STARS

Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019

2014

Positive Political Outcomes From Feminist Islam in Afghanistan: Identifying Development Program Features that Raise the Status of Women

Margaret Courtney Barnard
University of Central Florida

Showcase of Text, Archives, Research & Scholarship

POSITIVE POLTICAL OUTCOMES FROM FEMINIST ISLAM IN AFGHANISTAN:

IDENTIFYING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FEATURES THAT RAISE THE STATUS OF WOMEN

by

MARGARET COURTNEY BARNARD

B.A. Scripps College, 2008

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of Political Science
in the College of Sciences
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Fall Term
2014

Major Professor: Kerstin Hamann

ABSTRACT

Existing literature establishes a connection between elevating the status of women in less developed countries and positive political outcomes including: increased national stability, decreased likelihood of civil conflict, and international stability. In particular, the literature suggests that working within the dominant cultural framework of a country makes development projects more successful. This thesis expands upon these bodies of literature and examines the outcomes of the work of two major development agencies in Afghanistan, the UN and USAID in the area of women's education and healthcare. The thesis analyzes some specific characteristics that influence the effects of these programs in the Afghan context. It argues that when development agencies work within the unique cultural context of Afghanistan, and promote development gains for women within an Islamic framework, they are more likely to be effective than if they do not work within this framework. The thesis tests this hypothesis with a comparative qualitative analysis of the goals and accomplishes of the UN and USAID and compares the results of the analysis with survey data from The Asia Foundation Survey of the Afghan people, which provides data from 2006-2013 regarding attitudes of the Afghan people. Based on a qualitative analysis, the study's results, although tentative, identifies patterns of success using the Islamic framework.

For Gareth.

Thank you for pushing me to be the best person I can be.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Elevating the status of women, meaning, allowing women equal access to education, healthcare and effective political and legal equity, is an important human rights issue. Elevating women goes beyond access to education and political voice; it is also connected to community attitudes and norms. Women must be regarded by their society as equals to be treated equally. There is an established connection between development gains for women[1] and economic improvement. The connection is simple, when basic levels of education for women rise so does per-capita income, women pass on their skills and education in the home, allowing the cycle of poverty to be lessened and possibly lifted. In turn, GDP increases and economic gains can be felt of both the local and national level (Elborgh-Woytek and Newiack, 2013, 6, 21). Access to education is the cornerstone in development, it allows women become more valuable to their local society and their status is raised; local and national economies become more stable and profitable.

The benefits of elevating women go beyond economics and women's status is connected to all facets of society, and the web of improvements caused by empowering women stretches beyond the single individual: women who are able to read can better care for themselves and their families, maternal health improves (UN Millennium Development Goals, 2013), and young women can contribute to their families in a substantive manner, as opposed to being considered merely chattel (GirlRising, 2013).

---

[1] Development gains and/or elevating and/or strengthening the status women is a broad term used to describe in creases in equity of access to education, healthcare, and political representation (i.e. right to vote, run for office).

The correlation between development gains for women and bettered economies goes beyond the humanitarian lens; it holds important political implications. Strengthening women's status through access to education, healthcare, and political representation directly correlates with reduced rates of civil and interstate conflict, state insecurity, and authoritarianism (Hudson 2012, 95 and 101).

In an analysis of several nations, Hudson (2012, 100-101) found indicators related to the subordination of women, such as literacy rate gaps, unequal sex ratios (from female infanticide) and lack of women's suffrage provide a template for other forms of oppression, including authoritarianism and greater instances of intra and interstate conflict and instability. She argues, "This suggests that while it is surely not the only important factor, the promotion of better treatment for women would ensure greater social justice and peace, and would help prevent domestic conflict within a nation (Hudson 2012, 102)."

Women's status is more than a humanitarian or development agency issue; it is political issue and in order to increase global stability a greater focus needs to be placed on the optimal methods to elevate the status of women. International security cannot be attained without gender equality (Hudson 2012, 102) and it is important to identify what approaches taken by actors including development agencies and NGOS works to elevate women in countries where instability and inequity for women exist. By identifying what approaches can help or hinder women's gains, scholars and policy-makers can create a framework to facilitate women's elevation in post-conflict environments. It is imperative that peace-building and development projects focus on improving the status of women (Hudson 2012, 101).

