficient to limit the use of AI, and the international community's response to legalizing AI has been weak.

### Discussion

The conclusion provides a detailed analysis of the relationship between Just War Theory and International

Humanitarian Law (IHL) regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. The analysis focuses on the development, ethical issues, and legal complexities of the use of AI tools in the field of warfare, focusing on some key concepts such as differentiation, proportionality, precautions, and human control. A critical discussion of this analysis shows that some principles, although supported by AI tools, have been widely violated, with some serious aspects left unaddressed. The distinction between Just War Theory and IHL is of fundamental importance for the protection of civilians during war. The conclusion notes that while AI tools (such as drones) increase the accuracy of targeting, their limitations in detection and the possibility of error undermine the distinction. This leads to a significant legal and ethical violation in the field of warfare. In this regard, the accuracy of the use of AI, especially in the absence of human intervention, is a serious challenge to the actual implementation of this principle. If AI tools invest enough research and development capital for accurate identification, they can fully respect the principle of distinction. Also, human intervention is only necessary to increase accuracy, so that ethical principles are properly followed. The principle of proportionality refers to the ratio between harm and benefit on the battlefield. In the conclusion section, it is stated that the use of AI tools in Afghanistan sometimes violates the principle of proportionality, as some attacks cause more harm to civilians. Some attacks using AI tools have been carried out based on false intelligence, which has made the application of the principle of proportionality incorrect. The main criterion of "proportionality" can be determined in any war. Based on data and intelligence on the use of AI tools, only minimal harm reduction is sufficient, other factors such as human rights should also be considered. We must also deal with attacks based on false information. The precautionary principle is based on taking necessary measures to protect civilians. The conclusion states that the precautionary principle was not properly observed when using AI tools. Attacks based on false intelligence and the lack of human intervention in Afghanistan violated this principle. The precautionary principle refers to the need for human control and transparency of information in war, but it should also be examined how the use of AI tools can reduce human error. Although there is a need to increase human intervention, some precautionary measures may be automated in the use of AI. The principle of human control is essential for maintaining the ethical framework of war. The conclusion states that some uses of AI tools in the Afghan war undermine the principle of human control. This leads to the conclusion that artificial intelligence decisions do not fully respect human ethics and legal boundaries. Although the need for human intervention has been made clear in this article, the important thing is that all types of AI devices allow for human intervention. It is possible for automated devices to design advanced programs that are consistent with human ethics and international law. Therefore, regulation and supervision of this process are necessary. The weakness of international law is clearly mentioned in the conclusion, especially in this regard, in that the use of AI devices still requires a comprehensive international and legal framework. Regarding the use of AI devices in the Afghan war, the international community has not yet taken clear measures to ensure that these devices are used within a fully legal and ethical framework. An important point about the weakness of international law is that the international community should

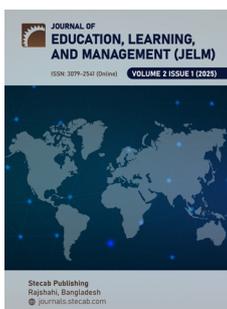
regulate the use of AI devices with its existing laws or create a special international law for this. Creating laws that are consistent with advanced technology is necessary in the era of technology. This discussion highlights that the use of AI tools sometimes undermines the principles of Just War Theory and IHL, particularly in the areas of distinction, proportionality, precautions, and human control. The international community should strive to develop clear and comprehensive legal frameworks for AI technology, in order to promote the ethical and legal application of these tools in warfare.

### Conclusion

This study found that the use of AI tools in war has created a number of contradictions and synergies between the principles of Just War Theory and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The use of AI tools in warfare has raised ethical and legal issues, highlighting contradictions between Just War Theory and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). AI tools have weakened the distinction between combatants and civilians, leading to potential errors. The precautionary principle of IHL requires transparent intelligence, but in Afghanistan, AI tools violated this. The weak international legal framework has led to increased ethical and legal problems, urging international law to limit AI's expansion. The analysis of the relationship between Just War Theory and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in warfare reveals significant ethical issues and legal complexities. The distinction between Just War Theory and IHL is crucial for protecting civilians during war, but AI tools' limitations in detection and potential errors undermine this distinction. The use of AI tools in Afghanistan sometimes violates the principle of proportionality, as some attacks cause more harm to civilians than intended. The precautionary principle, which requires human control and transparency of information, is also violated by AI tools. The conclusion emphasizes the need for regulation and supervision of AI devices, as they allow for human intervention. The study recommends increasing transparency on drone strikes to reduce human rights violations and set clear limits. It also calls for limited use of AI in the battlefield, ensuring human control and respect for humanity. It calls for strict enforcement of international human rights principles and the development of international agreements and regulations for AI use in war. It also emphasizes the importance of protecting civilians during conflict situations. The study suggests future research on AI ethics in warfare is crucial, as AI technology will pose new challenges to human rights, necessitating increased international coordination and law implementation, particularly in drone strikes.

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## Journal of Education, Learning, and Management (JELM)

ISSN: 3079-2541 (Online)

Volume 2 Issue 1, (2025)

 <https://doi.org/10.69739/jelm.v2i1.257>

 <https://journals.stecab.com/jelm>

 Published by  
Stecab Publishing

Research Article

### Factors Leading to Educational Centers' Closure in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan

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#### About Article

##### Article History

Submission: January 10, 2025

Acceptance : February 16, 2025

Publication : May 10, 2025

##### Keywords

*Educational Centers, Education, Managers, SDG 4, System Theory*

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#### ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify the root causes of educational center closures, assess the impact of this problem on society, and provide practical solutions to develop these centers and strengthen long-term learning. The study found that 75.8% of participants blamed financial issues for educational center closures. Additionally, 57.6% pointed to government problems, 54.5% to poor management, and 42.4% to lack of skills. Other factors included location (28.8%), legal issues (28.8%), curriculum (21.2%), co-education (21.2%), social diversity (21.2%), natural disasters (13.6%), safety (13.6%), sabotage (9.1%), and accidents (6.1%). This Mixed-Methods Research utilized purposive sampling to select educational center managers as respondents. A Google Form questionnaire was created and shared via email and WhatsApp. After distribution, 66 responses were collected. The data underwent content analysis, with results shown in the figures below, using system theory to highlight key themes. The study emphasizes the need for multifaceted measures to address the root causes of closures. Economic stability, political stability, providing financial support, and encouraging community participation are essential for the developing of educational centers. The results also point to the importance of long-term strategies to protect education in conflict-affected areas. The study recommends creating a safe learning environment, providing financial resources to struggling educational centers, and launching public awareness campaigns to gain community support. In addition, cooperation between the government and international organizations can enhance the capacity of local authorities to overcome the ongoing challenges. If these measures are effectively implemented, access to education will be restored and sustainable development will occur in Jalalabad city.

#### Citation Style:

Imranullah, A., Anwari, M. A., & Ghani, M. B. (2025). Factors Leading to Educational Centers' Closure in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan. *Journal of Education, Learning, and Management*, 2(1), 146-153. <https://doi.org/10.69739/jelm.v2i1.257>



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The closure of educational centers in Jalalabad city of Nangarhar province is a serious problem that has adversely affected the quality and accessibility of education. In the past years, many educational centers have been closed due to various factors. There has been little research attention to this topic, and most of the existing research focuses on general analysis of war situations or economic problems. The closure of educational centers has a profound effect not only on education but also on social development and economic growth. This study provides guidelines for solving this problem and helps related institutions to improve the learning environment. According to the value of research, it is to identify the main reasons for the closure of educational centers, to provide information about the problems in the field of education. According to the objectives of the research, to investigate the factors of the closure of educational centers, to evaluate the impact of this problem on the lives of students, teachers, and educational institutions, to provide solutions for the reopening of educational centers, to provide practical recommendations for policymakers. The research problem is that the closure of educational centers in Jalalabad city has weakened the quality of education in the region, students have been deprived of education, and the development of the community has faced a serious obstacle. The research question is that what are the main reasons for the closure of educational centers in the city of Jalalabad, and what steps can be taken to solve this problem? The hypothesis of the research is that the closure of educational centers is due to economic problems, security threats, and social problems. If the security, economic situation, and social factors are improved, then the reactivation of educational centers is possible. This research is necessary to determine the root causes of the problem, propose solutions, and create a basis for effective action by local authorities, policymakers, and international donors in the field of education.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Educational centers and afghanistan

An assessment of the available literature on the closure of educational centers in Jalalabad city reveals that no specific academic article or book has been written on this specific topic. However, some reports and studies discuss education-related problems that indirectly refer to the problem of the closure of educational centers. While the reports highlight general problems related to the education sector, the specific factors behind the closure of educational centers in Jalalabad city in particular are not explored. Educational centers are bodies established to provide education and training. The purpose of these centers is to teach and develop academic, technical, professional, and social skills for students. These centers consist of technical and professional training institutions, private courses, and educational institutes (Havnes & Stensaker, 2006). The presence of educational centers is a fundamental part of development and growth in any country (Petersen *et al.*, 2016). Especially in countries like Afghanistan that are facing protracted conflicts and security challenges, educational centers can play a vital role in social stability, peace, and economic growth (Havnes & Stensaker, 2006). Educational centers are the

fundamental pillars of a nation's development and prosperity (Petersen *et al.*, 2016). Strong steps are needed in the areas of security, finance, and social cooperation to support educational centers in Afghanistan (Ferguson, 2024). The continuity and development of these centers will not only increase the level of education, but will also pave the way for the formation of a prosperous and developed society for the future of Afghanistan (Binesh, 2023). Education is the foundation of the development of any society and is particularly important for Afghanistan, as the country faces serious challenges of illiteracy, economic poverty, and security problems (Havnes & Stensaker, 2006). The importance of education is vital for the future of Afghanistan. Education can prevent the country's current challenges such as poverty, insecurity, and social division (Smith, 2024). Accordingly, the development of education should be a priority for national and international institutions so that Afghanistan can move towards development, peace, and stability (Barakat, 2024). The closure of private educational centers in the country is a significant issue due to economic hardship, restrictions on girls' education, and the suspension of Kankor classes (FAIEZ, 2024). If education policies are not reformed, the country may face further deterioration and deprivation of the next generation, requiring immediate attention and support to save education (Mehran, 2024). In 2021, changes in Afghanistan led to the closure of 40-50% of educational facilities due to a small number of students (Binesh, 2021). Before-2021, more than 50,000 students were studying in these private education centers, but now that number has dropped to less than 15,000. According to the Association of Private Educational Centers in Herat, only 70 of the 200 educational centers in Herat are still operational. This situation has led to the closure of more than 400 private schools across Afghanistan, including 150 in Kabul and 250 in various provinces. Before-2021, there were about 3,600 private schools operating across Afghanistan, of which 1,200 were active in Kabul alone. In 2023, UNICEF launched over 5,000 local classes for students, with at least 50% of them being girls. The Taliban imposed a ban on high school education in September 2021 and later restricted women's university attendance at the end of the year. From 2002-2021, 3,816,793 girls enrolled in grades 1-12, with 18,765 schools, 200,000 teachers, 80,554 women, and over 100,000 enrolled in universities, including 2,439 female lecturers (Ahmadi & Sultan, 2023). In Kandahar, The NGO operates in nine districts, providing approximately 650 classes with 20-30 students per class, primarily for girls who cannot attend school (Binesh, 2023). However, the banning on girls effected on educational centers as well because all the girls went to educational centers. Each private school also served through an educational center, and with the closure of schools, educational centers were also closed.

### 2.2. SDGs Goals, systems theory and educational centers

Systems Theory examines the relationships, interactions, and coherence between all parts of a system (Mwambi, 2020). In this theory, systems (such as educational centers) are viewed as a whole structure with different components (such as financial, administrative, social, and environmental) interacting with each other (Havnes & Stensaker, 2006). In this theory, the



following points are explained about the closure of educational institutions: Each educational center is part of a network that includes various components such as management, teachers, students, financial resources, and social support, any problem in one part of the system has the potential to affect the entire system (Mwambi, 2020). For example, if financial support is lacking, teachers' salaries are delayed, quality services are reduced, and the institution eventually closes. Problems within the educational institution such as poor management, teacher absenteeism, and corruption lead to the closure of institutions (Marougkas *et al.*, 2023). Security situation, government policies, social beliefs, and external financial support affect the sustainability of the system (Khuzwayo, 2020). If the components of the system such as management, finance, and education do not coordinate with each other, the system will fail completely (Rapp & Corral-Granados, 2024). For example, if the selection of a suitable location for a school is not done according to environmental conditions, students and teachers will have problems with it, and this will lead to the closure of the center. The closure of educational centers is directly related to the effects of the external environment. For example, natural disasters, security problems, and lack of social support cause the system to collapse (Khuzwayo, 2020), each part of the system must be well organized. Management must be trained, financial resources must be provided, and social support must be increased. It is necessary to establish coordination between internal and external components, such as cooperation between government agencies and educational centers (Mwambi, 2020). Taking specific measures to address environmental issues and security concerns can reduce educational centers closures (Marougkas *et al.*, 2023). However, Systems theory teaches us that educational centers closures are the result of poor coordination between different components and the interaction between external factors. Solving this problem requires better organization, coordination, and reduction of environmental pressures across all components of the system. SDG 4 aims to provide quality education that is inclusive and equitable for all, ensuring lifelong learning opportunities (Li & Sindhuphak, 2024). The closure of educational center is a direct violation of SDG 4, as students are deprived of education. In line with this goal, educational institutions should be developed and systems should be established that make education accessible to all. This means full access to primary and secondary education for all children and improved educational facilities and capacity-building of teachers. Consequently, analyzing the root causes of the closure of educational institutions in Jalalabad and finding solutions will not only increase access to education, but also help achieve many of the SDG goals. SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality by empowering women and girls and eliminating discrimination based on gender (Mahin, 2024). The closure of educational centers has a particularly negative impact on female students, which leads to an increase in gender inequality. The analysis of the issue should highlight the need to provide a safe learning environment for women. SDG 8 aims to promote decent work and economic growth, promoting sustained growth, full employment, and productivity (Li & Sindhuphak, 2024). Education is fundamental to economic growth. The closure of educational centers limits opportunities

for young people to acquire skills and vocational training, which hinders their entry into the labor market, and increase employment and training opportunities, and develop skills. SDG 16 aims to promote peace, justice, and strong institutions by fostering inclusive societies, ensuring access to justice, and establishing accountable centers (Mahin, 2024). Security concerns are a major reason for the closure of educational center. This highlights the importance of peace, justice and security in SDG 16, efforts to build peace will help provide a safe environment for educational centers.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study is Mixed-Methods Research. For the first time, purposive sampling was used to select managers of educational centers as respondents, based on their direct involvement and experience with the subject matter. The sample included a diverse group of managers across various types of educational institutions in Jalalabad. To analyze the data, this study used a content analysis method, which specifically focused on qualitative responses. The analysis process involved several key steps: (1) responses were organized thematically, and (2) data were categorized into meaningful themes based on "systems theory." This theory was used to identify the interconnected economic, social, and security factors behind the closure of educational institutions. The limitations of this study are that the number of participants was limited, which may not have adequately represented all aspects of the education sector. Also, there is potential for bias due to purposive sampling. In addition, data collection through online tools such as Google Forms may not have enabled participation from individuals who do not have access to the Internet or digital skills. These limitations should be taken into account when interpreting and generalizing the results.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Google-created questionnaire was shared with experienced Educational Center managers, specifically from the human resources department, resulting in 66 individuals completing the survey. The figures show the results of a Google form that asked managers about educational center closures in the city of Jalalabad (Afghanistan). 66 Educational Center Managers participated in the Google Form Survey, and the results are as follows: The results of this survey indicate that participants are very concerned about the impact of the closure of educational centers on the education system in Jalalabad. A majority of participants indicated in their responses that the closure of educational centers is "very important" or "extremely important" for the education system. This indicates that participants consider the long-term impact of the closure of educational centers to be very significant for the future of education and the development of society. Some participants noted that the closure of educational centers will have major consequences for the future of students. In particular, one participant stated that this issue could directly affect the knowledge and development of society, indicating that these concerns are not limited to students, but also have broader societal implications. Some responses clearly indicated the lack of international relations, indicating that participants believed



that international assistance and support were vital for the development of the education system. Jalalabad city was also mentioned as a scientific and educational center in the field of education, and the lack of international support was presented as a major problem in the deterioration of this system. The government and education-related institutions should seriously study the impact of the closure of educational centers and take necessary steps to fill the gap in the education system. The participants' responses indicate that the lack of international assistance and relations is a major aspect of the problem. The government should try to obtain international support so that the education sector can be protected and developed. Programs should be developed for the general public that highlight the value of the education system and the importance of education for the next generation. The government should allocate a special budget to the education sector and develop a clear strategy to address existing problems.

In your understanding, have there been any recent reports of educational centers being closed in Jalalabad City, Afghanistan?

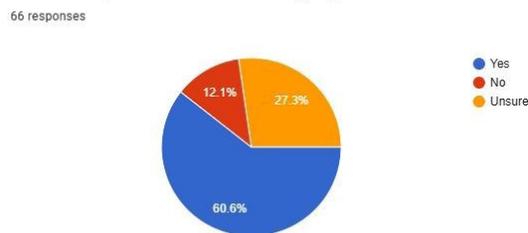


Figure 1. The reports of educational centers being closed in jalalabad city, afghanistan

60.6% of respondents said they have heard reports of educational centers being closed. This is a large proportion of respondents and indicates that the closure of educational centers is a serious issue for the public. 12.1% of respondents said they have not heard such reports. This proportion represents a small percentage of respondents. 27.3% of respondents said they are not sure or have not heard any reports. This indicates that some people are not aware of this.

**Comment:** The majority of respondents (60.6%) believe that educational centers in Jalalabad city are closed, which indicates a potential problem with the education system. The high percentage of "unsure" responses (27.3%) indicates that there is still a need for public awareness and clarification on this issue. Only 12.1% of respondents reported a lack of reports, indicating that the closure of the education system is a potential reality.

**Recommendation:** It is necessary to carefully examine the root causes of the closure of educational centers. To solve the problem, serious discussions should be held between the authorities and educational institutions to minimize the negative impact on students' education. Coordination between the media and institutions is necessary to increase the transparency of information on this issue for the public.

75.8% of participants considered financial difficulties as the most important reason for the closure of educational centers. This result shows that lack of financial support is a major problem for the closure of educational centers. 57.6% of participants considered government issues as a major reason for the closure.

What is the most likely reason for the closure of an educational center (Choose all that apply)?

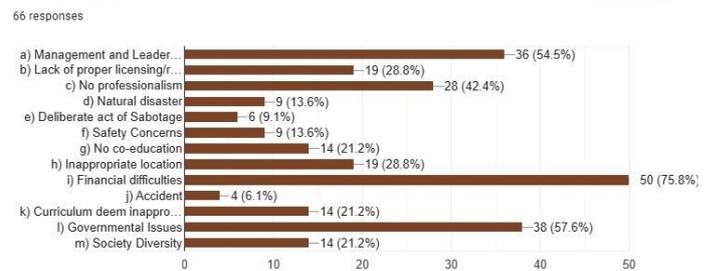


Figure 2. The most likely reason for the closure of an educational center

This shows that the role and policies of the government are very important in this regard. 54.5% of participants considered weak management and leadership as a major reason for the failure of educational centers. 42.4% of participants considered lack of professional skills as a major factor in this problem. 28.8% of participants considered inappropriate location as a major reason. 28.8% of participants considered legal issues and lack of licenses as a major reason. 21.2% mentioned curriculum deem inappropriate as a problem. 21.2% mentioned no co-education as a problem. 21.2% mentioned society diversity as a problem. 13.6% of participants cited natural disasters as a reason for the closure of educational centers. 13.6% of participants mentioned safety concerns. 9.1% mentioned deliberate act of Sabotage as a problem. 6.1% mentioned accident as a problem.

**Comment:** The survey results show that financial problems and government issues are the most important reasons for the closure of educational centers. At the same time, weak administration and leadership and lack of professional skills are also significant. The percentage of responses regarding legal problems and security concerns is significantly lower, but still needs to be considered for resolution.

**Recommendations:** Special efforts should be made to increase financial support for educational centers. It is necessary to conduct training programs for administration and management. The government should formulate policies that effectively address the problems of educational centers. It is important to recruit professional and experienced people for educational centers.

How would the closure of an educational center impact the community in Jalalabad City? (Choose all that apply)

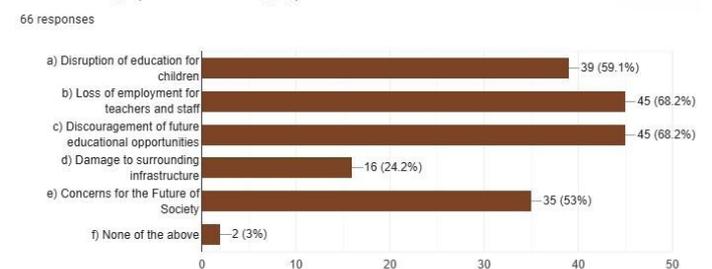


Figure 3. The closure of an educational center impact the community in Jalalabad City

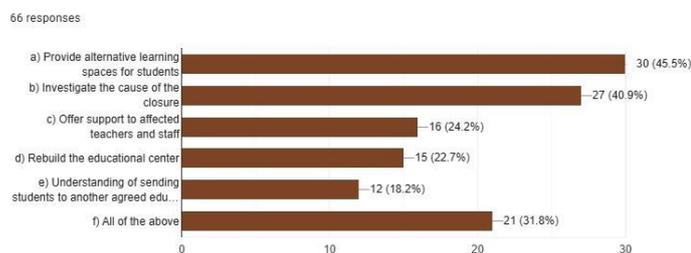


39 out of 66 respondents (59.1%) said that the closure of the educational center would harm children’s education. Loss of employment for teachers and staff was the largest impact, mentioned by 45 respondents (68.2%). Discouragement of future educational opportunities was also a major concern for respondents, with 45 respondents (68.2%). Only 16 respondents (24.2%) mentioned damage to surrounding infrastructure impact, which was considered a lesser concern compared to other factors. 35 people (53%) expressed concern about concerns for the future of society. Only 2 people (3%) said that the closure of the educational center had no impact.

