


## Chapter 5

# Disrupted Educational Pathways in Afghanistan: Evaluating the Disparities in Education Under the Taliban Affecting Women's Educational Access

**Nassir Ul Haq Wani**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3871-9857>  
Kardan University, India

**Farha Naz Khan**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6223-2286>  
Anil Surendra Modi School of Commerce, SVKM's Narsee Monjee Institute of Management, India

**Shukriya Sadaat Hashmi**

Kardan University, Kabul, Afghanistan

### ABSTRACT

*The chapter explores the impact of education disparities under the Taliban on women's educational access and capabilities development in Afghanistan, a country on the brink of collapse due to ongoing conflicts and political upheaval. The study uses a case study technique to analyze the current state of women's education and its impact on women's capability development. The chapter argues that women's potential can revolutionize Afghan society and secure the country's existence as a modern nation-state. Women's education can help Afghan women enhance their capacities and contribute to the country's progress. The chapter concludes with reflections on the implications for government, development partners, communities, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions in strengthening education services and building resilience in fragile contexts. It also highlights the need for linkages with social protection, justice, and psychosocial support services.*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-1483-8.ch005

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to education, starting at the most basic levels (Eriksson et al., 2010). However, educational discrimination in Afghanistan violates this declaration, particularly regarding gender. There is a significant research gap regarding gender discrimination in education, especially for Afghan women. Afghanistan, a country plagued by poverty and significant social and economic challenges, is particularly vulnerable to this prejudice. Therefore, the country must address this issue and harness the potential of its human capital through education. This would ensure equal access to education for all individuals, regardless of their background or circumstances. Afghanistan has emerged as a focal point in the formulation of international policies. Massive financial investments and human lives have been shed by international powers to revolutionise Afghan society. The nation has emerged as a central focus for policymaking among the main global powers. The primary focus has been on advocating for educational initiatives to instigate a transformative societal shift within this tribal community.

Considerable endeavours have been devoted to the education of Afghan women. Consequently, female literacy increased substantially before the Taliban regained control of the country. With the Taliban's consolidation of power and obstruction of educational opportunities for women, this matter assumes a profoundly significant nature. Women's education extends beyond female literacy, with implications for geopolitics and international security. The education for women was non-existent during the initial Taliban regime of 1996–2001 (New York Times, 2021). However, after the Taliban's downfall, female literacy increased to 30 percent by 2018, as reported by UNESCO in 2021. Since the withdrawal of the United States, women have been prohibited from resuming their studies, restricting feminist education once again (Walt, 2021). Comparatively, only 33% of adolescent females possess fundamental literacy skills, while 67% of boys in the same age group do so (Human Rights Watch, 2022). The disparity in female literacy between rural and urban areas is particularly pronounced, as evidenced by the fact that metropolitan regions have 70% of enrolled girls in primary education, while rural areas have only 40% (Centre for Global Development, 2022; Muram and Wani, 2020). It appears that no amount of pressure from the West can halt the Taliban's consolidation of power in Afghanistan.

The education of women in Afghanistan during the Taliban era provides ample material for research. Regarding Afghanistan during the Taliban regime, the education of women faces numerous obstacles. The history, society, economy, and culture of the nation ingrained these manifold impediments to female literacy.

Without discrimination, access to education alters societal norms and advances meritocracy concerning societal transformations (Dore, 1984). The promotion of

28 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/disrupted-educational-pathways-in-afghanistan/346508](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/disrupted-educational-pathways-in-afghanistan/346508)

## Related Content

---

### Microblogging During the European Floods 2013: What Twitter May Contribute in German Emergencies

Christian Reuterand Julian Schröter (2019). *Emergency and Disaster Management: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 739-759).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/microblogging-during-the-european-floods-2013/207599](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/microblogging-during-the-european-floods-2013/207599)

### Tales of the Unexpected: Post-Crisis Transformational Leadership

Catherine Hayes (2024). *Rebuilding Higher Education Systems Impacted by Crises: Navigating Traumatic Events, Disasters, and More* (pp. 195-218).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/tales-of-the-unexpected/343835](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/tales-of-the-unexpected/343835)

### Is Ubiquitous Technology for Needs Data Management a Game Changer in Humanitarian Arena?

Punya Prasad Sapkotaand Kashif Siddiqi (2019). *International Journal of Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management* (pp. 83-97).

[www.irma-international.org/article/is-ubiquitous-technology-for-needs-data-management-a-game-changer-in-humanitarian-arena/234328](http://www.irma-international.org/article/is-ubiquitous-technology-for-needs-data-management-a-game-changer-in-humanitarian-arena/234328)

### Evaluating Campus Safety Messages at 99 Public Universities in 2010

John W. Barbrey (2013). *Using Social and Information Technologies for Disaster and Crisis Management* (pp. 1-19).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/evaluating-campus-safety-messages-public/74855](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/evaluating-campus-safety-messages-public/74855)

### Digital Contact Tracing for COVID-19: A Review of Its Application to the Global Pandemic

Mahdi Nasereddin, Michael Bartolacci, Joanne C. Peca, Edward J. Glantz, Galen Grimesand Tyler Verlato (2023). *International Journal of Disaster Response and Emergency Management* (pp. 1-16).

[www.irma-international.org/article/digital-contact-tracing-for-covid-19/324084](http://www.irma-international.org/article/digital-contact-tracing-for-covid-19/324084)