An important country to examine with regards to this issue is Afghanistan. Afghanistan has faced war an occupation for centuries; colonial ambition of both Britain and Russia were followed by Soviet occupation and a pro-communist coup in 1979 (Afghanistan Country Profile, 2014 Web). Despite modernization and vast gains for women under Soviet control, most progress was lost in the ensuing years of civil war that followed. After years of violent conflict, the Taliban, an ethnic Pashtun group claiming legitimacy under radical Islam, came to power and held control of nearly 90% of the country (Afghanistan Country Profile, 2014 web). Under Taliban rule, rigid tribal customs that were imposed in the name of Islam were put in place. Laws included blocking women from any interaction with a male that was not a family member. Women were unable to leave the house without a familial male chaperone; women were banned from receiving an education and receiving medical treatment from a male. Women were considered to be of little value and could be given away to settle debts or disputes. Child marriage rates rose, and development gains made under Soviet control disappeared, while illiteracy and both maternal and child mortality skyrocketed (Girl Rising, 2013). Amnesty International reveals more disturbing facts:

> "Women were essentially invisible in public life, imprisoned in their home. In Kabul, residents were ordered to cover their ground and first-floor windows so women inside could not be seen from the street. If a woman left the house, it was in a full body veil (burqa), accompanied by a male relative: she had no independence. If women broke these discriminatory laws, punishments were harsh. A woman could be flogged for showing an inch or two of skin under her full-body burqa, beaten for attempting to study, stoned to death if she was found guilty of adultery (Women in Afghanistan: The Back Story 2014, web).

Afghanistan is still one of the most dangerous countries for women to live due to women's susceptibility to violence and lack of education and healthcare (Poll Says Afghanistan

'most dangerous' for Women, 2011). Women in Afghanistan have suffered for decades; and have lived with virtually no access to education, healthcare or personal freedom. In the post-Taliban era, Afghan women continue to face incredible challenges. Afghanistan is a divided country in many ways; its landscape lead to many isolated, under-developed tribes living in near-constant conflict. Years of repeated invasion, occupation and civil conflict have left Afghans to be mistrusting and guarded about outsiders. Afghanistan is unstable and lacking in development. For over a decade, since the fall of the Taliban, development agencies have been working in Afghanistan to overcome some of these issues. Many gains have been made, but Afghanistan still faces great instability, conflict and cleavages. Most Afghan women still have extremely limited access to education and healthcare, and lack basic human rights. In order to bring greater stability to Afghanistan, women must be granted more equity and human rights. Scholars need to examine what aid programs features have worked to better women and what has not worked as well.

Islamic Feminism: The Key to Success in Afghanistan?

Empowering women is the key strategy to greater stability in Afghanistan; however, it is unclear where feminism fits into Afghan culture. Feminism and Islam are not mutually exclusive terms. Feminism at its core is the empowerment of women leading to full equality between genders. When one conjures up images of the Arab or Muslim world, feminism is largely absent from the image. Many Westerners view Muslim women as subjugated and oppressed and in need of a savior in the form of secular feminism. Media outlets have pushed the plight of the Afghan woman again and again; the idea of freeing and saving Afghan women from Muslim and/or Taliban oppressors was seen as a valid secondary justification for invading Afghanistan.

After many years of US troops present in Afghanistan, and the subsequent opening of schools and health clinics, life for Afghani women is not very different. Many women in Afghanistan live under very harsh, real oppression. Their lives are of no societal value and these women are mistreated accordingly. Rape, abuse, and severe restrictions on basic social interactions dominate the lives of Afghan women. Amnesty International projects that nearly 87% of Afghan women experience domestic abuse and that an Afghan boy is twice as likely to be sent to school as an Afghan girl ("What is Life Like for Women in Afghanistan?" Amnesty International, 2014).