**Comment:** The results of the figure shows that the closure of educational centers has wide-ranging and profound effects on society. From an economic perspective, the loss of teachers’ and staff’s jobs directly affects family income. From an educational perspective, the disruption of children’s education and the loss of future educational opportunities are issues that harm the development of society. From a social perspective, people’s concerns point to the future stability and development of society, especially when educational centers are considered the main places for building human resources.

**Recommendations:** It is necessary to jointly examine the problem of the closure of educational centers with relevant authorities, charitable foundations, and international aid organizations. Budgeting, financial assistance programs, and support resources for centers should be increased. If it is not possible to prevent the closure of educational centers, alternative jobs or training programs should be provided for teachers and staff to minimize their economic losses. If an educational center is closed, alternative educational programs such as online learning or collaboration with nearby schools should be considered so that the flow of education is not interrupted. To continuously promote educational opportunities, awareness programs should be conducted with youth and parents to highlight the value of education and gain their support. Community leaders, parents, and education activists should work together to pressure for the preservation and development of educational centers.

In your opinion, what is the most important step to take after the closure of an educational center?



**Figure 4.** The most important step to take after the closure of an educational center

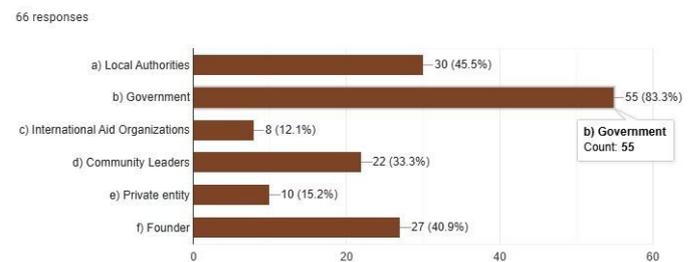
Provide alternative learning spaces for students received the most support, with 30 people (45.5%) saying it is important. 27 people (40.9%) said it is important to investigate the cause of the closure. 16 people (24.2%) said it is important to provide support to teachers. 15 people (22.7%) said rebuilding the center

is an important step towards the solution. Understanding of sending students to another agreed educational center, Only 12 people (18.2%) said it is important. 21 people (31.8%) believed that all of the above should be done together.

**Comment:** The results show that the participants are focused on steps that will continue to support learning and the future of students. Providing alternative learning spaces and investigating the causes of closures are of the highest importance, both of which represent immediate and long-term solutions to the problem. Also, support for teachers and the rehabilitation of the center were considered less important, but still significant.

**Recommendations:** Short-term and long-term solutions should be considered so that students are not deprived of education, such as online learning platforms or their transfer to a nearby school. Investigations should be conducted to find the root cause of the problem in order to prevent similar problems in the future. Financial or psychological support is necessary for affected teachers and staff to cope with the effects of this problem. Reconstruction of the educational center with community or government support should be part of a long-term solution. Parents, students, and community leaders should be part of the process to create an effective and inclusive solution.

Who do you believe is most responsible for ensuring the safety and security of educational centers in Jalalabad City?



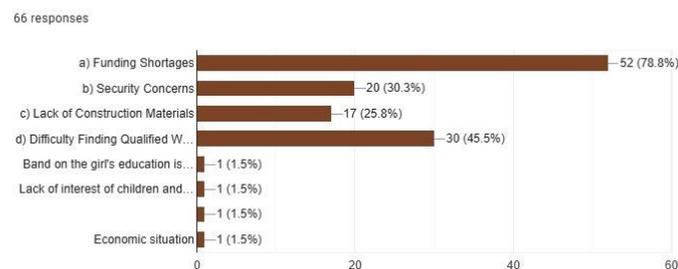
**Figure 5.** The most responsible for ensuring the safety and security of educational centers in Jalalabad City

The largest number of participants (55 people, 83.3%) believed that the government is responsible for the safety of educational facilities. 30 people (45.5%) said that local authorities also have an important responsibility in this regard. 27 people (40.9%) considered the founder of the facility to be responsible for safety and security. 22 people (33.3%) also considered the role of community leaders to be important. Only 10 people (15.2%) mentioned the responsibility of private entities. Least of all, only 8 people (12.1%) mentioned the responsibility of International Aid Organizations.

**Comment:** The results of the figure shows that the majority of participants consider the government to be the most important and responsible party for the security and safety of educational centers. Local authorities and the founder of the center are also mentioned significantly, but the role of international organizations and private institutions is given less importance. These results indicate that people expect more support from the government and local authorities, as they are officially considered to have this responsibility.

**Recommendations:** The government should develop specific policies for the security of educational centers, such as increasing security measures, implementing laws, and paying special attention to monitoring. Local authorities should take practical steps in the security and safety of educational centers, such as hiring security personnel and collaborating with the community. Creating plans for educational centers security together with founders, community leaders, and parents is important to increase transparency and accountability. Although international organizations have a limited role, support for educational projects, financial assistance, and training programs are beneficial for long-term security. Conduct awareness campaigns for the public to understand that educational centers security is not only the responsibility of the government, but also the role of society.

In your view, what are the biggest challenges in rebuilding the educational center? (Choose all that apply)



**Figure 6.** The biggest challenges in rebuilding the educational center

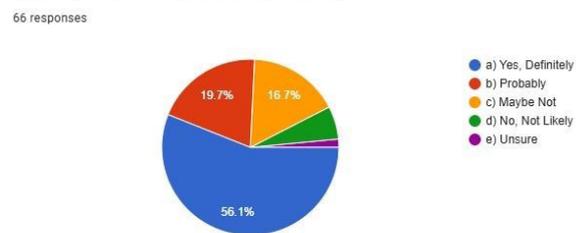
Funding Shortages was identified as the biggest problem, with 52 respondents (78.8%). This indicates that lack of financial resources is a fundamental obstacle to the reconstruction of educational centers. 20 respondents (30.3%) identified security concerns as an obstacle to reconstruction. This problem is more common in areas with high insecurity. 17 respondents (25.8%) identified the shortage of construction materials as a problem, indicating that basic physical equipment and materials for the reconstruction of educational centers cannot be provided. 30 respondents (45.5%) identified deficiency finding qualified workforce as a problem, indicating that professional and experienced people cannot be found. The ban on girls' education, the lack of interest in education by children and parents, and the economic situation were mentioned by few respondents, each with only 1.5% of responses.

**Comment:** The results of this survey show that the reconstruction of educational facilities in Afghanistan or similar contexts faces serious challenges. Lack of funding is the biggest obstacle to this process, overshadowing the entire infrastructure of the project. In addition, security concerns are a major obstacle to starting and continuing work, making progress in insecure areas very difficult. The shortage of construction materials and the lack of a skilled workforce affect the physical and human aspects of the reconstruction process. Although some other issues were not answered well, such as the ban on girls' education or the lack of interest in education, these issues still deserve attention, as they have a long-term impact on the development of education. These problems

require not only local but also international coordination. Rebuilding educational facilities should be recognized as a national priority, requiring joint efforts by the government, charities, and international aid agencies. Without this, the state of education will remain seriously compromised for a generation.

**Recommendations:** Strengthen relationships with international organizations and charitable foundations for funding, to create a sustainable source of financial support. Work with local government and the community to develop security plans to protect educational facilities. Try to reduce costs by utilizing local resources and request materials from aid agencies. Initiate short-term training programs to build the capacity of the local workforce to prepare professionals for reconstruction. Conduct public awareness campaigns on the value of education and its social benefits to gain community support. Use local construction materials and labor to reduce costs and boost the economy. With the help of religious and social leaders, the value of girls' education can be conveyed to the public so that this problem can be gradually resolved.

Do you think the closure of this educational center will discourage people from attending educational center in Jalalabad City?



**Figure 7.** The closure of the educational center will discourage people from attending educational centers in Jalalabad City

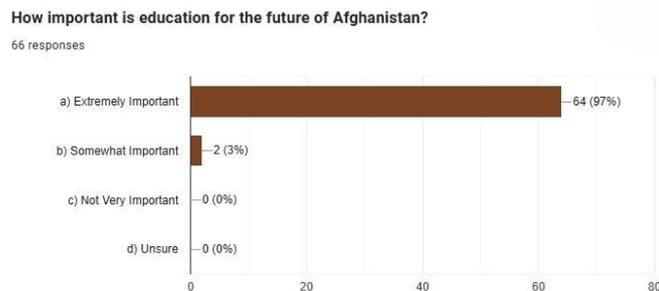
This figure shows the results of a survey that shows how much the closure of an educational center has affected people's motivation or discouragement to study in Jalalabad city. Based on 66 responses, the following results were obtained: 56.1% of respondents believe that the closure of this educational center will weaken people's efforts to study in Jalalabad. This is the main concern of most respondents. 19.7% of respondents said that the closure of educational centers will probably affect people's motivation. 16.7% of respondents said that it might not have an impact. Only a small percentage (no percentage shown) believe that the closure of the center will discourage people from studying. Some people (probably a minority) have no clear opinion on this question.

**Comment:** The survey results show that the closure of the educational center has profound social and educational impacts on the population. Most participants (56.1%) considered it a serious problem that would reduce the effort to learn. Those who answered "probably" are still not sure about this.

**Recommendations:** It is necessary to make financial and social efforts to reactivate the educational centers, so that people's interest in learning can be revived. If it is difficult to reopen centers, alternative places should be provided in Jalalabad to provide similar educational services. Initiate



awareness programs to encourage people about the importance of education, even if a specific center is closed. Ensure support from the local government and community to provide financial support and security guarantees for the center. Assess the education situation in other areas of Jalalabad city and see if other opportunities for education are available.



**Figure 8.** Importance of education for the future of Afghanistan

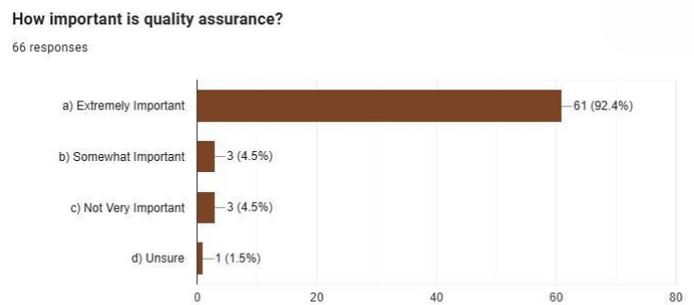
This figure shows the results of a survey on how important education is for the future of Afghanistan. Based on 66 responses, the following results were obtained: 97% (64 respondents) believe that education is extremely important for the future of Afghanistan. This indicates that most people fully understand the value of education. Only 3% (2 respondents) said that education is somewhat important. No respondents said that education is unimportant or that they are unsure about it.

**Comment:** The survey results show that education is a priority for people in Afghanistan, and they strongly believe in the value of education. The fact that 97% of the participants considered education to be “very important” is a sign that people understand that education plays a fundamental role in the development and stability of the country.

**Recommendations:** Create more educational programs and educational centers for education, so that access to education is easier for all. Obtain financial support from international organizations and domestic sources to facilitate education. Make the small percentage who consider education to be somewhat important understand the importance of education through public awareness programs. Improve the quality of education so that students not only have access to education, but also have quality educational opportunities. Pay special attention to the education of women and girls, because the development of society depends on the education of both sexes. Use education programs for peace and harmony, so that society focuses on education instead of violence.

The results of figure shows that Quality Assurance is highly important among the participants, as 92.4% of people rated it as “extremely important”. This indicates a broad understanding of the value of Quality Assurance. However, a small number of participants (4.5%) rated it as only “somewhat important” or “not very important”, and 1.5% seemed unsure about its importance. This figure indicates that the public perception of Quality Assurance is generally strong, but for some people, further clarification may be needed.

**Comment:** 92.4% of participants consider quality assurance



**Figure 9.** Importance of quality assurance

to be “very important”, which is an indication of the importance of the subject. Only 4.5% of participants consider quality assurance to be “somewhat important” or “not that important”, and only 1.5% are unsure about it. This shows that a small number of people are either unclear or underestimate its importance.

**Recommendation:** Both government and citizens have a key role to play in improving quality assurance. The government must create an effective system through legislation, oversight, and financial support, while citizens must demand quality services and take a stand against poor quality. Coordination between government and citizens can improve the quality of every part of society.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, Jalalabad city’s closure of educational centers has significantly impacted education quality, access, and societal development due to economic challenges, security threats, and social instability. The study underscores the need for immediate interventions to address closures of educational centers, including improved security measures, economic support, and community engagement, and calls for collaboration among policymakers and stakeholders. This research identified factors causing educational center closures, offering practical solutions and policy recommendations for collaboration, resource allocation, and long-term planning to restore access and promote a prosperous future. The study found that 75.8% of participants cited financial difficulties as the primary reason for the closure of educational centers. Government issues were also a significant factor, followed by weak management, lack of professional skills, inappropriate locations, legal issues, and curriculum issues. Additionally, 13.6% of participants cited natural disasters, safety concerns, deliberate acts of sabotage, and accidents as reasons for closure. In recommendation, special efforts should be made to increase financial support for educational centers. It is necessary to conduct training programs for administration and management. The government should formulate policies that effectively address the problems of educational centers. It is important to recruit professional and experienced people for educational centers. I work on educational centers, and I want to highlight a future research gap: what are the primary reasons for the closure of private schools in Jalalabad, and what solutions can be implemented to address this issue?



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# Kardan Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (KJSSH)

ISSN: 2616-8707 (P) 2958-9908 (O), Journal homepage: [kjsch.kardan.edu.af](http://kjsch.kardan.edu.af)

## Building Resilience: The Need for International Cooperation in Afghanistan's Climate Change Adaptation Post-2021

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**To cite this article:** Akhtar, Imranullah, and Nazifullah Niazi. "Building Resilience: The Need for International Cooperation in Afghanistan's Climate Change Adaptation Post-2021." *Kardan Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 8, no. 1 (2025): 85–99. DOI: 10.31841/KJSSH-8.1-2025-86

**To link to this article:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.31841/KJSSH-8.1-2025-86>



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Published online: 30 June 2025



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# Building Resilience: The Need for International Cooperation in Afghanistan's Climate Change Adaptation Post-2021

Kardan Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities  
8 (1) 85 – 99

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Kardan Publications  
Kabul, Afghanistan

<http://dx.doi.org/10.31841/KJSSH-8.1-2025-86>  
<https://kardan.edu.af/Research/CurrentIssue.aspx?j=KJSSH>

Received: 11 Nov 24  
Revised: 16 Jun 25  
Accepted: 28 Jun 25  
Published: 30 Jun 25

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## Abstract

*This study examines the critical role of international cooperation in adaptation to climate change impacts in Afghanistan. It aims to explore how international cooperation adapts to Afghanistan's climate challenges and builds resilience by leveraging resources, technical expertise, and technology. This study employs a qualitative approach to evaluate climate change and international cooperation in Afghanistan post-2021. Secondary data were gathered from published reports, journal articles, and official documents. Qualitative data were analysed through thematic content analysis and neoliberal institutionalism theory to identify key patterns and insights. The findings reveal that Afghanistan faces significant challenges in adapting to climate change due to inadequate infrastructure and political uncertainty. The paper argues that international support in renewable energy, disaster management, and sustainable agriculture can effectively reduce Afghanistan's climate risks. In addition, the paper argues that building climate resilience in Afghanistan cannot be achieved solely through domestic efforts. International cooperation is essential for developing technical capacity, securing financial resources, and implementing effective long-term adaptation strategies. A multi-stakeholder approach is necessary, with government and non-governmental organisations coordinating international cooperation, implementing disaster warning systems, and aligning climate adaptation policies with the National Development Strategy.*

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Adaptation, Climate Action, International Cooperation, Post-2021

## 1. Introduction

Climate change is an emerging transnational threat that crosses national borders, impacting the lives of human beings, with far-reaching consequences for the entire world. The detrimental and far-reaching effects of it are felt worldwide, which include increased heat, the rise in temperatures, drought, and disruptions and disturbances in rainfall patterns.<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan is not immune to these changes and has suffered much in this regard due to its limited resources and political unpredictability. In 2021, with the

<sup>1</sup> Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger and Christina Voigt, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Climate Law and Governance: Courage, Contributions and Compliance* (Taylor & Francis, 2024).

collapse of Afghanistan's republican system and the rise of the Islamic Emirate to power, a notable ambiguity is apparent, especially about the recognition of de facto authorities by the international community, which remains a significant obstacle to the delivery of international aid, cooperation and assistance in handling climate change. Cooperation among countries is vital to achieving the agreed goals of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the need for international cooperation in implementing climate change mitigation efforts in Afghanistan is a pressing necessity. The purpose of this study is to highlight how the international community can assist Afghanistan in coping with climate change, even if the de facto authorities are not officially recognised. The importance of this study lies in the fact that Afghanistan requires urgent measures, international cooperation, and assistance in handling the impacts of climate change. The international community must recognise that there is a pressing need to assist Afghans in handling the impact of climate change, and neglecting this aspect can pose significant threats to the region and the world. This research provides a roadmap that can help improve living conditions for Afghans, enhance international relations and cooperation, and help stabilise the region, particularly concerning climate change. This study argues that although the world has not officially recognised the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the international community can help combat climate change and increase the country's climate resilience. This research employs qualitative methods to assess climate change and prospects of international cooperation in Afghanistan in the post-2021 transition. Thematic analysis identifies themes such as international cooperation, climate change, and non-recognition. Content and descriptive analysis highlight the need for international cooperation in Afghanistan. Based on the neoliberal institutionalism theory, it is suggested that international organisations can support Afghanistan in its fight against climate change, even without official recognition.

## **2. Afghanistan's Vulnerability to Climate Change**

The unfriendly environmental activities release carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrogen oxides, contributing to global warming, sea level rise, and unpredictable climatic events, including droughts, floods, and storms.<sup>3</sup> These changes threaten human rights, basic physical and physiological needs, and the lives of the common people. According to Toraldo, the "Climate Justice Theory" and the "Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)" highlight that climate change is not just an environmental crisis, but directly impacts human rights.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Fischer states that climate change violates human rights in several ways, including the displacement of people due to natural disasters, which undermines their rights to shelter and security. In addition, food shortages lead to hunger, which violates the "right to food".<sup>5</sup> Similarly, lack of access to clean water induced by climate change undermines the right to health of the vulnerable population,

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Mohammad Imran Azizi et al., "Impacts of Climate Change in Afghanistan and an Overview of Sustainable Development Efforts," *European Journal of Theoretical and Applied Sciences* 2, no. 4 (July 1, 2024): 495-516, [https://doi.org/10.59324/ejtas.2024.2\(4\).42](https://doi.org/10.59324/ejtas.2024.2(4).42).

<sup>4</sup> Stefania Toraldo, "Towards a Universal Climate Justice through a Human Rights-Based Approach," *The Denning Law Journal* 33 (2025): 145-60, <https://doi.org/10.5750/dlj.v33i1.2175>.

<sup>5</sup> L. J. Fischer, *Demanding Justice: Corporate Responsibility for Climate Change Impacts on Human Rights* (School of Global Studies, 2019), [https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/62367/1/gupea\\_2077\\_62367\\_1.pdf](https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/62367/1/gupea_2077_62367_1.pdf).

mainly women and children, thus violating the principles of equality and non-discrimination.<sup>6</sup>

Afghanistan is one of the countries that emits very little greenhouse gases, but it is among the top ten countries that are affected and impacted most due climate change.<sup>7</sup> Efforts to reduce the effects of climate change can generally be divided into two areas: climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation. Climate change mitigation depends on regulating economic activities to reduce the production of greenhouse gases, thereby releasing fewer gases into the atmosphere.<sup>8</sup> However, this is a low priority for Afghanistan, as the country accounts for only 0.19% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, adapting to climate change is crucial and urgent, and Afghanistan must adopt necessary measures and be supported in regulating the economy, agriculture, water management, energy, and the environment so that the damage is reduced and the society can find resilience.<sup>9</sup>

Although Afghanistan signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, it ratified it in 2002. However, due to the decades-long war and isolation, Afghanistan has done very little about climate change and its negative consequences. With the establishment of an internationally backed Republic in late 2001, environmental laws were gradually introduced. The National Environmental Protection Agency of Afghanistan (NEPA) was established in April 2005.<sup>10</sup> Afghanistan passed its first environmental law in early 2007, which defined the duties, powers, and status of the NEPA as an organisation that formulates and implements the country's environmental policies. The powers and administrative framework of NEPA were gradually strengthened, and in 2010, the Department of Climate Change was established as one of the six key departments.<sup>11</sup>

Before 2021, the former Republic of Afghanistan had taken several important steps to address climate change. In addition to the UNFCCC, the government ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2013, the Paris Agreement in 2017, activated the NEPA, and passed an environmental law. However, these measures were not very practical due to insecurity, weak governance, and the high level of dependence on foreign aid.<sup>12</sup> The former Republic of Afghanistan employed efforts to mitigate the impact of climate change through policies and plans, legislation, and fact-finding,<sup>13</sup> however, with little practical success. Despite the efforts, the former Republic of Afghanistan made little progress in adapting to climate change, despite receiving financial and technical support.

<sup>6</sup> Abdul Alim Shaikh et al., "A Critical Review of Community Resilience Building Framework: Contexts of Climate Change and Disasters in Bangladesh," *Journal of Geoscience and Environment Protection* 12, no. 9 (2024): 315-34, <https://doi.org/10.4236/gep.2024.129017>.

<sup>7</sup> Imranullah Akhtar, "The Significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan," *Nangarhar University International Journal of Biosciences* 3, no. ICC (special) (February 10, 2024): 456-59, <https://doi.org/10.70436/nuijb.v3i02.263>.

<sup>8</sup> Segger, *Routledge Handbook of Climate Law and Governance*.

<sup>9</sup> Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, "Meeting the Climate Crisis in Afghanistan," *The Diplomat*, April 29, 2024.

<sup>10</sup> Aysha Saifudeen and Monto Mani, "Adaptation of Buildings to Climate Change: An Overview," *Frontiers in Built Environment* 10 (February 16, 2024): 1327747, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fbuil.2024.1327747>.

<sup>11</sup> Judy Lawrence, Paula Blackett, and Nicholas A. Craddock-Henry, "Cascading Climate Change Impacts and Implications," *Climate Risk Management* 29 (2020): 100234, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.crm.2020.100234>.

<sup>12</sup> Akhtar, "The Significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan," 457.

<sup>13</sup> Mhd Assem Mayar, "Economy, Development, Environment," accessed November 19, 2024, <https://www.afghanistan-analysts.org/en/reports/economy-development-environment/the-climate-change-crisis-in-afghanistan-the-catastrophe-worsens-what-hope-for-action/>.

Climate change poses significant threats to Afghanistan, affecting its living standards and economic situation, making it a particularly vulnerable country to global environmental and economic challenges. Afghanistan ranks fourth on the INFORM Risk Index 2023, indicating a risk of crisis, and eighth on the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index, which identifies it as susceptible to climate change and exposes the population to significant losses.<sup>14</sup> Afghanistan has witnessed at least 38,000 deaths in the first six months of 2023, with 50% of the displaced people being children, according to a Save the Children report.<sup>15</sup> The NEPA reported that due to climate change, 21 million people do not have access to clean drinking water, 2.5 million were displaced, and \$250 million loss in annual agricultural production for farmers.<sup>16</sup> Rain-fed agriculture supports the livelihoods of around 60% of Afghanistan's population;<sup>17</sup> however, climate change is severely affecting this sector, reducing crop yields, increasing food insecurity, and contributing to malnutrition and the spread of diseases.<sup>18</sup>

Afghanistan ranks sixth globally in the Global Climate Risk Index and is among the most vulnerable and least prepared countries worldwide.<sup>19</sup> According to the 2021 German report on climate risk figures, Afghanistan is the sixth most vulnerable country in the world due to the effects of climate change, following Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Japan, and Malawi.<sup>20</sup> The World Food Organisation also stated in a report that Afghanistan is the sixth most vulnerable country in the world due to climate change.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, according to the report published by the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) in 2020, Afghanistan was affected by natural disasters from 2012 to 2019.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, as per the European Union's representative in Kabul, Afghanistan is the most vulnerable country to climate change. According to a report by Roza Otunbayeva, the Deputy Director of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), who attended an international climate change conference in Dubai in 2023, approximately 20 million Afghans are facing a severe food shortage.<sup>23</sup>

Afghanistan's households are increasingly experiencing drought, with 25 out of 34 provinces experiencing severe impacts and thus affecting over 50% of the population.<sup>24</sup> In 2022, the frequency of drought-related shocks experienced by households in Afghanistan increased from 39% in 2021 to 64%.<sup>25</sup> In addition, Afghanistan faces severe water shortages, floods, and climate-related pressures, with 70% of its 40 million rural residents relying on agriculture, and 40% already experiencing high levels of food insecurity.<sup>26</sup> The UN reports a 1.8°C increase in the country's mean annual temperature,

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<sup>14</sup> Angela Lehmann, *Climate Change Policies and Global Cooperation*; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Afghanistan: The Alarming Effects of Climate Change," August 1, 2023, accessed March 15, 2025, <https://www.unocha.org/news/afghanistan-alarming-effects-climate-change>.

<sup>15</sup> "Climate Crisis Displaced 38,000 Afghans This Year," *Salam Watandar*, accessed November 19, 2024.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel F. Runde, Annie Pforzheimer, Thomas Bryja, and Caroline Smutny, "The Future of Assistance for Afghanistan: A Dilemma," June 13, 2024, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/future-assistance-afghanistan-dilemma>.

<sup>17</sup> Abubakar Siddique, "The Azadi Briefing: COP29 Highlights Afghanistan's Climate Woes," November 15, 2024.

<sup>18</sup> Lehmann, *Climate Change Policies and Global Cooperation*.

<sup>19</sup> European Commission, "Inform Country Risk Profile," 2023, accessed March 15, 2024, <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index/INFORM-Risk/Country-Risk-Profile>.

<sup>20</sup> Akhtar, "The Significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan," 478.

<sup>21</sup> Siddique, "The Azadi Briefing: COP29 Highlights Afghanistan's Climate Woes."

<sup>22</sup> "Natural Disasters Dashboard," *ReliefWeb Response*, accessed November 20, 2024.

<sup>23</sup> Roza Isakovna Otunbayeva, "https://unama.unmissions.org/", accessed November 20, 2024.

<sup>24</sup> European Commission, "Rozama's Story: How Afghanistan's Climate Crisis Is Affecting Vulnerable Populations," August 12, 2024.

<sup>25</sup> Emma Batha, "Afghanistan: Here's Why Climate Change Has Global Repercussions," *PreventionWeb*, November 27, 2023.

<sup>26</sup> Qiyamud Din Ikram and Jocelyn Perry, "In Global Climate Talks, Let Afghanistan In," *Refugees International*, November 30, 2023.

causing glacier and snow melt, which supplies summer river water.<sup>27</sup> UNICEF reports that eight out of every 10 Afghans are currently drinking unsafe water due to the significant reduction in freshwater resources.<sup>28</sup>

Therefore, Afghanistan needs urgent international cooperation to combat climate change and achieve the SDG 13 goal. However, this situation may become more complicated or cooperation may be delayed as Afghanistan receives limited development aid, particularly since the Taliban regained power in August 2021. The government's non-recognition by the international community has made it difficult to find ways to deal with the impact of climate change in Afghanistan. The paper argues that there are alternative ways to help combat climate change, enabling Afghanistan to progress in achieving the SDGs even without the official recognition of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

### 3. Post-2021 Geo-political Shifts and Their Impact on Climate Initiatives

Post-2021, Afghanistan was not invited to the COP26, COP27, and COP28 conferences because the UN member states had not officially recognised the Taliban government. For this reason, Afghanistan could not participate as a state, although some Afghan climate activists had attempted to participate informally; however, they were unable to be effective.<sup>29</sup> Afghanistan's disconnection from its former donors or the international system in general has impacted many climate change mitigation measures. Furthermore, after the fall of the Republic on August 15, 2021, donor countries are less willing to finance anything involving the Taliban administration. Although some measures to mitigate climate change, such as flood protection and drought resilience, are included in the humanitarian aid package; however, major climate crisis programs that were already agreed upon or underway have been suspended.

However, Afghanistan can benefit from the already existing agreements by receiving financial, technical, and capacity-building assistance from developed countries. However, due to the international community's non-recognition of the Islamic Emirate, Afghanistan has not yet been able to benefit from these protocols properly. Afghanistan was not even invited to participate in the three United Nations Climate Change Conferences in 2021, 2022, and 2023.<sup>30</sup> Afghanistan has various laws, regulations, and policies related to environmental protection, forestry, oil and gas, mining, water, energy, and air pollution, demonstrating its commitment and willingness to handle the impacts of climate change. However, despite the threats of climate change, the lack of technical capabilities, the international non-recognition of the Islamic Emirate, and the limited international attention to cooperation, the future of Afghanistan is a concern.

Afghanistan's absence from COP26, COP27, and COP28 since the Taliban's return to power in August 2021 was due to a lack of international recognition. However, in November 2024, Afghanistan attended COP29, marking its first appearance at a COP event since the Taliban's takeover in 2021.<sup>31</sup> Afghanistan's delegation laid out the plans to strengthen international cooperation on environmental protection and climate change,

<sup>27</sup> OCHA, "Afghanistan: The Alarming Effects of Climate Change," accessed November 19, 2024.

<sup>28</sup> Shaikh et al., "A Critical Review of Community Resilience Building Framework."

<sup>29</sup> Ikram and Perry, "In Global Climate Talks, Let Afghanistan In."

<sup>30</sup> Hadia Ziaei, "Afghan Delegation Attends COP29 Meeting in Baku," *TOLOnews*, November 12, 2024.

<sup>31</sup> Daniel Bellamy, "Afghanistan's Taliban to Attend Their First UN Climate Conference," November 10, 2024.

discussed Afghanistan's needs for financial mechanisms, and explored adaptation and mitigation efforts in response to the negative impacts of climate change.<sup>32</sup>

#### **4. International Cooperation on Climate Change in Afghanistan**

Transnational threats like climate change necessitate international collaboration, and countries like Afghanistan should receive technical and financial support through international organisations, strengthening regional cooperation, and benefit from international programs.<sup>33</sup> Climate change poses a global threat, necessitate and requiring international cooperation and climate adaptation strategies. International principles and agreements offer guidelines for global cooperation to mitigate their effects. The Paris Agreement, a significant catalyst for international cooperation, a global framework for mitigating and adapting to climate change, provides financial support and technical assistance to member countries to adapt to climate change.<sup>34</sup>

Similarly, the purpose of the UNFCCC is to establish climate adaptation measures for all countries, and it calls upon all member states to cooperate in coordinating efforts to combat climate change. Under the Convention, developed countries are required to provide financial support and technology to developing countries, enabling them to adapt to the impacts of climate change.<sup>35</sup> In addition, as financial cooperation is important for climate change adaptation, the Green Climate Fund provides financial support to developing countries in adapting to climate change. Through the Grid Fund, developed countries can develop programs and strategies for regions affected by climate change. Likewise, organizations like the World Bank and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) are working to provide technical and financial support in the field of climate adaptation.<sup>36</sup> These organisations cooperate with developing countries in climate change research and offer adaptation measures by introducing new technologies.<sup>37</sup> International cooperation for climate adaptation should be in harmony with various aspects, including politics, economy, social, and cultural structures. International cooperation strategies should support countries' economic adaptation to the risks of climate change. Through these strategies, consideration should also be given to the development of knowledge, education, and skills for adaptation to climate change.<sup>38</sup> International cooperation for climate adaptation is a pressing need, based on international principles and agreements; therefore, the international community should work together.<sup>39</sup> The Paris Agreement, the Climate Change Convention, financial support measures, and the development of international cooperation organisations are all important steps for climate adaptation and mitigation.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Segger, *Routledge Handbook of Climate Law and Governance*.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Abdullah Fahimi, "International Organizations and Energy Transitions in Afghanistan," 2023.

<sup>38</sup> Florian Krampe, Elizabeth S. Smith, and Mohammad Daud Hamidi, "Security Implications of Climate Development in Conflict-Affected States: Implications of Local-Level Effects of Rural Hydropower Development on Farmers in Herat," *Political Geography* 90 (October 2021): 102454, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2021.102454>.

<sup>39</sup> Sofia Ramirez, "Impact of Climate Change on Global Security and Cooperation in Mexico," *Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 1 (February 25, 2024): 9-21, <https://doi.org/10.47604/jir.2347>.

<sup>40</sup> Segger, *Routledge Handbook of Climate Law and Governance*.

#### 4.1 Adaptation, Resilience, and UNFCCC Bodies

The Adaptation Committee (AC) was established in 2010 to promote coordinated action on adaptation, providing technical support, information sharing, and recommendations for incentivising actions.<sup>41</sup> It requires the parties to submit and update adaptation communications periodically. The aim is to strengthen adaptation actions and support developing countries.<sup>42</sup> In addition, the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) established at COP 24 in 2018 aims to promote the sharing of experiences related to climate change, build capacity for engagement, and incorporate diverse ways of knowing into climate policy design and implementation.<sup>43</sup> Likewise, the Global Green Alliance (GGA), established by the Paris Agreement, provides guidance for adaptation and resilience-building efforts. In addition, at CMA 5, the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience and the UAE-Belém work program were adopted, focusing on thematic and dimensional targets for climate adaptation and resilience.<sup>44</sup>

Similarly, in 2001, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) was established to provide technical guidance and support to LDCs in formulating and implementing national adaptation plans (NAPs). The group works on accessing Green Climate Fund funding, sharing best practices, and promoting coherence. It uses various methods, including technical guidance, training, workshops, and NAP Central.<sup>45</sup> The NAPs process enables parties to develop and reduce climate change vulnerability, build resilience, and integrate climate change adaptation into policies and programs.<sup>46</sup> Likewise, the Nairobi Work Program (NWP) is a network of over 400 organisations dedicated to climate adaptation and resilience. Their Adaptation Knowledge Portal offers free access to a range of resources, including case studies and technical documents.<sup>47</sup>

SDG 13 goals require sustained international cooperation, urgent action on emission reduction, the development of green alternatives, mitigation, and adaptation to ensure sustainable progress. Afghanistan faces climate-induced challenges, including droughts, floods, and extreme weather events, as well as socio-political instability and limited institutional capacity. Effective adaptation strategies are crucial to reduce vulnerability. International mechanisms, such as AC, Adcoms, and LEG, etc. offer valuable resources, but their application in Afghanistan presents unique challenges. Afghanistan's climate change adaptation requires a comprehensive strategy that addresses institutional weaknesses, enhances community engagement, and leverages international support mechanisms to improve resilience and mitigate climate-related vulnerabilities.

<sup>41</sup> Saifudeen and Mani, "Adaptation of Buildings to Climate Change."

<sup>42</sup> United Nations, "The Paris Agreement."

<sup>43</sup> Clionadh Raleigh et al., "Climate Finance and Conflict: Adaptation amid Instability," *The Lancet Planetary Health* 8, no. 1 (January 2024): e51–60, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196\(23\)00256-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2542-5196(23)00256-5).

<sup>44</sup> Azizi et al., "Impacts of Climate Change in Afghanistan and an Overview of Sustainable Development Efforts."

<sup>45</sup> Qurban Aliyar et al., "Perceptions of and Adaptation to Climate Change in Mountainous Agro-Pastoral Communities: The Case of the Afghan Central Highlands," *Climate Risk Management* 45 (2024): 100639, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.crm.2024.100639>.

<sup>46</sup> Akhtar, "The Significance of International Cooperation on Climate Change Mitigation in Afghanistan," 457.

<sup>47</sup> Lehmann, *Climate Change Policies and Global Cooperation*.

## 4.2 Challenges to International Cooperation Post-2021

After August 2021, Afghanistan faced one of the most complex and sensitive periods, during which various challenges arose for international cooperation and aid. In 2021, with the Taliban coming back to power, Afghanistan faced political instability as the international community had not yet officially recognised the Taliban government. This situation has presented Afghanistan with a significant challenge to international cooperation and aid. In addition, due to the lack of international cooperation, humanitarian aid and essential facilities for people in need, such as healthcare, education, and food supplies, are decreasing. Likewise, restrictions on the work of international organisations and aid agencies, as well as security problems, especially in the delivery of humanitarian aid, the suspension of international aid, frozen foreign reserves (approximately \$9.5 billion), and the departure of skilled professionals create further problems for the Afghan people.<sup>48</sup>

The country remains heavily reliant on humanitarian aid, yet access is limited due to sanctions, political uncertainty, and restrictions on women's participation in the aid sector.<sup>49</sup> Although Afghanistan faced an acute economic collapse immediately after the Taliban took power in August 2021 – driven by the sudden halt in foreign aid, freezing of over \$9.5 billion in foreign reserves, and withdrawal of international institutions – the situation today is partially stabilised, yet remains critically fragile. The *Afghani* currency, which had plummeted to nearly AFN 130 per USD, later stabilised due to tight currency controls and limited imports, not due to actual economic recovery.<sup>50</sup> Currently, according to the World Bank (2024) and UNDP, the economy remains stagnant, with poverty affecting the population, unemployment at record highs, and the private sector paralysed due to sanctions and reduced international engagement. Humanitarian aid continues to sustain essential services, but it is insufficient for long-term development and sustainable growth.

Additionally, due to the country's limited international investment and trade relations, its development and stability have been delayed.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, while macroeconomic indicators, such as currency value, may suggest short-term stabilisation, the underlying structural crisis remains, making the situation different in form but not in substance from the initial collapse. The lack of formal recognition, ongoing political isolation, and gender-based restrictions continue to deter investment, banking, and economic recovery.<sup>52</sup> The international community is putting pressure on the Taliban, especially regarding the education and employment of women and girls. However, this pressure has led to many complications, mainly in aid delivery and international cooperation.<sup>53</sup> In addition, post-2021, many Afghans left their country and migrated to other countries. The increase in migration poses a significant challenge for the international community, which must be effectively managed, as it creates difficulties for host countries. The paper argues that the aforementioned internal and external issues in Afghanistan hinder

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<sup>48</sup> Human Rights Watch, "A Disaster for the Foreseeable Future: Afghanistan's Healthcare Crisis," February 12, 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/02/12/disaster-foreseeable-future/afghanistans-healthcare-crisis>; Runde et al., "The Future of Assistance for Afghanistan: A Dilemma"; World Food Programme, "Afghanistan Hunger Snapshot," 2023, <https://www.wfp.org/publications/afghanistan>.

<sup>49</sup> International Monetary Fund, "Islamic Republic of Afghanistan: Macroeconomic Developments Report," 2023, <https://www.imf.org/en/Countries/AFG>.

<sup>50</sup> Runde et al., "The Future of Assistance for Afghanistan: A Dilemma"; Reuters, "Afghani Drops 11% after Taliban Takeover," 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific>.

<sup>51</sup> World Bank, "Afghanistan Overview: Development News, Research, and Data," accessed November 19, 2024.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Mayar, "Economy, Development, Environment."

cooperation on climate change and its impact in Afghanistan. The interplay of internal issues (socio-political) and external issues (non-cooperation, non-recognition, and their impact), mainly post-2021, is exacerbated by the ill effects of climate change, which amplifies the problems faced by the people. Therefore, there is a critical need for attention to climate change adaptation for a sustainable Afghanistan.

#### *4.3 The Way Forward: Strengthening International Cooperation*

For transnational issues like climate change, strengthening international cooperation is one of the most pressing needs. In the post-2021 geo-political realities, the international community should expand its cooperation in Afghanistan across various areas, including climate change, humanitarian aid, economic development, and security. Dialogue and negotiations should be initiated on fundamental issues between the government of Afghanistan, the international community, and other stakeholders. Such negotiations should aim to create consensus and understanding among Afghans in order to promote a solution to the political crisis and instability. The international community should support positive negotiations in this area, thereby providing conditions for long-term political stability in Afghanistan and effective climate change management. The international community should enhance its cooperation in providing technical assistance and necessary aid to address climate change in Afghanistan. In addition, cooperation and assistance are needed in humanitarian areas, especially in areas such as health, education, food, and support for mitigating the refugee flow in Afghanistan. The dual approach could pave the way for a stable and sustainable Afghanistan.

### **5. Results and Discussion**

The findings of this study show that Afghanistan, despite its relatively small contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions, is among the countries most susceptible to climate change. The impacts of climate change—such as droughts, floods, rising temperatures, and threats to food security—have exacerbated the country's agricultural economic problems. The study also shows that, following the cessation of international aid in 2021, the non-recognition of the Taliban government and its impact has had a profoundly negative impact on the implementation of climate-related programs. However, the findings show that some climate assistance is still being implemented indirectly, through international organisations (such as UNEP, UNDP) and local non-governmental organisations. Although the international community has not officially recognised the current Afghan government, several international and regional institutions are implementing climate change mitigation and adaptation projects indirectly. For example, UNDP is implementing climate-resilient agriculture, water management, and drought-resilience projects in the western and southern provinces of Afghanistan through its Community-Based Rural Agriculture and Development (CBARD) program. The CBARD program and anti-drought activities are being implemented impartially through humanitarian assistance. These projects are implemented in coordination with local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and provide humanitarian assistance without direct involvement from the current government, adhering to the principle of political neutrality. Similarly, UNEP and FAO have also funded drought mitigation and reforestation activities through Afghan civil society. These institutions can undertake climate change projects in cooperation with local humanitarian aid and non-governmental organisations in Afghanistan, providing direct assistance to the Afghan people.

To combat climate change, particularly in a country like Afghanistan, which faces significant political and economic challenges that impact the international arena, a comprehensive and multifaceted approach is necessary. Establishing and developing an institutional framework for Afghanistan to combat climate change is important. Although the lack of political recognition is a major obstacle, there are opportunities for indirect assistance through regional and international organisations such as UNEP. Such organisations can work with local NGOs and charities, and create systems of transparency and accountability. Afghanistan's political uncertainty and weak institutional framework, which undermines the trust of international partners, need to be addressed. Specific laws and climate protection policies are necessary to address climate change, based on international agreements can attract international support. The constraints include a lack of law enforcement and inadequate local coordination for implementing policies; however, Afghans should be equipped with skills in water management, land and forest conservation, and air pollution control through technical education. This will give Afghans the opportunity to solve their problems in the long run, but the lack of professional trainers and consistent programs is a constraint. International private companies and industrial institutions can help by investing in climate projects. This will help provide employment opportunities to local people and accelerate the climate protection process; however, a lack of security and political stability discourages global investors.