The fight to "save" Afghan women through secular feminism is losing and scholars argue that a different approach must be taken; Hudson argues, "Some of them most effective efforts in facilitating women's progress and furthering peace require that the agents of change build upon the cultural and religious roots of those with whom they are working . . . culture is a powerful force that needs to be respected (Hudson 2012, 171)." Women cannot simply abandon cultural norms and live as equals in society overnight. Ziba Mir- Hosseini writes on the subject,

> "Many observers were consequently surprised and disappointed that the downfall of the Taliban did not lead to Afghan women's mass abandonment of the *burqa*. Its persistence was quite rightly judged, however, to reflect the persistence of traditional patriarchal values and norms that the Taliban had merely enforced in an extreme form, norms and values that most Afghan women and men continue to associate with Islam and that few of them are yet ready to abandon in the absence of any credible or palatable alternative set of values" (Mir-Hosseini 2006, 629).

Secular, Western feminism cannot be pushed onto the Afghan people. It is a naïve notion to assume that women would simply be able to rise up and demand equal rights and treatment immediately. Afghan people have lived with a strict set of patriarchal norms for many years, and

these norms are engrained in everyday social interactions. These norms have grown out of a

radical, tribal version of Islam, and are not a moderate interpretation of Islam.

The foundations of Afghan society lie in Islam and women's empowerment must be build

upon Islam. Islamic Feminism is born out of this idea-- empowerment and equality of the

genders through the teachings of Islam as opposed to humanist values. Margot Badan describes

Islamic feminism as

> "*A feminist discourse and practice that derives its understanding and mandate from the Koran, seeking rights and justice within the framework of gender equality for women and men in the totality of their existence. Islamic feminism explicates the idea of gender equality as part and parcel of the Koranic notion of equality of all* insan *(human beings) and calls for the implementation of gender equality in the state, civil institutions, and everyday life. It rejects the notion of a public/private dichotomy (by the way, absent in early Islamic jurisprudence, or* fiqh*) conceptualizing a holistic umma in which Koranic ideals are operative in all space (Badran 2006, 9)."*

Islamic feminism is way to create c*redible, alternative values* for the Afghan people

(Mir-Hosseini 2006, 629). Islamic feminism embraces the Koran and the current Afghan societal

norms, but calls for an adjustment in Koranic interpretations regarding women. Islamic feminism

allows women to work within an acceptable cultural framework to gain equality and Islamic

feminism doesn't alienate men or any of the core foundations of Afghan society.

Another important hurdle to overcome with the Islamic approach to feminism is to reject

the preconceived notion that Islam is inherently damaging to women. Mir-Hosseini argues "The

genesis of gender inequality in Islamic legal tradition, these scholars tell us, lies in the cultural

norms of early Muslim societies. While the ideals of Islam call for freedom, justice, and equality.

. . (Mir-Hossenini 2006, 643)." Islam grants specific rights for women; although these rights are often ignored and practices that create inequity between genders prevail.

The Islamic tradition is multi-layered and teachings come from multiple sources including: the Koran, which is the holy book of Islam with instructions given directly from God and recorded by the prophet Muhammad, the Sunnah which are writings regarding how Muhammad lived his life, the Hadith which are saying attributed to Muhammad (Hasan 2005, 44). These three writings are also guided by *fiqh* and *sharia*, which are jurisprudence and a code of law governing life (Hassan 2005, 44). The latter two aspects of Islam are subject to interpretation by man and vary greatly from one Muslim society to another (Hassan 2005, 24). The main source of information, which guides *fiqh* and *sharia*, is derived from Koranic verses.

The Koran teaches that God views all human beings as equal and afford the same rights to both men and women including rights to justice, peace, security, education and family decision making (Hassan 2005, 47). Unfortunately, scholars have interpreted the Koran to exclude women from access to education, inheritance and basic human rights in many cases (Hassan 2005, 51-54). Hassan argues,

> "Although violations of women's rights are widespread in the Muslim world, it must be borne in mind that the Koran does not discriminate against women. Not only does the Koran emphasize that righteousness is identical in the case of both men and women, but it clearly and consistently affirms women's equality with men and their fundamental right to actualize the human potential that they share equally with men (Hassan 2005, 57)."

Tradition and social norms dictate how women live in Afghanistan. Women will not be able to lift the curtain of oppressive Taliban tradition quickly, however Islamic feminism and working

with the Islamic framework could be the answer to empowering women. Hudson highlights that it is best when practices for elevating and empowering women are viewed as something that is not in conflict with societal norms and practices (Hudson 2012, 173). Islamic feminism is exactly this method; it works to keep intact the values of Afghan society and actively engages men, women and religious leaders to become invested in women's rights. Islamic feminism creates a middle road for women to pursue equity in a manner that does not force her to choose between her traditions and Western feminism. Islamic feminism needs to be embraced by development agencies to better assist Afghan women.

To examine this issue further of what approaches taken by development agencies best work to empower women, this study will broadly compare the approaches and goals of the two largest aid agencies in Afghanistan, the United Nations Afghan Development Program (UNDP or UN) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and compare the aid agencies with data from the Asia Foundation Survey of the Afghan People to determine what correlations can be drawn-- do Afghan feel the country is moving n the right direction? Are they aware of aid programs, etc.? The Asia Foundation survey will also provide extremely important data regarding the attitudes of the Afghan people.

Successful development needs to have the 'buy in' of the Afghan people; therefore it is incredibly important that aid agencies understand the attitudes and values of the Afghan people. The Asia Foundation has explored this data since 2006 and is the best source of information regarding current and past attitudes of the Afghan people. Afghans have faced years of occupation by outsiders and are resistant to foreign insertion into Afghan society. Trust must be

built between the aid agencies and the Afghan people, so it is important to identify what organization and institutions the Afghan people have confidence in and trust. Additionally, Afghans need to feel their concerns are being addressed by aid agencies. It is important that aid agencies foster programs that meet the needs of Afghans, either rural or urban. Lastly, aid agencies need to tailor programs in culturally appropriate and sensitive manners. Afghanistan is a majority Muslim country and many Afghans also live by a strict tribal culture that pushes more radical and constraining forms of Islam. Development agencies need to be sensitive to these issues to gain the trust of the people.

By examining the Asia Foundation data and comparing it to the actions and goals of the UN and USAID this study will help shed light on the development program features that best elevate women in the Afghan context. The findings of this thesis can be used as a model for development agencies and policy-makers to find better means to promote political stability in diverse Muslim-majority countries similar to Afghanistan. Focused and effective aid programs that can rapidly improve the status of women are a cost effective and long term solution to creating political stability; however, the best delivery methods of aid agencies in this context has not been examined.

This study is important; however, it is limited in several ways. The study relies on survey data to reflect changes in cultural norms and attitudes over time, and relies on broad qualitative comparisons of USAID and the UN to complement this date. Due to time constraints and limited available data regarding regional level aid programs in Afghanistan, a broader national focus of the UN and USAID programs has been taken versus a regional approach. Further study to

examine the rural versus urban divide would complement the patterns uncovered in this study. The Asia Foundation provides data on a regional and national level and the data helps to provide more substantive and significant findings of the study regarding attitudes at the local level as well as a better understanding of the regional and ethnic difference in Afghanistan. The results of this qualitative analysis must be interpreted with regard to these limitations, however the results are still original, important and build a solid foundation for further study.

Equity is dual sided; women must be deemed equals in their society to live as equals. Effective equity is not possible without societal backing. Cultural norms and attitudes are incredibly important to achieving parity between genders. This study places great importance on societal norms and seeks to measure changes in these norms by utilizing the Asia Foundation Survey of the Afghan people. This survey provides theoretical data, while the comparison of USAID and UN programs and achievements provides empirical data regarding women's gains in Afghanistan. This combined data provides a more solidified foundation for comparison and further study. This study is comprised of six chapters. In the next chapter I examine the relevant literature to establish a clear theoretical surrounding the unique situation in Afghanistan. In Chapter Three I establish my hypothesis and methods of evaluation based on the literature. The fourth and fifth chapters compose my data and findings; Chapter four focuses on work of the Asia foundation, while chapter five compares UN and USAID programs. The final chapter reviews the importance of the topic, the findings and limitations of analysis and includes recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