The paper argues that regional countries such as China, Iran, and Pakistan, although they do not officially have comprehensive climate programs, must include Afghanistan in regional climate negotiations. Iran, Pakistan, and China have close geographical relations with Afghanistan, and can cooperate with Afghanistan in the field of climate action. These countries can expand their climate programs to Afghanistan by leveraging their existing efforts, as regional environmental problems and solutions often require joint development. These countries share common challenges with Afghanistan's climate, so joint projects are beneficial to both sides; however, the existence of regional competition and political distrust presents a problem. The sharing of climate research by international research institutions, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), can provide Afghan officials and scientists with opportunities to make more informed decisions. This will help obtain accurate information, leading to better strategies for solving climate problems; however, a lack of tools and capacities for scientific research is a constraint. These projects will directly benefit the Afghan people, regardless of political considerations. For instance, China has informally included Afghanistan in the regional climate negotiations. China has informally included Afghanistan in discussions on jointly confronting climate risks in the region under the "Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which focuses on transboundary water management and climate coordination.

Although the de facto authorities are not officially recognised, the international community can implement projects in Afghanistan through international environmental initiatives like the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Such projects receive support through the Paris Agreement and other international agreements and can contribute to mitigating the effects of climate change in Afghanistan. The international community can help through technical know-how and capacity building, rather than direct financial aid. Through technical training, Afghans should be taught water management, soil and forest protection, air pollution control, and other important environmental skills. International private companies and industrial institutions with the necessary technology and budget for environmental protection can

directly or indirectly implement projects in Afghanistan. These companies can invest in climate change projects in Afghanistan and collaborate with local communities on activities. International institutions, such as the IPCC and other environmental research institutions, can start sharing climate research and information with Afghanistan, enabling Afghan scientists and officials to make informed decisions about the effects of climate change. The United Nations can launch neutral projects to achieve international environmental and humanitarian goals, including those in Afghanistan. Through these projects, the international community will provide impartial aid to the people of Afghanistan and reduce the effects of climate change. Adaptation actions vary depending on a community, business, organisation, country, or region, ranging from flood defences to drought-resistant crops. While many nations are already building resilient societies, greater action is needed to manage risks effectively. Afghanistan faces challenges in implementing climate change projects due to unrecognised needs, limited resources, specialised skills, public participation, technical limitations, and a lack of long-term plans, despite its commitment to addressing climate change. International cooperation is vital for Afghanistan's climate change projects, which involve ensuring political stability, securing financial assistance, upskilling, raising public awareness, facilitating technical cooperation, and strengthening planning processes, with support from the World Bank.

Although Afghanistan faces a lack of official recognition, the international community can still support Afghanistan's climate adaptation and resilience through humanitarian assistance, technical training, and regional cooperation. This assistance should be organised through local civil society institutions, transparent mechanisms, and a humanitarian perspective. The study's findings show that, although the Taliban government did not participate in the COP conferences (2021–2023) due to its lack of official recognition, international organisations still implemented climate-related projects through local non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The study concludes that, despite political constraints, alternative avenues for international cooperation exist; humanitarian, informal, and technical mechanisms can help Afghanistan build resilience to climate change. Combating climate change requires multifaceted measures, including institutional development (encompassing institutional frameworks, policies, strategies, plans, and procedures or practices), legislation, capacity building, and investment in physical infrastructure. Therefore, a comprehensive approach should be developed and implemented to cover all affected sectors. Although formal government-to-government cooperation is limited, it does not mean there is no international support. Through local communities, non-governmental organisations, and neutral mechanisms, cooperation on climate change is possible.

## **6. Conclusion**

Combating climate change requires institutional development, legislation, capacity building, and investment in physical infrastructure. Afghanistan attracts international cooperation through international organisations like the UN Environment Programme, as well as humanitarian aid and regional countries such as Iran, Pakistan, and China. International environmental projects like the 2030 SDG Goals and the Paris Agreement can help Afghanistan adapt to climate change. Technical know-how and capacity building can also be provided through technical training. Private companies and industrial institutions can invest in climate change projects in partnership with local people. International institutions can share climate research and information to help Afghan scientists and officials make informed decisions. Afghanistan faces challenges in

implementing climate change projects due to non-recognition, limited resources, and technical limitations, necessitating international cooperation for achieving political stability and effective planning. Afghanistan requires a comprehensive climate change strategy, despite its ongoing political instability and a weak institutional framework. Specific laws and policies, technical education, investment in climate projects, joint projects with neighbouring countries, and UN-launched climate-neutral initiatives are necessary. However, challenges include a lack of professional trainers, regional competition, and security threats. The Afghan government and international organisations should enhance climate change resilience through image-based mechanisms, joint geo-programs, capacity-building, capital management, forest restoration, water quality improvement, and a climate change monitoring system. Afghanistan should seek international financial resources for climate change adaptation, revise its curriculum to include climate change-related topics, and establish research collaborations with international universities to raise awareness and address climate problems. The study highlights the need for further exploration of specific climate resilience models in Afghan communities, emphasising the need for future research to document their experiences.

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## The Geopolitics of International Aid and its Influence on Afghanistan's Post-2021 SDGs Priorities

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### ABSTRACT

Since the Taliban's returned to power in 2021, Afghanistan faced widespread international isolation and a severe shortage of development aid. This study assessed how the geopolitical context of international aid affected Afghanistan's achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The need for this study arose because no scholarly analysis had previously examined the relationship between political conditions of aid, regional rivalries, and Afghan needs. The study relied on interviews with 20 university lecturers and a thematic analysis of documents. The main finding showed that international aid, which had previously focused on long-term development, became limited to addressing short-term humanitarian needs. Aid was made conditional on values such as women's rights, inclusive governance, and freedom of expression principles that conflicted with the Taliban regime's policies. These conditions hindered long-term development, with particular attention to SDGs 4, 5, 8, 9, and 16. Similarly, USA, China, Pakistan, and Qatar used aid for political influence, not to meet the needs of the Afghan people. This study concluded that effective aid required transparency, local ownership, and a needs-based approach rather than political conditions. It recommended that international donors adopt a neutral, needs-driven strategy that supported sustainable development without intensifying domestic political tensions.

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**Received:** July 26, 2025; **Accepted:** August 25, 2025; **Published:** August 30, 2025

**Keywords:** Geopolitics, International Aid, SDGs, Donor Interests, Aid Allocation, Conditional Aid

### Introduction

Afghanistan has historically been a center of international political competition, proxy wars, and foreign intervention due to its geographical location. This location, while of strategic importance, has also exposed Afghanistan to persistent instability, political pressures, and widespread economic dependence. Following the political transition in August 2021, when the Taliban returned to power, the country has faced an unprecedented economic and development crisis. According to a World Bank report, Afghanistan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has declined by more than 20 percent, nearly 97 percent of the population is at serious risk of poverty, and international financial assistance to Afghanistan has been cut by about half (World Bank, 2023). This assistance, which previously formed an important foundation for Afghanistan's state-building, fiscal, and economic stability, has now largely taken the form of humanitarian assistance. Due to these developments, Afghanistan's development goals, especially the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), have faced severe obstacles (UNDP, 2022).

In the current context, this study is particularly valuable because it analyzes the geopolitical aspects of international aid on the one

hand, and the impact of international conditions, sanctions, and indirect political pressures on Afghanistan after the Taliban came to power on the other. Existing research mostly assesses the stage before 2021, but the impact of recent developments, changes in the nature of aid, increased conditionality, and international political interventions has been largely ignored. This study fills this research gap, and assesses the extent to which international aid conditions and policies are consistent with the real needs of Afghan society. It also analyzes whether this aid is moving Afghanistan towards economic self-sufficiency, or making it more dependent on foreign aid.

Furthermore, the study provides important and practical recommendations for policymakers, international institutions, and Afghan institutions. It highlights that international aid should be aligned with Afghan national needs, development priorities, and actual capacities. Aid conditions should be free from political agendas, transparent, accountable, and ensure the sustainability of social services. The study emphasizes that aid should not focus solely on the provision of urgent humanitarian services, but should also provide broader opportunities for economic infrastructure, human capital development, regional markets, and the Afghan productive sector (SIGAR, 2023; OCHA, 2023). Eliminating political pressures, conditional aid, and regional competition are vital for Afghanistan's development.

The urgency of this study is heightened by the fact that Afghanistan is facing three major challenges at the same time: international political isolation, a crippled banking system, and a lack of legitimate international interaction. International institutions such as the UNDP, IMF, and World Bank have either suspended or completely suspended their development strategies due to the Taliban's lack of legitimacy (UNDP, 2023; World Bank, 2023). These conditions have created a dangerously precarious situation for Afghanistan's development, and if the current aid conditions and geopolitical principles are not reassessed, the country's economic future, aid sustainability, and domestic capacity building will be severely damaged. This is why this study provides sound, scientific, and practical guidance so that Afghans can take steps towards a self-sufficient, stable, and national economy without foreign aid.

In light of this analytical and practical need, this study aims to analyze the geopolitical aspects, conditions, political objectives, and impacts of international aid. The study attempts to show how international aid has been subordinated to the political agendas of donor countries, and how this situation has negatively affected Afghanistan's sustainable development goals. The study also assesses whether international aid is aligned with Afghan realities, and whether it is a means of economic stability, or whether it only keeps the country dependent on continued aid. With all this, the study attempts to present practical alternative strategies that can enable Afghanistan to move beyond the orbit of conditional international aid, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals based on self-reliance, accountability, transparency, and national capacity.

The main research question is how have the geopolitical implications of international aid affected Afghanistan's development process after 2021, especially the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? This question raises four sub-questions: first, is international aid and its political conditions aligned with Afghanistan's real development needs? Second, are these conditions and international political pressures strengthening Afghanistan's economic stability, or are they only leading to long-term dependency? The third question is, what long-term positive or negative consequences does such conditional, politically and geopolitically structured aid have for Afghanistan? And the fourth is, how can Afghanistan achieve a self-sufficient economy without foreign aid, and pursue a development process free from the effects of foreign pressures and conditional policies?

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Realism: Self-Interest, Anarchy and Power Politics**

Realism is a classical theoretical framework of international relations that views the international system as anarchic, that is, a system in which there is no central authority, and states compete with each other for survival, power, and security. According to this view, international aid is used primarily to enhance the self-interest, political influence, and economic influence of donor states, rather than for purely humanitarian reasons [1]. As Khan & Altaf also note, donor states seek to achieve their strategic goals through aid, such as regional security, opening new markets for their companies, or influencing foreign policy [2]. In this framework, aid is seen as a means of balancing power between states. Donor countries use this aid to build their international alliances, reduce the influence of competitors, and spread their values [3]. For example, a country that advocates for women's rights or a free-market economy may attach conditions to aid that ensure political or value loyalty to the rich country [4]. Therefore,

the implementation of the SDGs is also influenced by the policies and priorities of donors.

### **Constructivism: Values, Identity and Normative Influence**

In contrast to realism, constructivism theory believes that international relations are not based solely on material power, but are defined by values, identities, and social interactions. From this perspective, international aid not only pursues strategic objectives, but also reflects the values of donors, such as human rights, women's education, freedom of expression, and the expression of human emotions [5]. Therefore, if the issue of aid to Afghanistan is viewed from this perspective, aid is not only a means of power competition or economic monopoly, but also reflects the cultural and value identity of donors. Aid conditions, such as women's education, the free operation of non-governmental organizations, or support for freedom of expression, are considered to be reflections of these values. Similarly, according to Constructivist theory, aid is not only a political tool, but also an attempt to spread universal values.

### **Dependency Theory: Economic Exploitation and Structural Inequality**

Dependency Theory criticizes the international system from an economically focused perspective, arguing that the international system is structured in such a way that rich countries maintain a monopoly on poor countries, which they use to expand their companies, cultural values, and political influence. The theory claims that international aid is a form of neo-colonialism rather than development [6]. According to this perspective, Afghanistan, like other countries that receive continuous aid, faces economic instability due to the cessation or conditionality of international aid on the one hand, and the risk of losing long-term development opportunities on the other. This situation undermines Afghanistan's political power and hinders the development of an independent economic system. Furthermore, this theory believes that donor countries try to create markets for their economic institutions, issue their own laws, and spread their own culture instead of local values, which prevents long-term self-sufficiency. The analysis of the above theories shows that realism explains the political power and self-interest behind international aid well, but this theory alone cannot explain all the dimensions of international aid. The addition of constructivism and dependency theories also reveals the value, cultural, and colonial dimensions of aid. Therefore, this study is based on this theoretical diversity to provide an in-depth, multi-dimensional, and critical assessment of the international aid situation in Afghanistan, the conditions of aid, and its development process.

### **Geopolitical Aspects of International Aid**

Geopolitics, a term first coined by Swedish scholar Rudolf Kielen, describes how a country's geography – such as location, natural resources, climate, and borders – influences international politics [7]. This theory has now taken on a central role in the analysis of international aid, as aid has become a tool not only for humanitarian purposes but also for strategic objectives, the balance of power, and the expansion of global influence. The geopolitical dimension of international aid reveals the complex relationships between development, diplomacy, foreign policy, and security calculations [8,9].

### **Historical Relationship between Aid and Foreign Policy**

According to the literature, aid has been used largely as an instrumental tool of international politics. McLaughlin argues that after World War II, development aid programs were part of

the Cold War political competition between the US and European powers, not just a humanitarian endeavor [10]. Through aid, the world powers sought to strengthen their allies, reduce the influence of the socialist bloc, and spread Western values. Beyne & Moratis study shows that the decision-making process for international aid is still driven by geopolitical interests, and that this process is also subject to domestic politics and domestic pressures within international institutions (such as USAID, DFID, GIZ) [11]. This indicates a phase of the political use of aid in which aid is conditioned on the terms of “good governance”, “transparency” or “human rights”, but behind it lies political calculations.

**The Politics of Conditionality and the Weakening of Sovereignty**  
The conditionality of international aid, which has become a central policy of international institutions since the 1990s, has been described by several scholars as a “neocolonial agenda.” Niyonkuru argues that these conditions – such as implementing state reforms, implementing a market economy, or holding elections – pose a direct threat to the national sovereignty of recipient countries [12]. Because of conditional aid, donor countries can obtain contracts for their companies through political pressure, or export their own cultural agendas. Dijkstra demonstrates in a key analysis that a kind of strategic game is underway between donor countries and recipient bureaucracies, in which each side tries to ensure its own survival [13]. Donors look to expand their influence, while recipient institutions prioritize the continuation of aid, which harms both parties and makes aid lose its original purpose.

### **The Role of Humanitarian Institutions in the Deepening Crisis of International Aid**

Lyshol argues that NGOs, once symbols of impartiality, humanitarianism, and independence, have now come under the influence of donor country policies [14]. These institutions are forced to accept donor conditions for their funding, even when these conditions conflict with their core principles – impartiality, independence, and human dignity. This situation poses a serious threat to the legitimacy of international aid.

### **Energy, Economics and New Strategies**

New geopolitical elements, such as energy security and industrial transformation, are also influencing the geography of aid. Bozhko et al. show that energy resources and pipeline politics have now become an important part of aid focus, as countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia (such as Azerbaijan) are framing these interactions in their energy policies [15]. Similarly, Adamson & Han show that in the light of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, international development funding is now linked to training, technical skills, and lifelong learning and that this assistance should also be aligned with the SDGs [16].

### **The Afghanistan Experience: The Consequences of Aid Dependency**

The case of Afghanistan is an important case for the geopolitical analysis of international aid. According to the World Bank, international aid accounted for almost 40% of Afghanistan's GDP from 2002 to 2020 [17]. This aid played an important role in the areas of education, health, infrastructure, and security, but at the same time it also created a kind of economic dependence. After 2021, when international aid stopped, it was proven that Afghanistan had not yet reached a self-sufficient economic system, and aid was not managed without strategic calculations [18]. This in-depth literature review shows that the geopolitical dimension of international aid is not simply a matter of balance of power, but a complex web of systematic interactions of values, economic

interests, humanitarian principles, and international institutions. Therefore, any study that assesses the impact of international aid – especially in a country like Afghanistan – must provide a deep cross-dimensional analysis of politics, economics, governance, values, and scientific perspectives on development. The impact of aid should be assessed not only from numerical criteria but also from value, cultural, and political perspectives.

### **Aid Conditionality and Geopolitical Interests Aid Conditionality and Geopolitical Objectives**

International aid is often tied to conditionality, with donor countries seeking to impose conditions that serve their own economic or political interests [1]. These conditions may require recipient countries to implement specific economic reforms, governance reforms, or other programs. For example, some countries provide aid to counter terrorism or to secure strategic areas [16]. Such conditional aid can undermine aid effectiveness if it takes priority over basic humanitarian needs [8]. Also, aid is often given to donor countries or to countries that are political or strategic allies of donor countries, even if these countries do not have serious needs [19].

### **The Harms of Aid Conditionality and Local Trust**

When aid is subordinated to foreign political interests, suspicion and distrust of aid increase. This situation is a major obstacle to local cooperation and the sustainability of development projects [9]. The legitimacy of aid objectives is reduced and aid organizations are sometimes caught in a conflict between the countries seeking support and their own principles [16]. Several researchers emphasize that an impartial and disinterested aid approach should be adopted to ensure the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [10].

### **The Impact of Geopolitical Competition on Aid Distribution**

The distribution of international aid is closely linked to the geopolitical situation, whereby donor countries give priority to countries that are in line with their political, cultural or strategic interests [11,20]. For example, historically, countries rich in oil and gas, or those that had important positions of influence during the Cold War, have benefited from aid [19]. Also, since the Cold War, the US and other powers have distributed aid to meet their political goals [17].

### **Geopolitical Impact on International Aid to Afghanistan**

Before 2021, international aid to Afghanistan was based on the fight against terrorism, regional stability, counter-narcotics, and humanitarian needs [21]. Since 2015, Afghanistan has adopted all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and focused on various areas such as education, health, gender equality, and economic growth [20]. However, since the Taliban came to power, development aid has decreased and most aid has been allocated only to humanitarian needs [8,22]. Donors are wary of working directly with the Taliban and work with the United Nations and NGOs [23].

### **The Role of New Donor Countries and the Long-Term Impact of Aid**

New sources of aid to Afghanistan, such as Qatar and China, are expanding aid based on their specific geopolitical objectives [18]. At the same time, the Taliban government is facing a loss of trust from other donor countries due to human rights and governance problems [22]. Due to this situation, development programs such as education and health sectors are not receiving significant resources, which is a major obstacle to the SDGs [24].

### **Balancing Humanitarian Needs and Development Goals**

The increase in humanitarian aid, especially in the area of food security (SDG 2), has created obstacles to long-term development goals such as creating sustainable jobs (SDG 8) [24]. Additionally, the Taliban's closure of girls' schools and restrictions on women's rights are major obstacles to community development that impact SDG 5 and other goals [25,26].

### **Impact of Political Instability and Regional Rivalries**

Geopolitical rivalries and support for or opposition to the Taliban government have a direct impact on Afghanistan's security stability and development [27]. Regional powers such as Iran, Pakistan, and Russia are seeking to increase their influence in the region and are also playing a role in the distribution of aid in this regard [28]. Although this cooperation promotes regional stability (SDG 16), it has also shown negative effects on human rights restrictions [25].

### **Post-Taliban Governance and International Engagement Post-Taliban Governance and Economic Situation**

Afghanistan has long been a focus of foreign intervention, regional rivalries, and international power struggles due to its geopolitical location. Later the Taliban's Interim Administration (ITA) came to power in 2021, Afghanistan's economic situation deteriorated sharply; its GDP contracted by 20.7%, falling to 6.2% in 2022, 2.7% in 2023, and 3.2% in 2024 [17,29]. Although international aid continues to contribute to economic stability, this stability is highly fragile and fragile [30]. The banking system is plagued by weaknesses and payment system problems, which hinder economic development [17]. This situation poses serious challenges to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Impact of the Economic Crisis and Humanitarian Situation**

Despite the improvement in household conditions, nearly half of Afghans still face poverty and unemployment rates remain high [30]. The decline in international aid and the deepening economic crisis have led to poverty, hunger, and a lack of basic services, posing a serious threat to the SDGs' goals of ending hunger (SDG 2), health (SDG 3), and poverty reduction (SDG 1) [11,23].

### **Geopolitical Impact and International Aid**

After the Taliban's resurgence, the international community has been wary of direct engagement due to the Taliban's human rights abuses and the existence of some terrorist prisoners [20]. Competition among global powers, prioritizing regional interests, and aid conditionality have complicated the distribution of aid [11]. Neighboring countries such as Pakistan, Iran, and China pursue their geopolitical interests and use aid as part of their diplomatic strategies [23]. This conflict poses challenges to achieving SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions).

### **Aid Conditionality and the Importance of Human Rights**

Many donor countries insist on human rights, especially women's rights, as conditions for aid, an issue that is in conflict with the Taliban regime [23]. Tying aid to human rights and governance reforms may lead to conflicts between the Taliban and donors, which in turn affect the implementation of development programs [11].

### **Relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Way Forward**

As it stands, Afghanistan's development is subject to complex interactions between international aid, the Taliban government, and international political pressures. Emergency assistance in the areas of food security and health is important, but long-term

development requires economic reforms, ensuring women's rights, and implementing transparent governance, all of which are directly linked to the SDGs [18,20]. The international community must work together to prioritize the needs of Afghans and expand cooperation to make aid more effective and sustainable.

### **Materials and Methods**

This study is a qualitative study that aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the geopolitical impact of international aid on Afghanistan's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Two main methods were used to collect data: First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 lecturers, who were selected from private universities in Nangarhar province. These lecturers were experts in the fields of international relations and political science, and held master's degrees. Participants were selected through "purposive sampling" to provide accurate, scientific, and factual views relevant to the research objectives. Second, an in-depth study of academic sources, research articles, reports, and official documents was conducted to examine the relationship between international aid, geopolitical goals, and Afghanistan's development needs. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire, which had five main sections: the geopolitical nature of international aid, aid allocation and distribution, priorities for the SDGs, policy-making decisions, and aid effectiveness. Each section had three or four sub-questions. The interviews were mostly conducted face-to-face, the duration of the interviews was usually 20 to 30 minutes. The demographic characteristics of the participants were as follows: all 20 were male, all participants had a master's degree. Their specialization was law and political science, and their professional experience ranged from 5 years. Informed consent was obtained from all participants to ensure research ethics, and the confidentiality of names and personal information was maintained, and all participants were given the right to withdraw from the interview or not to respond at any stage. This study was conducted after approval from the relevant university ethics committee, in order to comply with international standards of research ethics. For the analysis, the interview transcripts were analyzed through thematic coding and four key themes were extracted. In addition, a comparative analysis between the documents and the interviews was also conducted to make the results more reliable, in-depth, and balanced.

### **Result**

The findings of this qualitative study, based on semi-structured interviews and an extensive literature review, show that since 2021, the geopolitical context of international aid has had a profound negative impact on Afghanistan's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). After the Taliban came to power, major international donors such as the US, the World Bank and the IMF have suspended development aid. Now, only emergency aid such as food, health and support for the displaced continues, while long-term development goals have been neglected. Current aid is tied to conditions on women's rights, girls' education and human rights, which are at odds with the Taliban. This situation has weakened aid and prevented the achievement of development goals. China, Pakistan and Qatar are now more active in Afghan affairs, and aid has become a tool of influence. This aid is mostly for their own geopolitical goals, not to meet the real needs of Afghans. The lack of a legitimate government, frozen assets, and lack of international recognition have forced donors to channel aid through the United Nations and NGOs, which in turn reduces local ownership, increases bureaucracy, and reduces effectiveness. The following key findings were obtained through thematic analysis of the interviews and comparison of secondary sources:

### **The Political Nature and Values of International Aid**

Most interviewees believe that international aid is not only humanitarian, but has become increasingly subject to political agendas and values. According to Haji Hakim Mushfiq of Alfalah University lecturer (personal communication, February 12, 2024) states: "Women's education, a free press, and the demand for an inclusive government are basic conditions for aid, but they are neither in line with the situation in Afghanistan nor do they respond to the needs of the people." According to Fakhruddin Ekhlasmad of Rokhan University lecturer (personal communication, March 14, 2024) adds: "International powers have used aid as a tool for soft power; they want to deal with values, not just needs." In this regard, Kalsoom and Cevik show that international aid is a tool for promoting Western values, not just humanitarian cooperation [5,20].

### **Impact of Economic Collapse and Aid Cuts**

After the Taliban came to power, the withdrawal of international aid has plunged Afghanistan into a deep economic crisis. 17 interviewees said that the sudden withdrawal of development aid has led to poverty, unemployment, and economic weakness. Afghanistan's GDP shrank by nearly 20% in 2022. Emergency aid is not enough to provide the foundations for long-term stability. Abdul Wali Atif, a lecturer at Al-Taqwa University (personal communication, April 16, 2024) says: "We cannot survive without aid, this is a fact; our economy is in ruins, banks are half-functional, and unemployment is at its peak." According to Muhammad Ibrahim Sekandari, a lecturer at Rokhan University, (personal communication, May 17, 2024) says: "With the withdrawal of international aid, people's lives have also come to a standstill; from cities to villages, there is poverty, famine, and helplessness everywhere." World Economics reported that Afghanistan's GDP fell by 20% in 2021, and by 3.2% in 2024 [29].

### **Aid Management and Lack of Transparency**

Although international aid is now implemented through the United Nations and NGOs, it still faces serious problems of transparency, effectiveness, and coordination. "We don't know where the aid budget is being spent; which programs reach the people and which are just report cards," says Shah Mahmood Ehsas, a lecturer at Alfalah University (personal communication, February 13, 2024). According to Qudratullah Sangeen of Tabesh University lecturer (personal communication, March 15, 2024) adds: "The Taliban have restricted the work of international agencies, and international agencies also have no contact with the government. This situation does not create aid, but chaos." Whittall also wrote that international agencies are caught between their own values, donor pressures and the illegitimacy of the domestic government [19].

### **Strategic Goals and Assistance of Regional Countries**

Most of the lecturers believe that China, Qatar, Iran, and Pakistan use aid in Afghanistan for their own economic, transit, and security purposes. China focuses on mineral resources, while Pakistan and Qatar are trying to increase political influence. 15 participants say that this aid does not meet the real needs of the people, and does not contribute to long-term development. According to lecturer Riazullah Sadiq of Nangarhar University (personal communication, May 19, 2024) explains: "Pakistan is trying to keep the Afghan economy under its pressure, and China wants to obtain Afghanistan's natural resources." According to lecturer Shamsulhaq Saqib of Tabesh University (personal communication, April 11, 2024) says: "Qatar is lobbying for the international legitimacy of the Taliban, and seeks political influence through

aid." Akhtar & Manzanay show that regional countries see aid as a means of expanding influence, not as a panacea for human suffering [18].

### **Threats to the Effectiveness of the SDG Goals**

According to the results, many of the long-term SDG goals such as industry, climate, peace and governance (SDG 9, 13, 16) have been neglected, and only immediate needs such as food, health, and support for displaced people (SDG 1, 2, 3) receive focus. Humanitarian assistance is mostly limited to SDG 1 (poverty reduction) and SDG 2 (hunger). Important goals such as SDG 8 (work and economy), SDG 9 (resources), SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 16 (justice and peace) have been neglected. Saqib Fikri, a lecturer at Nangarhar University, (personal communication, April 22, 2024) expresses concern: "Development should be strategic, not seasonal; we need education, infrastructure, and jobs, not just a little bit of help for a month." Sahab et al. and Schmeding & Natanzi also confirm that the SDG goals are at risk due to the political nature of aid [24,31].

### **Conditionality of Aid and Conflict of National Sovereignty**

A key concern of the participants was that the conditions of international aid imposed for dealing with the Taliban undermine Afghanistan's political independence and right to national decision-making. Aid is tied to conditions of human rights and good governance, which are valuable to the international community, but conflict with domestic sovereignty and realities. These conditions, especially in the areas of education (SDG 4) and gender equality (SDG 5), have blocked the way for aid. Hashmatullah Rahmati, a lecturer at Alfalah University, (personal communication, February 23, 2024) clearly stated: "If aid is for us to accept their policies, then it is not aid, it is commercial pressure." Khaliqyar Alokozai, a lecturer at Rokhan University, (personal communication, May 26, 2024) said: "The conditions of the West that come under the name of human rights sometimes directly conflict with the culture, values, and religion of the country." This perspective is also consistent with Ngang and Niyonkuru where aid is interpreted as a kind of "neocolonial pressure", limiting the autonomy of local governments [4,12].

### **Weak Afghan Government Capacity and Disorganized Aid Absorption Structure**

Another important issue that emerged from the interviews was the Taliban government's weak administrative capacity and the lack of a clear and transparent system for managing international aid. This has not only led to disorganized aid, but also to a loss of public trust in it. Tariqullah Malikzia, a lecturer at Al-Taqwa University, (personal communication, March 9, 2024) explains: "The Taliban government has no plan, no strategy, no transparency; aid comes, but it is not clear where it goes." Ansarullah Dawlat, a lecturer at Nangarhar University, (personal communication, April 18, 2024) says: "For aid to be effective, there must be a structured administration and an accountability system, but currently both are lacking." Carment & Samy also argue that the implementation of SDG-16 (peace, justice and institutions) is only possible through capacity building of internal governments, not just through the provision of funds [28].

### **The Need for Self-Reliance and Development of Domestic Capacities**

From the perspective of most lecturers, Afghanistan should not rely on international aid for a long time. Self-sufficiency requires management of domestic resources, transparent governance, and development of sectors. The cessation of international aid has also

been seen as an opportunity for Afghan governments to recognize and strengthen their own capacities. According to Imran Sherzia, lecturer of Alfalah University (personal communication, June 12, 2024) said: "We must learn to rely on our own resources for our economy instead of others; this will take time, but it is not impossible." According to Zahidullah Shinwari, lecturer of Al-Taqwa University also (personal communication, May 6, 2024) said: "Increasing domestic revenues, focusing on agriculture, trade, and mining are also the foundations of self-sufficiency; the government must translate these policies into action." Hakimuddin Manzany, a lecturer at Tabesh University, (personal communication, March 20, 2024) referred to the fight against corruption: "Even if aid comes, until a system of transparency, accountability, and anti-corruption is established, no aid can benefit the people." (Interview 20) This perspective is consistent with Cooper and Carment & Samy, who write that self-reliance occurs when state capacities, internal resources and democratic policies come together [28,32].

**International Double Standards and Political Differences in Aid**  
A key criticism that emerged from the interviews is that international powers have double standards in aid. The lecturers pointed out that some countries accused of human rights violations still receive extensive aid, but aid to Afghanistan is stopped because of women's education or other conditions. According to Jamil Hassanzio of Rokhan University lecturer (personal communication, February 21, 2024) states: "Why do some other countries turn a blind eye to oppressive regimes, but when it comes to Afghanistan, aid is stopped because of women's education? This is political discrimination." Nazifullah Niazi, lecturer of Alfalah University (personal communication, May 17, 2024) put it this way: "The main criterion for international aid is not human needs, but the interests of the powers." Authors such as Ryan & Dolan and Chukwuma have also raised the problem of international double standards, arguing that aid allocation is often subject to international politics [3,26].

### **Regional Inequality in Aid Implementation and Neglect of Marginal Areas**

The interviews also revealed that aid mostly reaches limited segments of the urban and central regions, but remote, tribal, and underserved areas remain largely unserved. This inequality further widens the gap between the government and the people. Fazalwali Wali, a lecturer at Roshan University, (personal communication, May 24, 2024) complained: "Projects are announced in the central cities, but neither budget nor work reaches the districts. There is no fair distribution of aid." Abdul Basit Khedam, a lecturer at Al-Taqwa University, (personal communication, March 15, 2024) said: "In provinces that are under strict Taliban control, institutions do not operate there. This means that the needs of the people are victims of political geography." This concern is consistent with research by Safi, Oral et al. and Zhao et al. which point to geographical imbalances in aid [33,34].

### **Loss of Social Trust and Threat to the Legitimacy of Aid**

Interviews revealed that due to the mismanagement of aid, lack of transparency, and external pressures, people have lost trust in international aid and partner institutions. This has seriously jeopardized the legitimacy of aid. Nazifullah Niazi, lecturer of Alfalah University (personal communication, February 28, 2024) put it this way: "People say that this aid goes into the pockets of bigwigs; it has no connection with the common people. The belief that aid is for the people is dead." Tariqullah Malikzia, a lecturer at Al-Taqwa University, (personal communication, April

24, 2024) said: "If international aid loses the trust of the people, then the influence, cooperation, and sustainable results of the institutions will be zero." Lyshol and Whittall also raised the argument that the legitimacy of aid is based on public trust, not just on budget [14,19].

### **Discussion**

The results of this study show that the geopolitical nature of international aid has negatively impacted Afghanistan's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) post-2021. The lack of development aid, political conditionality, and the lack of a legitimate government have made aid effectiveness, coordination, and sustainability problematic. Interviewees believe that aid is no longer provided solely for humanitarian needs, but has become a means of exporting values, political pressure, and expanding influence. The results show that aid is limited to urgent needs rather than meeting the basic needs of the people, such as education, infrastructure, and employment opportunities. This situation has led to the destruction of the foundations of Afghanistan's long-term development and has severely damaged public trust in international aid.

The results of this study are consistent with numerous international and regional studies. Kalsoom and Cevik argue that international aid has become a means of exporting Western values, not just humanitarian aid [5,20]. Similarly, Whittall argues that international aid agencies are caught between their own values, donor pressures and a lack of domestic legitimacy a situation that is consistent with the current situation in Afghanistan [19]. Carment & Samy argue that implementing SDG 16 (peace, justice, and institutions) is only possible through domestic state capacity, not just through money [28]. This is also consistent with research findings that show that the Taliban government has no clear strategy, transparency, or institutional structure, and that aid is therefore fragmented. Similarly, Schmeding & Natanzi and Sahab et al. also confirm that the SDGs are at risk due to political pressures, unbalanced aid and the lack of a legitimate government [24,31]. This comparison shows that the Afghan context is not unique, but rather a broader problem in international aid policy.

This study provides a picture of the real challenges that the geopolitical dimension of international aid poses to the Afghan development system. The study adds to the understanding that: For long-term stability, aid must be free from political conditions, transparent, and responsive to the needs of the people; An effective, stable, and credible internal system for aid (administrative structure and accountability) must be established; Domestic trust, transparent governance, and revenue generation must be prioritized so that Afghanistan can become self-reliant; The strategies of international aid agencies must cover the entire country, not just the central regions. The limitations of this study should also be considered: This is a qualitative study, so the interpretation of the data is based on the participants' opinions and analytical interpretations, not on statistical evidence; The participants were selected only from universities and intellectuals, not from the general public or aid recipients; This study only assesses the situation after 2021, so it is not possible to assess long-term development changes; Some of the data is based on personal relationships, which may undermine objective impartiality. The conclusion of the discussion is that the main factors behind Afghanistan's development process and the failure to achieve the SDGs are geopolitical politics, weak domestic capacities, lack of legitimate government, and low trust between the people and the government. If international assistance is to achieve reform,

it should prioritize addressing the above issues [35-42].

## Conclusion

This study shows that the economic, development and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan after 2021 is deeply linked to international aid and the geopolitical calculations of aid. The main findings of the study are: After the Taliban came to power, development aid has completely stopped, and only emergency humanitarian assistance (such as food, health and support for the displaced) remains; The conditionality of international donors, especially issues of women's education, human rights and Taliban legitimacy, has a profound impact on the distribution of aid; Countries such as China, Qatar and Pakistan use their aid for their geopolitical interests, not to meet the real needs of Afghans; Although aid is implemented through the United Nations and NGOs, it still has problems with transparency, accountability and effectiveness; Afghanistan is still dependent on foreign aid, which hinders the country's economic self-reliance.

This study provides new and deeper scientific insight into the relationship between the political and economic realities of Afghanistan and international aid. It fills a gap that has been poorly analyzed in the post-2021 situation. The study proves that international aid is now distributed not only on the basis of need, but also on the basis of values, pressures and influence. The study also has important practical recommendations for policymakers, international institutions and Afghan institutions to make aid free from political influence, transparent and closer to the needs of the people.

This study was only qualitative. Future research should also assess the volume, impact, SDG indicators and statistical assessment of aid implementation. Some participants refrained from expressing their views due to political pressure. Future research should provide an opportunity to gather candid, fearless views through confidential methods. If international aid is to be a tool for reform, development, and progress, it must be free from geopolitical calculations and political conditions, aligned with national needs, and contribute to the development of Afghans' internal capacities. Therefore, this study not only provides an in-depth analysis of the situation, but also provides a scientific and practical framework for reform.

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## Factors Contributing to the Occurrence of Medical Crimes in Jalalabad City and Their Prevention Method

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### Article History

Received: 28.08.2025

Accepted: 16.09.2025

Published: 30.09.2025



**Abstract:** Medical crimes are among the crimes committed by medical personnel during the treatment and care of patients. There are different types of these crimes, and specific legal penalties have been determined for each type. The value of this study was that it clarifies the factors that cause medical crimes in Jalalabad city and identifies ways to prevent them, so as to increase the level of justice and trust in the health sector. The main goal of the study was to identify the root causes of medical crimes and find effective ways to prevent them. This study was conducted from February to December 2024 in Jalalabad city using a mixed-method. Data were collected from 177 university professors and 33 defense attorneys via Google Forms and evaluated through thematic analysis. The results of the study indicated that the factors that contributed to medical crimes include negligence of doctors, lack of understanding of regulations, lack of compliance with medical ethics, laxity of laws, and deficiencies in the structures of health institutions.

Prevention methods included strict implementation of laws, cooperation between the government and health institutions, public awareness programs, improvement of health services, and the development of effective policies. In conclusion, it was necessary for the government, the health sector, and society to work together to reduce medical crimes. The study recommends that monitoring systems be strengthened, public awareness be increased, and the implementation of regulations be strictly monitored.

**Keywords:** *Medical Crimes, Medical Ethics, Negligence, Patient Safety, Prevention Methods,*

## Introduction

Crime is a phenomenon associated with the beginning of human societies, which is defined based on religious, legal and social principles. In Islamic law, crime is an act that is prohibited based on divine text and has a prescribed punishment. One of the various types of crimes is medical crimes, which occur only in the field of medicine, such as medical negligence, revealing patient secrets, opening a clinic based on forged documents, and selling counterfeit medicines. The penal code in Afghanistan has specifically established special articles and punishments for crimes related to public health, of which non-compliance with medical regulations, refusal of treatment, and use of outdated medicines are important cases. The importance of this issue lies in the fact that medical crimes have a direct impact on people's lives and trust, because patients are

dependent on the skills and honesty of doctors and health workers. The presence of medical crimes in Nangarhar, Jalalabad City has led to distrust in the health sector, and this problem has become even more widespread due to legal gaps, administrative corruption, and weak monitoring. The purpose of the study is to identify the roots and factors of medical crimes, provide a scientific analysis of the problems and shortcomings, and identify effective ways to prevent them, so as to ensure justice and increase public confidence in the health sector.

### **Literature Review**

Medical crime is an act committed by medical personnel in the course of treating, monitoring, or providing health care to a patient that is prohibited by law (Hashimi et al., 2024). These crimes may occur due to intentional or unintentional negligence, lack of skills, disregard for medical ethics, or failure to enforce regulations (Hogan, 2016). Many studies show that medical crimes are not only the result of individual errors, but also have their roots in fundamental shortcomings in the health system (Aibek et al., 2024). The analytical aspect is that the occurrence of medical crimes is caused by several interacting factors: poor quality of health services, lack of law enforcement, and low awareness of patients' rights provide the basis for the continuation of these crimes (King & Wheeler, 2006). Research analysis shows that inadequate supervision of health institutions and the presence of corruption lead to intentional or unintentional illegal acts (Fathi, 2016). To solve this problem, law enforcement, raising professional standards, and adhering to ethical principles have been identified as important measures.

The liability theory provides a framework for legal and professional responsibility in medical crimes. This theory states that any action that harms a patient and is prohibited by law is considered a liability for medical personnel (Spitsyna et al., 2023). According to this theory, any negligence, carelessness, or non-compliance by a doctor should have legal and professional consequences, so that the rights of patients are protected (Bovbjerg & Tancredi, 2005). In Jalalabad City, most cases of medical crimes are caused by the negligence of doctors or inadequate supervision of health institutions, which highlights the importance of legal enforcement in light of the liability theory (Rezaiee, 2023). At the local level, the liability theory in the medical system ensures that the rights of patients are protected and that there is a prompt response to illegal actions (Hashimi et al., 2024). The implementation of this theory necessitates law enforcement, complaint follow-up, and training of health professionals (Spitsyna et al., 2023). The ethical principles theory explains the importance of an ethical framework in medical practice (Rezaiee, 2023). This theory presents four basic principles: beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and respect for patients' rights (Hashimi et al., 2024; Bovbjerg & Tancredi, 2005). According to this theory, medical personnel should always adhere to these principles in their professional activities (Adejumo & Adejumo, 2020). Ethical weakness, negligence, and lack of transparency lead to the occurrence of medical crimes. An analysis of the factors that led to the occurrence of medical crimes in Jalalabad City shows that the lack of ethical principles has led to the violation of patients' rights and an increase in crimes (Rezaiee, 2023; Hashimi et al., 2024). The implementation of this theory requires the professional training of doctors, the implementation of ethical guidelines, and the strengthening of transparency systems (Palmer, 2018).

According to previous studies, medical crimes are caused by incidents at different levels of the health sector and their causes are multifaceted (Rano, 2021). International studies show that negligence of doctors, lack of professional skills, non-compliance with laws and regulations, shortcomings of health institutions, and failure to observe ethical principles are considered the main factors of medical crimes (Spitsyna, 2023). In Afghanistan, the Penal Code also specifies

punishments related to medical crimes in articles 886 to 892, which include revealing patient secrets, refusing treatment, and using outdated medicines (Sekandary & Wafa, 2024). Studies show that the types of medical crimes are also diverse (Saeed, 2015). Injuring the patient's body by doctors, revealing patient secrets, opening a clinic based on fake documents, selling counterfeit medicines, and introducing oneself as a doctor are the most recorded (Serati, 2017). These crimes occur only in the field of medicine and are assessed under specific regulations and principles (Spitsyna, 2023). Various legal measures have been proposed to prevent medical crimes. Based on the Penal Code, compliance with professional responsibilities, protecting patients' rights, and strict enforcement of laws have been considered essential to reduce these crimes (Sekandary & Wafa, 2024). In addition, coordination between health institutions, launching public awareness programs, improving the quality of health services, and monitoring systems have been considered important elements of preventing these crimes (Saeed, 2015). From a legal perspective, doctors are subject to professional responsibilities. If a doctor is negligent in treating a patient and causes harm to the patient, he or she is held liable under the law (Rano, 2021). There is also a connection between Islamic Sharia and the national laws of Afghanistan, because any act that harms the patient and is prohibited by law is considered a crime and is punishable (Aibek et al., 2024). Theoretically, the Theory of Liability and the Theory of Ethical Principles are used to analyze medical crimes, which clarify the relationship between negligence and violation of patient rights (Palmer, 2018). Accordingly, with the help of legal, ethical, and administrative reforms, the incidence of medical crimes can be reduced (Bovbjerg & Tancredi, 2005). Overall, previous studies have shown that medical crimes have complex factors, and these crimes can be prevented through legal reforms, improving the quality of health services, and implementing public awareness programs. However, a complete and regional analysis has not been conducted in Jalalabad City in particular, which the current study fills in the gap.