To provide further background to this study, one must examine the current literature surrounding several areas including civil conflict, gender, and development and peace building. It is important to consider all of the literature with regard to the unique context of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has undergone years of civil conflict and occupation. The protracted conflicts plaguing Afghanistan have created challenges for development agencies. Deep mistrust of outsiders, and divisions among Afghanistan's many ethnic groups create a challenging environment (Afghanistan Country Profile, 2014 Web). One uniting factor in Afghanistan is Islam. Afghanistan is a Muslim majority country and nearly all inhabitants practice some form of Islam. Islam is deeply engrained in Afghan culture and has been constantly embraced despite years of foreign occupation. Islam is the base of the Afghan identity and transcends the rural, urban and ethnic divisions (Coleman 2010, xxii). This deeply rooted identity in Islam allowed the Taliban to come to power with relative ease. Islam is seen as the redeemer of society and is a trusted remedy to the issues faced by the population[2]. The Taliban enforced a radical tribal regime in the name of Islam; however this tribalism is not a true representation of moderate Islam, which promotes education and specific rights for women (Coleman 2010, xxiv).

---

[2] Similarly in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, which promoted "Islam is the solution" were embraced by the majority of the country as a solution to end civil conflict despite hardline Islamic views (Coleman 2010, xxii)

The radical form of Islam imposed by the Taliban stripped women of most rights and pushed women to the bottom of the Human Development Index (Human Development Reports, 2014). As mentioned previously, women in Afghanistan had virtually no rights, and ranked behind most nations with regard to access to education, healthcare and basic political representation for women.

Scholars note that women in developing countries are often considered the center of the home, the managers of the family assets and land, yet these women are rarely consulted with regard to major family decisions (Asaju & Adagba 2013, 39.) The concerns of women are considered of little value and statistics show that women of great economic status are given great societal worth (Asaju & Adagba 2013, 40, 43). The key to elevating women and allowing them to gain wealth, influence, and power is access to education. Women's ideas and input become valid in their social networks only with increases in these types of development gains.

Unfortunately, gains for women become increasingly difficult during times of civil conflict and in post-conflict rebuilding. Violence during civil conflict is specially geared toward creating cleavages and targeting symbolic religious, ethnic, or gender groups to create divisions among society (Kalyvas 2006, 171, 262). Women are often the targets of violent insurgent groups as they are used as symbols to emasculate the whole community. (Bouta, Ferks 2002, 7).

By examining the issue of violent conflict from the gendered perspective suggests that it is imperative to understand that women are key components of both conflict and society, and that violence, and subsequently post-conflict rebuilding is a highly gendered issue. War is gendered

and serves to reinforce cultural stereotypes. Goldstein (2001, 42-43) reveals that during times of conflict women are blocked from power positions and gender equity.

Goldstein (2001, 261-265) notes that both guerilla insurgents and traditional soldiers often depict the enemy as feminine, something weak that needs to be destroyed- and that those who cannot defeat the enemy are also seen as weak and feminine. Goldstein demonstrates how being in an armed conflict leads to reinforcement of gender roles, where women's inequality, inferiority, and weakness are only reinforced by armed conflict (Goldstein 2001, 331).

Macdonald (1988, 21) goes beyond the arguments of Goldstein and notes that women in most cultures are seen as outside of the political sphere. She states that, "The association of women with the private and domestic, rather than the public political, sphere may also be built into a politically enfeebled picture of peace movements. Their vision is said to be limited or naïve, and their concerns are depicted as those of individual rather than national security" (Macdonald 1988, 21).

Macdonald highlights perfectly the issues faced by international development agencies and other actors when trying to promote women's interests during post-conflict recovery. Women have been pushed out of the political sphere and are seen as of little value; getting societies to accept women as productive members who belong in the sphere of politics and education is a daunting task. Often in post-conflict societies, education and the empowerment of women is seen as secondary to national stability; however it should be treated with great regard to the political implications and stability it offers the nation.

It is also important that women's empowerment is substantively addressed, in many instances, countries in the peace-building stage have begun to recognize the rights and values of women on paper-- however; in practice this is very different. Gordon and Gordon (2012, 310) examine the realities for women. They note that in many instances, the rights of women in practice do not match what is laid out in law. They state, "In the 1990s, Ethiopia, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa enacted new constitutions declaring women's equality and proscribing gender discrimination in such areas as property ownership, employment, or marriage rights" (Gordon and Gordon 2012, 310). They highlight the disparities in practice of these laws and practice, citing a striking case from 1999 Supreme Court Case in Zimbabwe where a woman was evicted from land she rightfully inherited from her father. The judge stated in his ruling "The nature of African society relegates women to a lesser status, especially in the family. A woman should not be considered an adult, but only a "junior male" (Gordon and Gordon 2012, 311).

While women have been given rights in many situations, those rights are not respected or enforced. We see by the term "junior male" that notions of feminine weakness and worthlessness still permeate the highest levels of the law in many nations. In Afghanistan in particular, women in positions of political power are often subject to violent threats and incidences; many women who have been democratically elected to the Afghan Loya Jirga (parliament) over the last decade have been subject to threats or have been murdered (Coleman 2012, 174-175). It is important to not only realize the realities facing women with regard to legal rights, but to identify the feature of initiatives that have been most successful in advocating for women's rights.

Despite the harsh realities facing women in the developing world, progress is being made in many cases. One can also note substantive examples of women's empowerment initiatives promoted by international development agencies, like the United Nations bringing real results to women. Development agencies, in many cases, have been able to work with the community and gain the 'buy in' of locals to foster women's empowerment through trusted community organizations. As an example, in Serbia, domestic violence was commonplace and most women feared retaliation from their spouses as well lack of support or further abuse from police. Women who reported domestic violence were not taken seriously, and often did not receive support from local police. Through UN educational programs women were able to voice their concerns as a group and work together through their local UN educational program office to create an action plan for dealing with local authorities to have their concerns to be seen a valid (Jaric, 2014).

Women are able to use local education centers as a place of empowerment, a meeting point, and were able to form a group that provided them with a credible political backstop to enforce their rights. Working with a credible multinational actor can be important to changing the perception of women and their value to the community as it brings an outside voice that has established itself in the community as being authoritative and not a threat to the current community[3].

Studying development agencies with regard to elevating the status of women is important. Other scholars have examined the work of multinational organizations in similar

---

[3] This study will explore similar examples of programs involving the community and multinational actors in Afghanistan in the data and findings section.

studies; for example Keck and Sikkink (1998) examine the most effective international women's

campaigns to empower women and end violence against women. They highlight that reframing

violence against women as a health issue, as opposed to an issue of equal rights, helped the

movement gain international awareness and local support. The notion of 'equal rights' is often

viewed as a Western, imperialist paradigm, and is not embraced by many developing

communities. However, promoting the same issues in the framework of women's health was

more acceptable to the local culture and was more easily embraced. Keck and Skikink (1998,

191-192) further argue that ending violence against vulnerable victims is a translucent cross-

cultural value, and that any success for women needed to be framed as a health or family issue in

order to gain social acceptance, as opposed to framing the issue as equality and dignity for

women.

In a study regarding gender equity and development for women in the Middle East and

North Africa, The World Bank (2013) highlights similar steps to achieving equity for women.

The study comments on importance of social norms with regard to progress,

> "Additional interventions could be put in place to overcome the restrictions induced by
> social norms that inhibit girls' access to schooling or healthcare. Providing transportation
> facilities or subsidies to girls to be able to access school or health facilities more easily,
> or interventions such as having more female teachers and building girls' bathrooms in
> schools, may make it easier for parents to continue to send their girls to school.
> Ultimately, identifying the appropriate mix of policies is strongly dependent on country
> context (World Bank 2013, 129)."