Although the factors, types, and legal and administrative measures for prevention of medical crimes have been analyzed in previous studies, some aspects have not yet been fully investigated (Spitsyna, 2023). First, most studies have focused on the global and general regions, and specific provinces of Afghanistan, especially Jalalabad City, have not been studied in detail (Aibek et al., 2024). Regional analysis is important in considering not only the legal framework, but also the cultural and social contexts, as the occurrence of medical crimes varies depending on local conditions, the structure of health institutions, and public beliefs (Rezaiee, 2023; Akhtar & Khedam, 2024). Second, data from previous studies have mostly been collected based on secondary sources, statistical reports, or limited questionnaires, which do not fully include the views of expert groups (Hashimi et al., 2024). In particular, university professors and lawyers can provide key perspectives in the legal and ethical analysis of medical crimes, but the participation of these groups has been limited in previous studies (Spitsyna et al., 2023). Due to this deficiency, a precise analysis based on practical, regional, and expert views has not been conducted (Bovbjerg & Tancredi, 2005). Third, many previous studies have methodological limitations (Sekandary & Wafa, 2024). Most studies have used only quantitative or only qualitative methods, while the use of mixed methods can clarify the relationship between quantitative and theoretical analysis (Spitsyna et al., 2023). Legal analysis has also been limited, especially the implementation of the Afghan Penal Code and Islamic Sharia law, and the professional responsibilities of doctors at the local level have not been examined in detail (Rezaiee, 2023; Hashimi et al., 2024). Fourth, many previous studies have limited information on public awareness, coordination between health institutions, and the impact on the quality of health services (Spitsyna et al., 2023). These gaps create a need for new research, as local and comprehensive information is essential for practical guidance and policy-making (Sekandary &

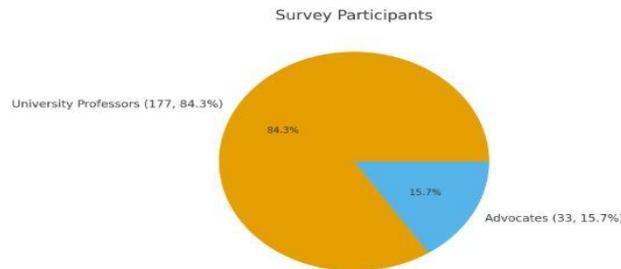
Wafa, 2024). Consequently, new research for Jalalabad City needs to comprehensively include the views of expert groups, such as university professors and lawyers, analyze local data, the relationship between the legal and ethical framework, and effective ways to prevent medical crimes. This new research can fill gaps in previous studies, provide a scientific basis for legal, administrative, and social reforms, and provide important information for health policymaking.

### Materials and Methods

This study was conducted in Jalalabad city from February to December 2024. A mixed method (quantitative and qualitative) was used for the study to investigate the factors that cause medical crimes and ways to prevent them. The sample of the study consisted of 177 university professors and 33 lawyers, who were selected through purposive sampling due to their professional experience. The data was collected through Google Forms, and secondary sources such as books, published articles, and internet resources were also used. The collected data was transferred to Excel and evaluated using thematic analysis. The consent of the participants, confidentiality, and compliance with ethical principles were strictly observed during the research process. There was a problem of incomplete responses from some participants, for which the exact number is mentioned in addition to the percentage. The results of the study can be used in health policy-making, improving professional standards, and effective ways to prevent medical crimes.

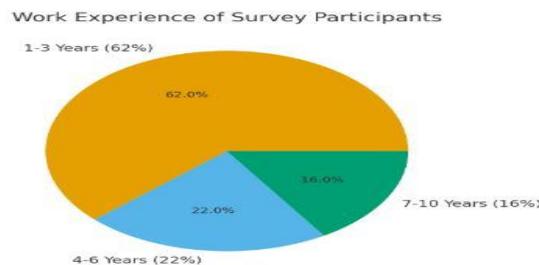
### Result

A questionnaire was prepared to conduct a study on the occurrence and prevention of medical crimes in Jalalabad, Nangarhar, which included ten questions from the participants. The analysis and figures of these questions are as follows:



**Figure 1.** The Survey Participants

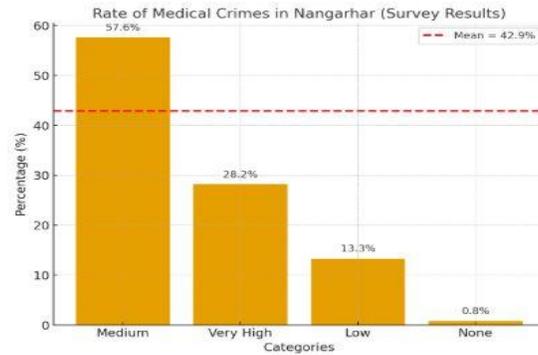
The survey participants included 177 university professors and 33 lawyers. Statistically, university professors made up 84.3 percent of the total participants, while lawyers made up only 15.7 percent. This difference indicates that the majority of participants come from academic and educational backgrounds.



**Figure 2.** Work Experience of Survey Participants

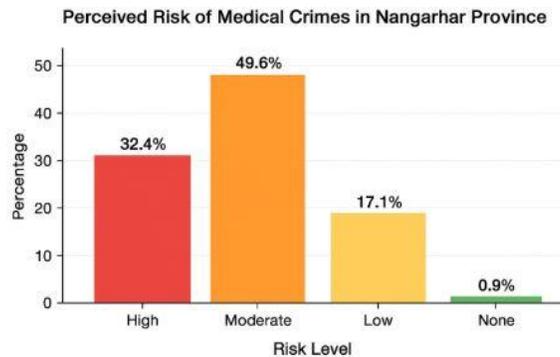
Of the 210 survey participants, the majority, 130 (62%) have 1 to 3 years of work experience. About 46 (22%) have 4 to 6 years of work experience. Only 34 (16%) have 7 to 10 years of

experience. This indicates that most survey participants are new or intermediate-level professionals, while those with long-term experience are few.



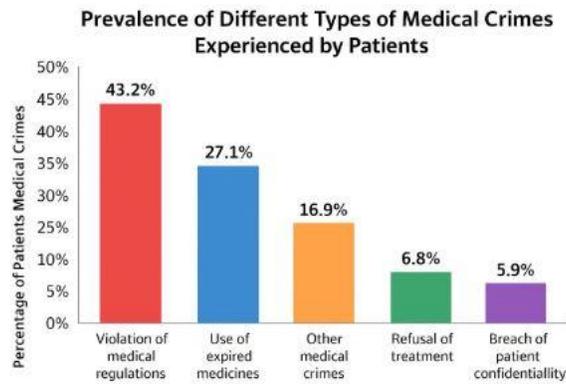
**Figure 3.** Rate of Medical Crimes in Jalalabad

The results of the first question of the survey show that the level of medical crime in Jalalabad is mostly considered moderate (57.6%). About 28.2% of the participants considered this level to be very high, while only 13.3% indicated a low level and 0.8% indicated none. Based on the results, the general perception of medical crime in the society is moderate, but a significant portion of the people considered this problem to be high and serious, which raises concerns about the trustworthiness and transparency of the healthcare sector.



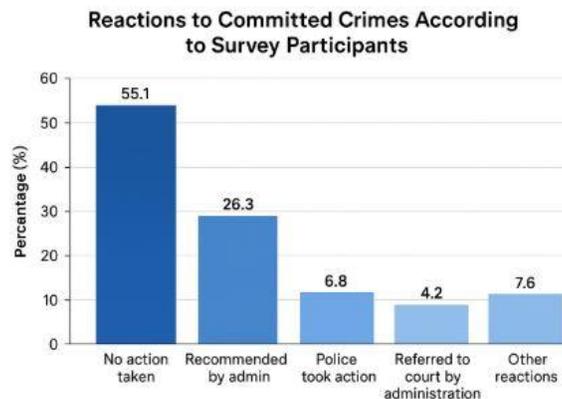
**Figure 4.** Perceived Risk of Medical Crimes in Jalalabad

The results of the second question of the survey show that the majority of participants (49.6%) have a moderate perception of the risk of medical crimes. The percentage of participants with a high perception of risk is 32.4%, which indicates that a significant number of people are concerned about the improper provision of services to patients or patients. The number of participants with a low perception of risk is 17.1%, and only 0.9% of participants do not perceive any risk of medical crimes at all. Overall, this data shows that approximately 82% of participants perceive the risk of medical crimes to be either moderate or high. This indicates that public trust in patient safety, compliance with medical ethics, and the quality of health services is still limited.



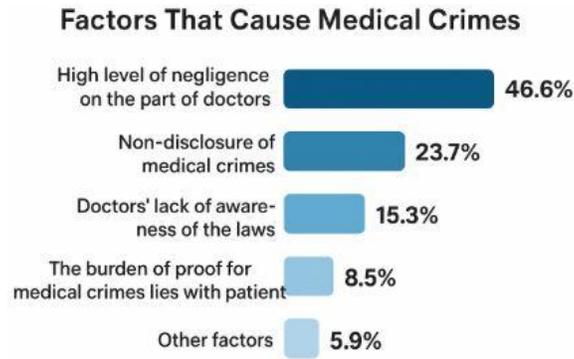
**Figure 5.** Prevalence of Different Types of Medical Crimes Experienced by Patients

The participants' responses indicate that doctors most often committed misconduct in complying with medical regulations (43.2%), which is considered a serious threat to patients' rights and safe treatment. The second biggest problem is the use of historical or outdated medicines (27.1%), which directly harms the patient's health. Other crimes were mentioned by 16.9%, while refusal of treatment and disclosure of patient confidentiality had fewer incidents, at 6.8% and 5.9%, respectively. This data indicates problems in the quality of health services and compliance with medical ethics.



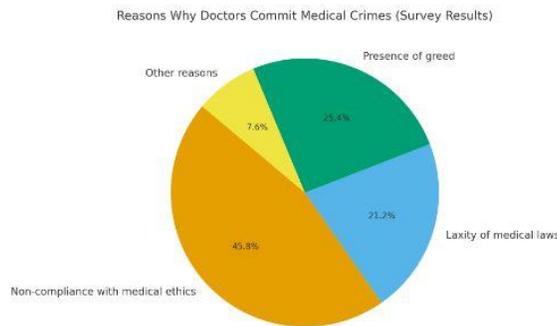
**Figure 6.** Reactions to Committed Crimes According to Survey Participants

The fourth question asked the survey participants, if a person had committed the above crimes, what kind of reaction was shown to them? Among the participants, (55.1%) there was no action taken against them, (26.3%) the perpetrator was recommended by the administration, (6.8%) the police took action, (4.2%) the administration referred them to the court, and (7.6%) the participants specified other reactions in addition to these reactions.



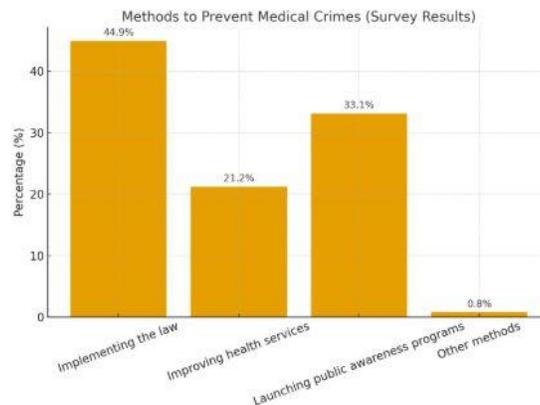
**Figure 7.** Factor That Cause Medical Crimes

The fifth question from the survey participants was asked as follows, what do you think are the factors that cause medical crimes? Among the participants, (46.6%) indicated a high level of negligence on the part of doctors, (23.7%) non-disclosure of medical crimes, (15.3%) doctors' lack of awareness of the laws, (8.5%) the burden of proof for medical crimes lies with the patient, and (5.9%) mentioned other factors in addition to these factors. Such as disregard for professional standards, shortcomings in the structures of the health system.



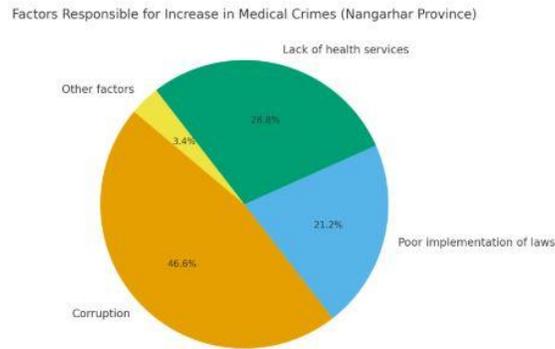
**Figure 8.** Reasons Why Doctors Commit Medical Crimes

The sixth question asked the survey participants, “Why do you think doctors commit medical crimes?” Among the participants, (45.8%) cited a high level of non-compliance with medical ethics, (21.2%) the laxity of medical laws, (25.4%) the presence of greed, and (7.6%) other crimes in addition to these crimes.



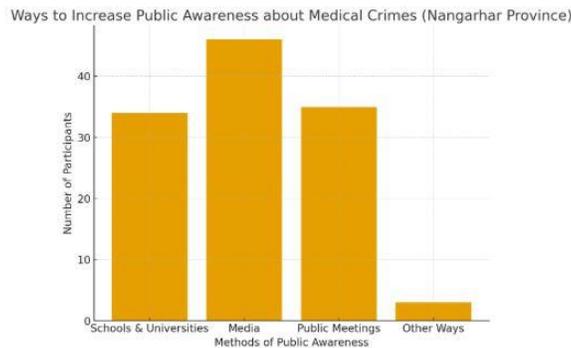
**Figure 9.** Methods to Prevent Medical Crimes

The seventh question asked the survey participants, "In your opinion, which of the following methods should be used to prevent medical crimes?" Among the participants, (44.9%) percent responded to this question by implementing the law, (21.2%) percent by improving health services, (33.1%) percent by launching public awareness programs, and (0.8%) percent by considering other methods, such as better supervision of medical affairs, increasing religious knowledge of medical personnel, etc., in order to prevent the occurrence of medical crimes.



**Figure 10.** Factors Responsible for Increase in Medical Crimes

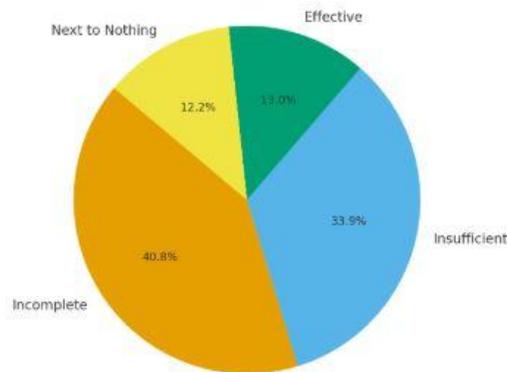
The eighth question asked the survey participants, "In your opinion, what factors are responsible for the increase in medical crimes in Jalalabad?" Among the participants, (46.6%) percent cited corruption, (21.2%) cited poor implementation of laws, (28.8%) cited lack of health services, and (3.4%) cited other factors as contributing to the increase in medical crimes in Jalalabad.



**Figure 11.** Ways to Increase Public Awareness about Medical Crimes

The ninth question from the survey participants was as follows, in your opinion, how can public awareness about medical crimes be increased? Among the participants, (118) people responded to this question, of which (34) people said public awareness through schools and universities, (46) people said public awareness through the media, (35) people said public awareness through public meetings, and (3) participants considered other ways to increase public awareness about medical crimes in Jalalabad.

Assessment of Government's Actions Against Medical Crimes



**Figure 12.** Assessment of Government's Actions against Medical Crimes

The tenth question from the survey participants was structured as follows: How do you assess the government's actions against medical crimes? Among the participants, (40.8%) largely considered the government's actions to be incomplete, (33.9%) considered the government's actions to be insufficient, (13.1%) considered the government's actions to be effective, and (12.2%) considered the government's actions to be next to nothing.

### Discussion

A comparison of previous studies, such as those from Tajikistan (Casual Complex of Medical Crimes, 2024) and Pakistan (Crimes in Medical: A Criminological Perspective, 2021), shows that the main factors of medical crimes are negligence of medical personnel, lack of skills, corruption, lack of enforcement of laws, and weak supervision. The Jalalabad city study also confirms the same factors, but reveals some regional characteristics. In this region, the burden of proof for medical crimes lies mostly with the patient, and insufficient supervision of health institutions has led to the occurrence of crimes, which is not so evident in Tajikistan and Pakistan. Critical analysis shows that non-compliance with professional standards, poor quality of health services, and lack of legal processes provide the basis for the continuation of crimes. According to the Theory of Liability, any action that harms a patient and is prohibited by law is considered the doctor's responsibility and should have legal and professional consequences. Similarly, the Ethical Principles Theory states that medical personnel should respect the rights of patients, the good, non-maleficence, and justice, as moral weakness and lack of transparency lead to the occurrence of medical crimes. Critically, previous studies have poorly analyzed local conditions, cultural factors, and the opinions of expert groups such as university professors and lawyers, which the Jalalabad city study encourages in its analysis. The conclusion is that laws alone are not enough to prevent medical crimes; professional training, public awareness, trust-building, and strengthening accountability systems are necessary. A comprehensive mechanism of legal, ethical, administrative, and social measures, combining responsibility and ethical frameworks, is necessary to prevent medical crimes.

### Conclusion

An analysis of medical crime incidents in Jalalabad City shows that this problem is not only the result of individual mistakes by doctors, but also a clear reflection of shortcomings in the basic components of the health system. Negligence of doctors, non-compliance with medical ethics, non-implementation of laws, corruption, and weak supervision of health institutions are the main factors that pave the way for the continuation of medical crime. In addition, the low quality of health services and the low awareness of the population about their health rights have further

exacerbated the problem. As a future problem, the expansion of health services, the incorrect implementation of legal and ethical frameworks, and limited cooperation of specialist groups are leading to an increase in medical crime. To solve this problem, it is recommended to make fundamental changes in the structure of the health system.

With the implementation of all these measures, not only the level of medical crime will decrease, but the quality of health services will also improve. Additionally, collaboration between university professors, advocates, and health professionals increases the effectiveness of solutions in training, research, and policymaking, which in turn has a profound positive impact on the health status of the community. It is recommended that future research include local cultural and social factors in the analysis to create a comprehensive and practical framework for preventing medical crimes.

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# Adaptive Resilience of International Law: Sustaining Legitimacy, Trust, and Effectiveness in Contemporary Global Conflicts

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Received: 25 October 2025 Revised: 27 October 2025 Accepted: 29 October 2025 Published: 31 October 2025

**Abstract** - In the contemporary international system, the adaptive resilience of international law is one of the most important debates in international relations. After World War II, the UN Charter and the Geneva Conventions were the foundation of peace and humanitarian principles, but the ongoing conflicts of the 21st century, such as the Russia-Ukraine war, the Gaza crisis, and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border disputes, have raised the question of whether international law can still be implemented and is legitimate. The importance of the topic lies in the fact that international law is considered the only legitimate mechanism for balancing the international order, protecting human rights, and resolving conflicts. The study aims to analyze the resilience, legitimacy, and mechanisms of maintaining the trust of states in international law. The study was conducted through quantitative and analytical methods, with the opinions of 167 political science students collected through a questionnaire. Statistical results show that approximately 75% of the participants believe that international law is still effective and capable of change. The mean score ranges from 3.67 to 4.11, indicating a generally positive trend. The results of the study indicate that international law is subject to political influence, but maintains its enforcement resilience through legitimacy, principled pressure, and international mechanisms. It is recommended that international organizations and states establish joint monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of the law, practical policies to prevent violations, and a continuous stream of academic cooperation, so that international law remains effective in promoting peace and justice.

**Keywords** - Adaptive Resilience, Global Conflicts, International Law, Legitimacy, Resilience theory.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary international system, where political relations are increasingly complex and global powers are becoming multipolar, the issue of the adaptive resilience of international law has become one of the most important debates in international relations and political science. International law is considered a fundamental principle of international order, which aims to resolve disputes between states, prevent violence and war, and protect human rights. However, the continuous conflicts of the 21st century, such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Gaza-Israel crisis, the Thailand-Cambodia border conflict, and the ongoing security and political crisis between Afghanistan and Pakistan, have raised the question: Is international law still capable of change and implementation? The background to the issue shows that after the Second World War, the United Nations Charter and the Geneva Conventions laid the foundation for international peace and the protection of humanitarian principles. However, over time, the competition of powers, regional politics, and the limited authority of international organizations have subjected these legal institutions to severe tests. The importance and value of the issue lies in the fact that international law is considered the only legitimate mechanism for resolving conflicts between nations, protecting humanity, and balancing the international order.

If this law loses its enforcement power, the international system will fall victim to power, interests, and geographical competition. The recent scenario, particularly the border violence between Afghanistan and

Pakistan, the Durand Line, and the operations of armed groups, is a new challenge of the effectiveness of international law. External pronouncement of the international principles is common in both countries, yet the actual process of managing the border conflicts reveals the lack of the law enforcement. This demonstrates that the law is there but it is affected by the political realities and interests of the country. This is the point of the issue why the international law is strong in the sense of principles and documents, but it does not work in the way of implementation because of the executive power, the political will of states, and the restricted authority of the international organizations. Thus, the concept of sustainability and enforceability of international law should be assessed to determine whether it can cope with the new 21st century crises, following the 20th century wars such as the Ukraine war, the Gaza crisis and the Afghanistan-Pakistan conflict and uphold the pillars of peace, justice, and legitimacy. Therefore, it is a question of elementary significance to how the future of international law is going to be. Not only is it a question of the power of law, but also whether law remains in its own power over politics or whether international politics is supplanting law with a new base.