Each aspect of the literature revealed how closely women are connected to violent conflict, post

conflict recovery, and cultural constructs. The literature exposes the disproportionate difficulties

women face during conflict and in post conflict rebuilding. It highlighted the lack of status and

political voice women carry in the developing world, and in particular Afghanistan. It explored

the precarious position women hold in society as keepers of the home and symbols of society as a whole; the literature also echoes the notions put forth by Islamic feminism as the most viable option in which to promote the empowerment of women.

Women hold a very delicate place in Afghan society, as does Islam. It is important to recognize these to facets of Afghan society when attempting to raise the status of women in Afghanistan. The literature highlighted the importance of working within the country context; in Afghanistan this means paying close attention to the position and 'honor' of Afghan women and to the highly valued place of Islam. Development agencies will not be successful at elevating in empowering women if their actions are seen as violating women or Islam. It is important the agencies work within the framework of Islam, especially with regard to programs involving women. Programs seeming to be tools of westernization will not be embraced by local Afghan communities; as noted by Keck and Sikkink (1998, 192) women's programs and issues need to be framed in the context outside of western context of "women's empowerment" and as something that the local community will embrace, such as a health issue. Nothing the importance of Islam to the Afghan people, it would be wise for development agencies to frame women's issues in the context of Islam, and to utilize Islam as the basis for the program. Feminist interpretations of Islam can provide a thoughtful backdrop on which development agencies can connect with locals. By utilizing the Koran and the assistance of local Islamic authorities to promote women's education, access the healthcare and political voice within the current cultural norms of Afghanistan, agencies can be more effective as promoting women as opposed to approaching the issue a secular human rights issue.

As mentioned previously, The Taliban enforced a very tribal based form of radical Islam; however many moderate interpretations of Islam advocate women's empowerment (Hassan 2005, 44). Hassan states the in Islam women are granted specific rights in the Koran including, rights to justice, freedom from persecution, the right to acquire knowledge and the right to privacy (Hassan 2005, 47-49). Despite clearly stated rights, Hassan acknowledges that

> "Muslim women partake of all the rights that have been mentioned [above]. In addition, women are the subject of much particular concern in the Koran. However, a review of Muslim history and culture brings to light many areas in which—Koranic teachings notwithstanding—women continued to be subjected to diverse forms of oppression and injustice, often in the name of Islam. Although the Koran, because of its protective attitude toward all downtrodden and oppressed classes of people, appears to be weighted in many ways in favor of women, many of its women-related teachings have been used in patriarchal Muslim societies against, rather than for, women. Muslim societies in general appear to be far more concerned with trying to control women's bodies and sexuality than with women's human rights (Hassan 2005, 50)."

The use of Islam to subjugate women is practices heavily in Afghanistan; however it can also be used as the basis upon which to empower women. Hassan continues,

> "God, who speaks through the Koran, is characterized by justice, and it is stated clearly in the Koran that God can never be guilty of *zulm* (unfairness, tyranny, oppression, or wrongdoing). Hence, gender injustice cannot be legitimized with reference to any Koranic text. The goal of Koranic Islam is to establish peace, which can only exist within a just environment "(Hassan 2005, 57).

Taking note from the literature, utilizing moderate interpretation of the Koran to empower women in Afghanistan will be the most affective way to elevate Afghan women. The importance of Islam and the must be taken into account and development agencies must work within this context of feminist interpretations of Islam to be successful. Hassan reinforces this point,

"Western analysts are still unable or unwilling to see Islam as a religion capable of being interpreted in a progressive way or problem is their refusal to understand the pivotal role of Islam in the lives of Muslims. . . I do not believe that any viable model of self-actualization can be constructed in Muslim societies, for women or men, that is outside the framework of normative Islam deriving from Koranic teachings, and exemplified in the life of the Prophet of Islam. Nor do I believe that any profoundly meaningful or constructive dialogue can take place between "the World of Islam" and "the West" without a proper recognition of what Islam means to millions of Muslims (Hassan 2005, 64)."