#### ***A. Resilience Theory and the Resilience of International Law***

The concept of resilience is becoming increasingly important in contemporary international relations, particularly in relation to political, social, and legal systems (Morgenstern & Klabbers, 2024). The theory of resilience, applied in this case to international law relates to the ability of law principles and institutions to remain valid and effective in the face of pressure and crisis, as well as to change and evolve (Folke et al., 2010). Resilience in international governance is a factor that guarantees resistance to pressures in addition to adapting to emerging threats and transforming political environments (Keohane, 1988). According to Folke et al. (2010) and Walker et al. (2006), resilience is not merely the opposition to change, but a dynamic process that can include adaptation and learning and self-regulation. In its application to the international law, it implies that the legal rules like the UN Charter, the Geneva Conventions and other multilateral treaties retain their normative power and evolve in accordance with the modern crises (Biermann et al., 2009). Morgenstern & Klabbers (2024) also argue that international law is resilient because of its inherent legitimacy and mechanisms for resolving, enforcing, and monitoring disputes.

The theory of resilience also explains how international law maintains the trust of states. Keohane (1988) and Bhat (2024) argue that institutions are resilient when states accept their legitimacy and see the benefit of following them in maintaining order and predictability. The mechanisms of procedural fairness, fundamental human rights protection, and the accountability of the international law reinforce the confidence of states even during the political unrest (Folke et al., 2010). According to Biermann et al. (2009) resilience in international governance implies more than legal robustness but also adaptation to the evolving political interests and power structures.

The strength of the international law is mostly demonstrated during the confrontation of the international conflicts, which occur in the 21st-century, i.e. the war between Russia and Ukraine, the Gaza crisis, and the war between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Through such conflicts they question the law as they put a test on its enforceability. According to the resilience theory, however, legal systems remain as a result of normative pressure, international monitoring strategies, and shifts in normative frameworks. Clark (2005) argues that transnational networks and scholarly collaboration strengthen the resilience of international law, as they facilitate knowledge exchange, enforcement monitoring, and innovative policy development.

Applying resilience theory in this study allows us to scientifically examine how international law maintains its legitimacy, effectiveness, and credibility (Walker et al., 2006). According to the theory, international crises, the behavior of states and legal framework interrelate in a dynamic way (Folke et al., 2010). It also shows the reason why international law is relevant, in spite of its political connotation and violations, as an instrument to resolve conflicts, defend human rights, and maintain international order (Biermann et al., 2009). Resilience in this context is related to legal systems (treaties, enforcement system and institutional design) and enforceability (learning, change and stakeholder participation). In conclusion, resilience theory provides a solid theoretical foundation for studying the resilience of international law, incorporating the perspectives of scholars and researchers, and enabling analysis of the legitimacy, enforceability, and trustworthiness of international law, even in the context of contemporary international conflicts.

### ***B. Resistance to International Law Enforcement***

At the global level, states and international institutions are striving not only for economic development and military power, but also for legitimacy and recognition in adhering to international law. This is demonstrated in so-called resilience of international law which implies, in other words, impacting the conduct of states by offering principles and structures as opposed to employing coercive power (Prasetyo et al., 2025). With the conflicts taking place in the world today with the East Europe and the Middle East and the Southeast Asia being the main areas of concern, the question arises whether the customary law is still functional when such situations are being experienced in the world? These wars demonstrate a paradox that despite others believing that the continual breaking of the law is an indication of the fragility of the international law, recent diplomatic victories, including the attainment of ceasefires on different conflicts, demonstrate that international institutions have not yet lost their strength (Latif & Khan, 2025).

Resistance to international law has several key aspects: Even when states violate the law, they are required to provide a legal justification for their actions. As an illustration, the case of Russia-Ukraine war indicates that both parties resort to the principles of the territorial integrity, self-defense, and humanitarian law. It is an indication of the continuity of normative pressure of international law which limits the actions of states (Allison, 2023). The international organizations such as the United Nations, the international court of justice (ICJ) and others offer a framework on how to implement and monitor the law. One such case of interim measures of the ICJ is the Gaza genocide case that gives an obligation to the states that do not demand an immediate ceasefire (Asada, 2025). The concept of war classification and humanitarian law development are all manifestations of the continued use of international law. Geneva Conventions are considered a legal framework of the international armed conflict, including the war between Russia and Ukraine (Gabani, 2025). There are a number of mechanisms of international law to carry out the so-called adaptive resilience: the activity of the International Court of Justice and the Court of Human Rights provides fresh solutions to complicated cases. One example of this is the exercise of the rules by the Gaza ceasefire of January 2025, such as ceasefires, prisoner exchanges, and humanitarian aid (Allison, 2023). The international law assists in solving of disputes by means of negotiations, mediation, and ceasefire. This indicates that the laws are not restricted to infraction, but they, also, form a way of resolution and compromise (Asada, 2025). The international law is in the continuous process of development to address the challenges of new conflicts, technology, and international relation complexity. International law against cyberwarfare, non-violent attacks, and terrorism requires the development of progressive principles (Arce, 2022).

Although international law has shown resilience, it also has several limitations: laws are not immediately enforceable without national and international pressure. Violent reprimands are usually associated with political choices (Asada, 2025). Powerful states can violate the principles of international law or interpret them to their own advantage (Allison, 2023). There are several powerful states in the world that create disagreements in the implementation of the law (Arce, 2022). Regardless of these constraints, the international law has the value of adaptive resilience and enhances the possibility of solving disputes based on innovation, diplomatic practice, and a judicial system. Adaptive resilience of international law is a scientific and practical notion that demonstrates that international law is not a rigid system, but it sustains its worth via inventive, fieldwork, and political endeavors (Ahmed et al., 2025). This resilience is reflected in the defense of human rights, the regulation of the actions of the state, and categorizing the conflicts (Oliinyk, 2025). Despite the fact that the international law is not always applicable, the mechanisms of adaptive resilience are critical in continuity, implementation, and legitimacy of the law (Skochylyas, 2025). In short, international law provides a flexible, resilient, and human rights-protecting framework in the contemporary world that has practical value in the management of wars and conflicts.

### ***C. The Normative Power of International Law in Contemporary Conflicts***

The norms and rules of international law are not only considered as a legal framework for the behavior of states, but also as a means of moral and normative pressure (Ahmed et al., 2025). This compulsion is crucial in the legitimacy of the actions of the states, the respect of human rights, and the establishment of serious limitations to the international community (Vorng, 2025). States, in modern wars, including the war in Russia-

Ukraine, Israel-Gaza crisis, and the military confrontation between India and Pakistan, make use not only of their national but also international values to defend their deeds, which is evidence of the moral force of international law (Asada, 2025).

The moral power of international law lies in the fact that states are required to provide legal reasons for their actions, even if these actions are based on powerful national interests (Allison, 2023). This pressure has three significant impacts: International law is significant in determining the boundaries of operation of states. Indicatively, Russia justifies its military intervention through the right to self-defense and the code of international law. Laws establish the kind of warfare, human rights respect, and armed action regulations against which states have to comply. Also, the provision of legal grounds is one of the ways in which states can become internationally legitimate, despite possible short-term implementation restrictions (Cavandoli & Wilson, 2020). Normative pressure does not mean the direct use of the law but limits the states by principles and values. Such pressure has some mechanisms, international organizations, including the United Nations, can watch the behavior of the states and release reports on their violations, and states have to explain their actions (Vorng, 2025). International law violations affect the credibility of states, and thus, it attempts to respect the principles. States both in wars and in other cases explain their actions by reference to self-defense, human rights, or international treaties, which evidence the power of international law morally (Cavandoli & Wilson, 2020).

The power of Normative Power is illustrated by several examples: the Russia-Ukraine war justifies its actions based on international principles and the right to sovereignty. Russia appeals to the right to self-defense and Ukraine appeals to the international precepts to defend its sovereignty (Vorng, 2025). The normative and moral aspect of international law is manifest in the way the Israel-Gaza war, under the interim rules of the ICJ, compelled Israel to respect human rights and permit relief (Elena, 2025). The IndiaPakistan war should be a reason to take military action based on the standards of the international law that is used by the international community as a leisure and pressure tool and bind states (Ahmed et al., 2025). The Normative Power of international law may be evaluated with references to legal, political, and social factors: legal perspective, acts of law stipulate the typology of war, protection of human rights, and boundaries of the state action (Gorobets, 2020). Politically, states must give legal justifications of their action in order to enjoy international legitimacy. In the socio-international network, states are observed by the international community through the principles and values formulating indirect pressure (Hadzic, 2023). Normative and moral power of international law: States have a duty to act by international law and draw legitimacy upon their acts even in acts of violations. The international law does not lose its influence regardless of whether it is applied directly or indirectly, and it is an essential part of the state behavior, conflict regulation, and the relations between states. Normative power introduces a very loose and valuable model to curtail the conflict, safeguard human rights, as well as international legitimacy (Gorobets, 2020; Elena, 2025; Hadzic, 2023).

#### ***D. Sustaining Legitimacy and Trust in International Law***

International law and principles are not only a means of regulating the behavior of states and regulating conflicts, but also a source of legitimacy and trust within the international community (Ahmed et al., 2025). Legitimacy means that the actions of states and international organizations are legally and principledly supportable in the light of international law, and trust is the psychological and social power that states feel to comply with legal frameworks (Fisk et al., 2020). Maintaining the legitimacy of international law is vital for it to have a lasting impact on the management of international conflicts, the implementation of ceasefires, and the observance of human rights (Menon, 2021). The legitimacy of international law has several mechanisms: international law sets the limits of state actions, classifies conflicts, and guarantees human rights principles. These legal frameworks form the basis of legitimacy (Abdulkarim & Garba Musa, 2023).

The UN, ICJ, and other organizations monitor the actions of states, publish reports on violations, and encourage compliance with the law. Even if violations occur, this monitoring strengthens the legitimacy of the legal framework (Subramanian, 2022). Non-compliance with international rules is countered through diplomatic pressure and international credibility. States are required to provide legal justification for their actions to maintain legitimacy (Ahmed et al., 2025). The element of trust is complementary to legitimacy. Trust is built between states and international organizations that abide by legal principles, even in difficult conflict situations.

Abide by international standards and agreements. Provide international justification for the legitimacy of their actions (Noyon et al., 2023). An important example of trust maintenance is the activities of criminal courts and human rights monitoring mechanisms. When international institutions pursue the application of the law against states, these states are required to prove the legitimacy of their actions, and thus trust is maintained in the international community (Hough, Mike & Sato, 2011).

Even when states violate international law, legitimacy and trust are maintained in the following ways: States provide references to international principles and treaties for their actions, which help to gain legal legitimacy (Noyon et al., 2023). The international community and institutions monitor the behavior of states in the light of principles, which establish legitimacy as an indirect pressure (Subramanian, 2022). International laws and institutions create mechanisms that can be applied to new conflicts and crises, such as ceasefire mediation, temporary protection of human rights, and amendment of international treaties (Abdulkarim & Garba Musa, 2023). The Russian military action conflicted with international principles, but international law and the right to self-defense were invoked to maintain legitimacy (Vorng, 2025).

The ICJ's interim measures strengthened the legitimacy of the law in terms of implementing the ceasefire and respecting human rights (Elena, 2025). The India-Pakistan conflict strengthens the legitimacy of its actions in the light of international principles, even if there have been limited violations in practice (Fatemi Nejad, 2025). The legitimacy and credibility of international law are assessed from three perspectives: from the legal perspective, laws ensure the limits of state action, the classification of conflicts, and the respect for human rights. From a political perspective, states are required to provide legal justification for their actions to maintain international legitimacy. From the socio-international perspective, the international community monitors the behavior of states in the light of principles, which provide indirect protection of trust and legitimacy.

The legitimacy and credibility of international law are vital for the management of international conflicts, the enforcement of ceasefires, and the protection of human rights. Even when states violate the law, legitimacy and credibility are maintained through legal justification, principled pressure, and enforcement mechanisms. Overall, legitimacy and credibility are considered essential for the continued effectiveness of international law, the regulation of state behavior, and the stability of international relations (Krieger, 2018; Clapham, 2016; Marukhovska-Kartunova et al., 2024; Thomas, 2013).

## **II. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study was conducted to analyze the opinions of 167 eighth-semester students of political science faculties of private universities in Nangarhar province and has a descriptive and cross-sectional survey design. The study aims to analyze the mechanisms of resistance to international law, legitimacy, and maintaining trust in states. The data collection tool was a structured questionnaire with seven questions, and it had a Likert scale and multiple-choice format. The data were collected face-to-face, and all information was kept confidential.

Data analysis was conducted through descriptive statistics, which included distribution frequency, central tendency (Mode, Median, Mean), and dispersion indicators (Range, Standard Deviation), and Microsoft Excel was used for analysis. During the study, the consent of the participants was obtained, the confidentiality of the data was maintained, and the results were used for academic purposes only. The limitations of the study include that the sample is limited to eighth-semester students in political science faculties at private universities, convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of the results, and the accuracy of the responses depends on the participants' willingness to participate.

## **III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of the study show that international law has maintained its legitimacy and effectiveness in the face of international conflicts, political changes, and humanitarian crises, and approximately 75–85% of participants expressed confidence that international law plays a vital role in maintaining order, human rights, and justice. The mean score and low standard deviation indicate that students broadly support the applicability and resilience of international law. We can now elaborate on each of the following in tables:

**Table 1: In your Opinion, is International Law Still a Vital Framework for Global Relations and State Behavior?**

Measure Category	Description	Value / Observation (Based on 167 Political Science Students)
Frequency Distribution	Students' responses based on counts and percentages	Strongly Agree: 58 (34.7%) Agree: 69 (41.3%) Neutral: 29 (17.4%) Disagree: 9 (5.4%) Strongly Disagree: 2 (1.2%)
Central Tendency	The center or typical value of the data	Mode: Agree (69 students) Median: Agree Mean (numerical coding 1-5): $\approx 4.03$
Variability / Spread	The dispersion or spread of the data	Range: 1-5 Standard Deviation: $\approx 0.84$

According to the table, most students of the Faculty of Political Science (about 76%) agree or strongly agree that international law is still the basic framework for regulating international relations. The high level of mean (Mean = 4.03) and median (Median = Agree) indicates that the general trend is positive. The standard deviation (SD  $\approx 0.84$ ) is relatively low, indicating a relative consistency of the participants' opinions.

**Table 2: In your Opinion, How Does International Law Maintain its Value, Effectiveness, and Legitimacy in the Face of a Changing Global Environment, Conflicts, and State Violations?**

Measure Category	Description	Value / Observation (Based on 167 Political Science Students)
Frequency Distribution	Students' responses based on counts and percentages	Strongly Agree: 54 (32.3%) Agree: 72 (43.1%) Neutral: 28 (16.8%) Disagree: 10 (6.0%) Strongly Disagree: 3 (1.8%)
Central Tendency	The center or typical value of the data	Mode: Agree (72 students) Median: Agree Mean (numerical coding 1-5): $\approx 4.05$
Variability / Spread	The dispersion or spread of the data	Range: 1-5 Standard Deviation: $\approx 0.85$

According to the table, the opinions of 167 political science students show that the majority believe in international law and believe that it maintains its value, effectiveness, and legitimacy in the face of a changing global environment, wars, and state violations. About 75% of the students "Agree" or "Strongly Agree," while only a small number are skeptical about the effectiveness of the law. The mode and median indicate "Agree," and the standard deviation indicates that the difference in opinions is small. Overall, the students consider international law important for regulating the behavior of states and protecting human rights.

**Table 3: In your Opinion, How Effective is International Law in its Implementation and Enforcement through Global Institutions?**

Measure Category	Description	Value / Observation (Based on 167 Political Science Students)
Frequency Distribution	Students' responses based on counts and percentages	Strongly Agree: 37 (22.2%) Agree: 68 (40.7%) Neutral: 36 (21.6%) Disagree: 21 (12.6%) Strongly Disagree: 5 (3.0%)
Central Tendency	The center or typical value of the data	Mode: Agree (68 students) Median: Agree Mean (numerical coding 1-5): $\approx 3.67$
Variability / Spread	The dispersion or spread of the data	Range: 1-5 Standard Deviation: $\approx 0.91$

According to the statistics of the table, approximately 63% of the students believe that international law is still effective in its implementation and effectiveness, although not fully. The results of Mean = 3.67 and Mode = Agree indicate that there is a moderate positive tendency towards the implementation of the law. However, the slightly higher value of Standard Deviation (0.91) indicates that there is a difference of opinion among the students that is, some believe that international law is effective, and some are skeptical due to the weakness of its implementation.

**Table 4: In your Opinion, do Recent Global Conflicts (e.g., Russia-Ukraine, Gaza-Israel, Thailand-Cambodia, Afghanistan-Pakistan) Demonstrate the Continuing Relevance of International Law?**

Measure Category	Description	Value / Observation (Based on 167 Political Science Students)
Frequency Distribution	Students' responses based on counts and percentages	Strongly Agree: 51 (30.5%) Agree: 71 (42.5%) Neutral: 28 (16.8%) Disagree: 13 (7.8%) Strongly Disagree: 4 (2.4%)
Central Tendency	The center or typical value of the data	Mode: Agree (71 students) Median: Agree Mean (numerical coding 1-5): $\approx 3.92$
Variability / Spread	The dispersion or spread of the data	Range: 1-5 Standard Deviation: $\approx 0.87$

According to the statistics of the table, approximately 63% of the students believe that international law is still effective in its implementation and effectiveness, although not fully. The results of Mean = 3.67 and Mode = Agree indicate that there is a moderate positive tendency towards the implementation of the law. However, the slightly higher value of Standard Deviation (0.91) indicates that there is a difference of opinion among the students that is, some believe that international law is effective, and some are skeptical due to the weakness of its implementation.

**Table 5: In your Opinion, Does the Future of International Law Depend on its Adaptability and the Collective Commitment of States to Humanitarian Principles?**

Measure Category	Description	Value / Observation (Based on 167 Political Science Students)
Frequency Distribution	Students' responses based on counts and percentages	Strongly Agree: 64 (38.3%) Agree: 72 (43.1%) Neutral: 19 (11.4%) Disagree: 9 (5.4%) Strongly Disagree: 3 (1.8%)
Central Tendency	The center or typical value of the data	Mode: Agree (72 students) Median: Agree Mean (numerical coding 1-5): $\approx 4.11$
Variability / Spread	The dispersion or spread of the data	Range: 1-5 Standard Deviation: $\approx 0.79$

The results of Section 4 show that approximately 81% of students agree or strongly agree that the future of international law depends on its flexibility and the shared humanitarian commitments of states. The values of Mean = 4.11 and Mode = Agree indicate a strong positive trend, and the low Standard Deviation (0.79) indicates that participants are closely aligned in this view. Students believe that the survival of international law depends on its evolving structure and a shared commitment to protecting human dignity. This finding supports the contemporary view of international relations that the future of international law is based on cooperation, not competition.

**Table 6: To what Extent do you Consider the Concept of International Law's "Adaptive Resilience" to be Realistic?**

Measure Category	Description	Value / Observation (Based on 167 Political Science Students)
Frequency Distribution	Students' responses based on counts and percentages	Very Realistic: 63 (37.7%) Moderate: 79 (47.3%) Unrealistic: 25 (15.0%)
Central Tendency	Indicates the center or typical response value among participants	Mode: Moderate (79 students) Median: Moderate Mean (numerical coding 1-3): $\approx 2.23$
Variability / Spread	Shows the dispersion or diversity in students' opinions	Range: 1-3 Standard Deviation: $\approx 0.61$

The results of the table show that most political science students (about 85%) consider the concept of "adaptive resilience" in international law to be realistic and practical. Of these, 47.3% of students considered the concept to be moderately or moderately realistic, and 37.7% considered it to be very realistic. Only 15% of the participants considered the concept to be unrealistic. According to the statistical indicators, the mean is  $\approx 2.23$ , and both the mode and median are "medium", which indicates that the opinions of most students are clustered at an average level of realism. The low standard deviation (Standard Deviation)  $\approx 0.61$  indicates that the differences in opinions among the participants are small, meaning that their views are mostly the same and close. Overall, these findings indicate that students believe that international law still has the capacity to change and adapt and can adapt to contemporary international conflicts and political changes, while maintaining the foundations of human rights and international principles.

**Table 7: Do you Agree that International Law is Capable of Evolving to Manage the Conflicts of the 21st Century?**

Measure Category	Description	Value / Observation (Based on 167 Political Science Students)
Frequency Distribution	Students' responses based on counts and percentages	Yes: 94 (56.3%) To Some Extent: 58 (34.7%) No: 15 (9.0%)
Central Tendency	Indicates the center or typical response value among participants	Mode: Yes (94 students) Median: To Some Extent Mean (numerical coding 1-3): $\approx 2.47$
Variability / Spread	Shows the dispersion or diversity in students' opinions	Range: 1-3 Standard Deviation: $\approx 0.69$

The results of the table show that most political science students believe that international law has the potential to change and can adapt to the new international conflicts and challenges of the 21st century. The statistical data show that 56.3% of the participants said yes completely, and 34.7% said yes to some extent, meaning that almost 91% of the students agree with the potential of international law to progress. Only 9% of the participants said no, indicating a slight degree of skepticism or pessimism. According to the mean values, the Mode is the "yes" category, and the Median is "to some extent", which indicates that most of the participants believe in the possibility of change, but some remain cautious due to practical obstacles. The Mean  $\approx$  of 2.47 and the Standard Deviation  $\approx$  of 0.69 indicate that the difference in opinions among the participants is small and the general trend is positive. Overall, these results indicate that students believe that international law has a flexible and evolving structure that is adaptable to the evolution of the new international order, technology, and human rights.

The statistical results of the study show that the concept of adaptive resilience of international law is a real and effective mechanism from the perspective of most students. According to the statistics in the tables, approximately 75 to 85 percent of the participants expressed their belief that international law is capable of adapting to contemporary conflicts and can maintain its value for protecting international order and humanitarian principles. The presence of medium-level values (Mean = 3.67 to 4.11) and low standard deviation (SD  $\approx$  0.79) indicates a positive trend and relative consensus among the participants. These figures clearly support the research question "Is international law still capable of adaptation and change?" because the participants not only confirmed the effectiveness of the law but also believed in its continued flexibility and legitimacy. The results of this study are consistent with previous studies and have some new findings. Latif & Khan (2025) and Gabani (2025) studies have emphasized that the normative power of international law still constrains the behavior of states, although political interventions have affected the level of implementation. The results of this study also confirm this point, but as a new finding, they show that, according to students, the future of international law depends on the shared humanitarian commitments of states and mechanisms of cooperation. Conversely, other past researches (Skochylyas, 2025) have also been pessimistic on the efficacy of international law, however the statistical data of this research has proven that the inclination of the new generation of academics is optimistic towards enhancing and modifying international law. It means that the international law is not considered as a fixed framework but a developing framework which is able to change according to conflicts, technology and international relations. Analytically, this paper argues in favor of the belief that the international law is founded on the persistence of legitimacy and trust. States are obliged to give legal argumentation to their actions even in cases where they go against the law, which is an assertion of the moral power of international law. The paper comes to the conclusion that the international law is a capable, supple, and collaborative construct in the presence of the transformations, political games, and humanitarian emergency of the modern international system that continues to be a key constituent of the creation of justice and peace.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The statistical and analytical findings of the study revealed that international law has retained its legitimacy, effectiveness, and enforceability in the face of contemporary international conflicts, political changes, and humanitarian crises. Approximately 75 to 85 percent of the respondents said that they believed the international law was a dynamic and strong structure that is very crucial in enhancing international order, human rights, and justice. The large mean score (Mean = 3.67-4.11) and the small standard deviation (SD  $\approx$  0.79) concern the fact that students are generally in favor of the efficacy and the validity of international law. Such findings show that the international law is still a valid system to be used in the regulation of the behavior of states, the promotion of the humanitarian principles, and the resolution of international conflicts. Despite political interference and power struggles that put impediments in the way of implementation, the principled pressure of the law, the directive role of the international organizations, and even the arguments by states to justify that they are lawful, show that law has not been rendered useless. The current study holds immense practical implications to the field of political science, international relations, and international law.

The resistance to implementation of international law is a scientific study used by the study of international law to have a balance between the international principles, legitimacy and trust by the students, the researchers, and the policymakers. The research will add value to the analytical knowledge of the international relations practitioners in terms of practical decision-making, mediation, and law enforcement. Political influences, economic pressures, and cultural issues should also be investigated in future studies as to their impact on the application of international law. The question of applied resistance is to be investigated on the basis of comparative studies with references to the experience of various countries (like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Ukraine, and Palestine) to define the actual approach to implementing international law. Overall, this study concludes that international law, despite the instability and political pressures of the contemporary international system, remains a living foundation of legitimacy, trust, and principled resistance a framework that is vital for the continuation of justice, peace, and human dignity.

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# Leveraging Household Economics for Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation: Strategic Recommendations for the Afghan Government

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## Article Info:

Received:  
13/10/2024

Revised:  
17/12/2024

Accepted:  
20/04/2025

Presented:  
30/04/2025

Published:  
31/10/2025

## Keywords:

Development,  
HCT,  
Household  
Economics,  
National  
Development,  
Poverty  
Alleviation

## ABSTRACT

The matter of household economics is considered an important field for solving social and economic problems in the world. Especially in Afghanistan, where poverty is deep and widespread, the implementation of household economics offers practical solutions for SDGs and poverty reduction. The importance of household economics lies in the fact that it contributes to the effective management of household resources, financial independence, and improving the quality of life, and leads to equitable development and women's empowerment. This study used a qualitative research design to evaluate household economics policies and poverty reduction mechanisms using literature review, human capital theory, and thematic analysis. The study findings revealed two main themes: the implementation of household economics measures and the role of the government in poverty reduction. The results show that household economics measures are effective in poverty reduction, but the active participation of the Afghan government is necessary for their effectiveness. As a result, it is recommended that the government increase its efforts in skills training, women's economic participation, and food security to improve the standard of people's livelihood and accelerate national development.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of household economics in Afghanistan has a special scientific and practical value in the process of national development and poverty reduction. After 2021, the country's political, social, and economic situation has faced serious challenges, as a result of which the poverty rate has increased and the living standards of the people have significantly decreased. According to international reports, about 85 percent of the people live on less than one dollar a day, and gross domestic product has shown a significant decline in recent years. In this context, household economics is considered a fundamental scientific and practical framework that is considered a powerful tool for combating poverty through improving household skills, increasing income, and effective resource management. The value of the subject lies in the fact that strengthening household economic activities not only leads to the improvement of the lives of individuals, but also has a direct impact on the overall stability of society, the economic participation of women, ensuring food security, and national development processes. Human Capital Theory suggests that improving people's education, skills, and capabilities is vital for economic development, and is considered an effective way to reduce poverty in the household economy, especially in Afghanistan, where the labor market is limited. Therefore, the main question of this research is formulated as follows: What household economic strategies reduce poverty and how can the government support these measures?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Household Economics: Concept and Importance

Human Capital Theory (HCT) is an important theory in economics that considers human education, skills, experiences, and other intellectual and life skills as valuable. According to this theory, humans, through their knowledge, skills, and training, play an important role in economic development, just like natural resources or capital (Fleischhauer, 2007). By strengthening the household economy, the government can take necessary measures to reduce poverty and contribute to the national development of the country. Home economics provides a wide range of services to all aspects of family life (Ukpore, 2005), and is a skill-based subject that develops the basic skills of individuals to become self-sufficient and contribute to the economic and social development of society (Onuorah, 2023). According to the human capital theory, human

capabilities and resources are not only considered physical and material resources but also their knowledge, skills, and experiences (Mayilyan & Yedigaryan, 2022). In Afghanistan, there is strong evidence that poverty reduction through strengthening household economies is possible through household skills, knowledge, and training (Fleischhauer, 2007). In developing countries where employment opportunities are limited, strengthening household economies is essential to develop skills and create new opportunities. Government focus on skills and knowledge can improve people's living standards (Wani, et al., 2022). Household economic measures such as financial management, utilization of household economic resources, and expansion of women's economic activities lead to poverty reduction and development (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024 Onyernama, et al., 2024). Developing human potential and skills promotes economic development (Schultz, 1964). Women's economic empowerment is essential for strengthening household economies, and expanding women's economic opportunities is critical for poverty reduction and national development (Mayilyan & Yedigaryan, 2022; Funmilayo & Larai, 2015; Baker, 2010). Agriculture and livestock are fundamental components of household economies, and developing agricultural skills and establishing household and community training programs can lead to poverty reduction and economic development (Onyernama, et al., 2024; Ikeogu, et al., 2013; Schultz, 1961). The government should expand social assistance to reduce poverty, including employment opportunities, education and training programs, and skills training (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024; Haryatie, 2022). However, investments in education, skills, and training contribute to economic development, poverty reduction, and strengthening domestic economies, but weak institutions and limited resources hinder implementation.

## **2.2. Household Economics and Poverty Reduction**

Implementing household economics principles plays a fundamental role in poverty reduction (Temory, 2024). Through these principles, households are provided with tools to better manage their resources, including financial planning, food security, and skills training, to improve their quality of life and reduce poverty (Oluwagbemileke & Uko-Aviomoh, 2023). When households focus on financial planning, household production, and economic skills, they can cope with economic difficulties (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). Implementing household economics principles is particularly important for low-

income households, as it provides a means for better resource management and improved economic status (Onyernama, et al., 2024). Training household members in skills, especially in handicrafts, food production, and financial management, is a key way to reduce poverty by increasing income and improving quality of life (Umoru, 2024). Implementing household economics creates new opportunities for people and is an effective tool for poverty reduction and social development (Wani, et al., 2022). Household economics principles, which focus on financial planning, food security, and skills training, improve people's lives and are effective in reducing poverty (Pace et al., 2015). In developing countries, implementing household economics principles plays a fundamental role in poverty reduction and economic development, through the management of economic resources, skills development, and better financial management (Onyernama, et al., 2024). If people are educated about proper management of their resources and financial planning, they can significantly improve their lives (Yar & Yasouri, 2024). Household economics principles provide skills training and financial management, which are very effective in reducing poverty and improving individuals' income and livelihoods (Funmilayo & Larai, 2015). The development of financial management and skills training programs for implementing household economics, and the cooperation of government, non-governmental, and international organizations are essential for poverty reduction and improving people's lives (Behzad, 2024). Government-sponsored skills training programs, such as handicrafts or food production and marketing, can make a significant difference in poverty reduction. Also, specialized training workshops that promote women's economic participation in the household economy create new opportunities for women to contribute to the economic development of their families (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). Implementing household economics in rural Afghanistan is difficult due to a lack of education, information, and basic facilities, but with appropriate programming and financial awareness from the government and international organizations, it can become an effective tool for poverty reduction.

### **2.3. Poverty Reduction through Household Economy**

Strengthening the domestic economy is considered a fundamental strategy for poverty reduction in developing countries, because through domestic economic growth, the quality of life of the people improves, economic empowerment is created, and proper

management of resources is possible (Temory, 2024). The expansion of economic inequality is a major cause of poverty, because the unfair distribution of wealth and the lack of employment opportunities worsen the economic situation of households (Chaudhary, 2018). Limited educational opportunities lead to a lack of skills and scientific knowledge among the population, which directly leads to an increase in poverty (Wani, et al., 2022). In addition, weak government, corruption, and the lack of development projects contribute to the spread of poverty, but if the government implements policies that support the domestic economy, it can reduce the level of poverty (Nerlove, 1974). War and insecurity limit economic activity, deprive people of the resources to meet their basic needs, and increase poverty rates (Yar & Yasouri, 2024). Strengthening household economies is an important way to reduce poverty. Providing households with financial management, increasing productive capacity, and supporting local businesses are effective measures to reduce poverty (Behzad, 2024). Expanding economic activities for women and providing them with skills and training opportunities is a fundamental step in reducing poverty (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). Women's economic independence not only improves the economic situation of households, but also has positive consequences for society (Temory, 2024). Investment in the agriculture and livestock sector creates employment opportunities for people and leads to poverty reduction (Ehsas & Akhtar, 2024). Government support for the development of agriculture and livestock plays an important role in reducing poverty (Temory, 2024). Upskilling people through education and vocational training is an important poverty reduction strategy, as training programs and educational advancement integrate people into the labor market (Umoru, 2024). However, implementing household economic empowerment has some challenges. Corruption, security problems, and lack of government planning have made it difficult to implement in the political, social, and economic environment (Wani, et al., 2022). To develop the agriculture and livestock sector, the government should expand specific policies for smallholder farmers and livestock keepers (Akhtar & Niazi, 2024). Unequal land distribution, lack of technology, inappropriate policies, and social, cultural, and legal constraints pose obstacles to poverty reduction strategies, although women's economic participation and education development are important.

## 2.4. Government Role in Strengthening Household Economy

The government has an important role to play in poverty reduction in the household economy. Improving the quality of life of the people, developing skills, providing economic opportunities, and managing resources properly are the fundamental components of the household economy. The government should strengthen support for women's training and economic activities so that they can play an active role in the development of the household economy (Simorangkir, et al., 2024). Onyernama (2024) highlights the importance of household economic training for poverty reduction and states that governments should expand household economic training programs to build resilience in the face of economic crises. Women's economic participation not only strengthens the household economy, but is also effective in reducing poverty in the community (Behzad, 2024). To reduce poverty in developing countries, governments should implement new techniques and technologies in agriculture and livestock, expand markets for agricultural products, and improve the quality of products (Ikeogu, et al., 2013). Christiaensen & Demery (2007) consider the development of the agricultural sector as essential for poverty reduction and argue that the government should formulate new policies for the development of agriculture and livestock. The government should expand the labor market and provide economic opportunities to the people. Adams & Page (2005) present government measures to reduce unemployment, which include employment programs, skills development, and job creation for the unemployed. Chaudhary (2018) considers social security programs as important for poverty reduction. The government should implement financial literacy programs, microfinance, job creation, affordable health, subsidized education, infrastructure development, social safety nets, and implementation of sustainable practices to improve household economic performance and help reduce poverty (Temory, 2024). To reduce poverty, the government should develop social safety nets, including household empowerment, low-interest microfinance, vocational training, public health, scholarships, infrastructure investment, and providing assistance in times of natural disasters and economic crises (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). There are some challenges with household poverty reduction efforts in Afghanistan, as programs must consider community needs, women's economic rights, and sustainability of assistance, environmental agriculture, and respect for cultural and social institutions.

## **2.5. Household Resource Management and Savings Strategies**

Household resource management and savings strategies are of particular importance for economic development and sustainable growth in Afghanistan. Proper management of financial resources, economic planning for households, and wise use of land and human resources are essential not only for improving the economic situation, but also for reducing poverty and improving the quality of life (Haryatie, 2022). In developing countries, proper management of financial resources is essential for household economic growth and poverty reduction, because government policies and household plans can properly manage financial resources, reduce consumption, and use better savings methods (Syed, et al., 2017; Temory, 2024). Savings are an important principle of economic development, and households should maintain a balance between income and consumption. With the help of financial advice, people can properly organize their needs and save for necessary goods (Syed, et al., 2017). Afghanistan's vast land resources and human capital provide great opportunities for the development of household economies, but wise use of land, development of people's skills, and training and employment opportunities for women, youth, and low-income households are vital (Ehsas & Akhtar, 2024; Temory, 2024; Umoru, 2024). Reducing consumption, cutting unnecessary expenses, and prioritizing household necessities are important strategies for good financial resource management. Implementing household economies in developing countries is difficult due to corruption, poverty, and poor education (Wani, et al., 2022). For these strategies to be successful, land and human resources must be used wisely and prudently to improve household economic conditions and reduce poverty.

## **2.6. Sustainable Development via Household Economy**

Sustainable agriculture and production for sustainable economic growth in developing countries, with good government planning, can lead to economic growth, resource conservation, and environmental improvement (Nzasabayezu et al., 2024). Sustainable agriculture in Afghanistan is an important way to develop the domestic economy. Government encouragement of new agricultural technologies, such as chemical-free farming and water-efficient systems, is vital for increasing production and conserving resources (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). The government should provide training and financial assistance to farmers, support the development of technology and technical knowledge, and ensure cooperation with international aid organizations and local

agencies (Ikeogu, et al., 2013). Environmental protection is an important part of sustainable economic development, and should be included in domestic economic training programs so that people can protect the environment through their economic activities (Funmilayo & Larai, 2015). Government policies should include specific strategies for the proper management of energy, water, and other natural resources (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). Awareness of sustainable practices is important in domestic economies, but land degradation, natural disasters, poor use of technology, and lack of financial and technical support make sustainable agriculture difficult to implement (Behzad, 2024). Furthermore, implementing government policies to improve the economic environment faces political and economic challenges, as the material and technical capacity required for the proper and sustainable use of resources on a large scale is limited.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The methodology of this study is based on a qualitative design, which prioritizes the analysis of library and secondary sources. The data were collected from academic articles, reports, and studies related to household economy, sustainable growth, and poverty reduction. The data analysis was conducted through thematic method to provide appropriate policies and recommendations for strengthening household economy, sustainable growth, and poverty reduction. All sources were reliable and directly related to the research objectives, the sample size was determined based on existing scientific materials, and the validity, confidentiality, and ethical principles of the data were taken into account.

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

As a result, Thematic Analysis is used as the primary qualitative method to identify key patterns within household economic policies and government interventions. The study categorizes findings into two major themes: (1) household economic measures for poverty reduction and (2) the government's role in implementing these measures. This approach shows how policies, economic activities, and support programs work together to reduce poverty. The role of household measures and government has a two-way effect: the government sets policies and provides incentives, and households increase the

impact of the policy by implementing energy conservation, recycling, and health guidelines. Collaboration is essential for sustainable social goals.

#### **4.1. Household Economic Measures for Poverty Reduction**

First, Financial Management and Household Economic Stability includes savings and budgeting, providing financial support, financial education, providing financial independence to family members, and raising awareness about credit opportunities. These measures are important for families to be able to manage their limited resources properly, reduce unnecessary spending, and achieve financial stability in the long term. Increasing financial literacy enables families to use their income wisely and prevent poverty. Second, Education, Skills, and Capacity Building includes investing in education and skills, teaching marketing skills, vocational training programs for adults, encouraging creative thinking, and raising awareness of advances in science and technology. Skills training provides families with the opportunity to find ways to become self-sufficient, compete in the labor market, and increase income through their professional abilities. Third, Income diversification and economic growth pathways include small business development, entrepreneurship, agricultural and livestock programs, horticulture development, support for household production, and increasing women's economic participation. Income diversification reduces the pressure on agricultural households in particular and generates income through various sources. Women's participation, in turn, plays an important role in increasing overall household income. Fourth, Social services, health, and cooperation include access to health and social services, employment and health insurance for the unemployed, building social institutions, and social support systems. These services improve the quality of life of people and increase the resilience of households to poverty. Social cooperation institutions provide the basis for joint efforts for the common good of society. Fifth, Resource efficiency and sustainability include programs for the efficient use of energy and resources, teaching the necessary practices and skills for managing limited resources, and guiding decision-making to improve the quality of life. Efficient use of resources enables households to make rational use of natural and economic resources, reduce waste, and pave the way for sustainable development. In summary, skills training programs for women and youth, such as sewing, handicrafts, and agriculture, play an important role in increasing household income. Products are sold through markets and

exhibitions to support domestic production, and further support is needed through tax exemptions and exports. Microcredit schemes are effective for women's economic empowerment. Economic awareness is raised through public awareness programs. Free training programs for the development of agriculture and livestock, energy-saving projects, and solar power are useful. Women's economic participation is expanded through special programs, loans, and social cooperation institutions. Financial management, health insurance, innovation, and technology open up avenues for families to progress. Ultimately, these measures play a fundamental role in poverty reduction, economic stability, and long-term prosperity.

#### **4.2. The Government's Role in Implementing These Measures**

First, the government's primary role in reducing poverty is to promote Education, skills and capacity building. This includes training women in income generation, raising awareness about computer literacy, teaching business and management skills, and encouraging self-reliance projects. If people's skills are improved, they can find new ways to earn an income and be able to compete in the market. Such investments are important for long-term economic stability. Second, another important aspect is Women's economic participation and social inclusion. Income generation programs for women not only support the household economy, but are also fundamental for the development of society. Utilizing women's capabilities, providing them with small business capital, and raising social awareness lead to women becoming economically independent and increasing household resilience to poverty. Third, the government should pay serious attention to the development of Agriculture and Livestock Development and Food Security because most Afghan families depend on agriculture. Integration of agriculture with other professions, innovative techniques in agriculture, livestock development programs, and ensuring food security are among the important tasks of the government. Food security guarantees that families are protected from the risk of hunger and malnutrition and, accordingly, the need for migration is reduced. Fourth, Business Support and Economic Growth Programs includes supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, building business networks, tax exemptions, and economic subsidies. These measures lead to people starting businesses in an innovative way and finding new opportunities for economic stability. Strengthening small businesses not only increases household income, but also expands employment

opportunities for the entire country. Fifth, the government can use public awareness programs to promote economic development among households, such as education on financial management, capital accumulation, and effective use of resources. In addition, the management of Zakat and Waqf resources is an important mechanism for supporting the poor. If these resources are used effectively, poverty in the community will be fundamentally reduced and the quality of life of the people will be improved. To reduce poverty in Afghanistan, the government should prioritize skills training and capacity building so that people can generate income. Loans and tax breaks are needed to support small and medium-sized businesses. Women's economic participation is increased through special programs, and the creation of business networks provides opportunities for joint projects. Agriculture and livestock development is carried out through new technologies and improved seeds. Food security, tax reduction, and subsidy programs reduce economic stress. Public awareness programs provide information on economic development. These measures reduce poverty and improve the quality of life.

The study results indicate that the role of the Afghan government in poverty reduction is important in several areas, such as skills training, capacity building, women's economic participation, agricultural development, and public awareness programs. The results emphasize that learning sewing, handicrafts, and agricultural skills can increase household incomes and strengthen their economic independence. Special business programs and loan schemes for women are effective in strengthening the household economy. In addition, the use of improved seeds, vaccines, and modern technology is essential for the development of agriculture and livestock, which will bring positive changes in food security. The results also recommend that specific training programs be developed for the unemployed according to market needs to increase their employment opportunities. However, the implementation of these programs faces challenges, such as lack of infrastructure, low quality of training, and the existence of cultural barriers that particularly affect women's economic participation. In light of human capital theory, these results demonstrate that skills training and women's participation are fundamental to the economic stability of households.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the study, it can be concluded that household economic measures play a special role in reducing poverty, but the government needs to make more efforts in this area. Also, it is clear that with the help of the government and NGOs, household economic measures will be better implemented. In addition, household economic measures will give people the opportunity to improve their lives. The role of the government in reducing poverty in Afghanistan is vital through household economic measures. The government should encourage and support households to participate in their professions in addition to agriculture. Families should be made aware of the importance of self-sufficiency and self-employment. Household economists and governments should encourage cooperation between households so that they can participate in small businesses together. NGOs should participate in institutional programs to reduce poverty. The government should encourage Household economics professionals to use their professional skills to teach about poverty reduction and community empowerment. Household economics practices may vary across different cultural and regional contexts in Afghanistan. Research can examine how these practices fit with local customs, traditions, and the economic needs of different communities, in order to design more specific and appropriate interventions.

## 6. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Encourage family participation beyond agriculture, promoting diverse home-based professions.
- 2) Raise awareness on self-sufficiency and self-employment through public campaigns.
- 3) Support collaboration among households for joint small business ventures.
- 4) Involve NGOs in structured poverty-reduction programs.
- 5) Mobilize home economics professionals for community training and awareness.
- 6) Conduct region-specific research to align strategies with local traditions and needs.

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