Hassan notes three other key issues: Islam is often not rightfully interpreted and used as a tool to subjugate women, Islam can be used to empower women and that lastly, Western development agencies must recognize the critical place of Islam in Muslim majorities societies. Without recognizing the importance of Islam and framing empowerment around Islam, development agencies will not be successful. These key pieces of knowledge, combined with the rest of the supportive body of literature, help frame this study and establish a solid theoretical base on which to build a hypothesis.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORHETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Framework

The literature has covered several important factors relevant to this thesis, including issues of gender and violence, effective equity and the importance of Islam. These factors are important for creating a sound theoretical framework from which to develop a hypothesis. In short, the literature has revealed gendered nature of conflict and civil violence, the inconsistencies that women face under the law- what is practiced versus what is 'on paper', and what development does for women to improve their status as well as the political stability of their country as a whole.

It has been noted that development programs are often overlooked in the peacebuilding process and that women's concerns are often seen as naïve or selfish. Despite women's interests as being seen as 'unimportant', scholars have established a link between raising that status of women and political stability both at the national and international level (Hudson, 2012, 95). The issue at hand is to determine what features make a development program more successful at raising that status of women. This thesis does not seek to study which programs are more 'successful' based on number of women reached, but rather seeks to determine what features allow a program to be successful at changing the attitude of the general population toward women. As mentioned in the literature, it is important therefore to consider the unique cultural background and role of women within Afghanistan when examining these programs.

According to a University of West Florida and joint US Navy cultural awareness training

documents regarding Afghan customs and social norms, life for women is bleak,

> ". . . Marriages are usually arranged, and women are usually less educated than men.
> They marry young, have many babies (preferably boys), generally do not work outside
> the home, and are usually restricted to socializing with female relatives. . . In all cases,
> females are highly deferential to all male family members, even when older females
> interact with younger male siblings and cousins.
>
> For all Afghan women, maintaining a good reputation is a lifelong demand. Once a
> women's reputation is tarnished, she is no longer respected. Promiscuity, rape, divorce
> and the like will all tarnish a women's reputation. Once a women's reputation is
> tarnished, she is no longer respectable and society's respect cannot be re-
> attained."(Afghanistan Society and Norms – Gender Roles: Women, 2010 Web.)

Other authors also highlight that Afghan women have long symbolized the honor of the

family and the nation (Skaine, 2008, 5). Women represent Afghan culture and its values; Islam

and the family are central to all Afghan ethnic groups and groups seen as subverting Islam or the

family will be greatly mistrusted (Sakinem 2008, 73 and Rostami-Povey, 2007, 130-132). This

pertains the importance of embracing development programs that will not tarnish social

perceptions of 'honor' or Islamic values. Development programs will have to tread a fine line in

order to be effective at changing attitudes toward women without becoming too intrusive or

being seen as an affront to Afghan values.

Afghanistan has long been at the center of foreign invasion and occupation and this has

created a significant degree of mistrust of outside countries and cultures. Many Afghans felt the

Soviet era as an affront to Islamic values, and especially to the role of Afghan women. Soviet

occupation created a polarizing effect causing the population to embrace radical Islamic practices

to subvert the Western influence of the USSR (Rostami-Povey, 2007, 132). Rostami-Povey (2007, 139) expands on the notion of westernization and women in Muslim countries stating, ". . .the histories of all Muslim majority societies demonstrate that whenever the imperial powers adopted the rhetoric of women's liberation in order to justify their imperial domination, they faced resistance and rejection, (Rostami- Povey 2007, 139)." It is no wonder that after the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, and after years of civil war, the Taliban enforced the practice of harsh tribal policies under the guise of Islam and protecting the honor of the family.

In short, women had to remain fully covered by a burka; women and girls were barred from receiving any education, employment outside of the home, and were cut off by society. Women could not leave their home without a male chaperone, and women could not have any social interaction with a man that was not a relative. These policies effectively barred women from any form of education, medical care, or political involvement. While these practices are not currently embraced by all Afghans, it is important to understand the social constructs in place in Afghanistan until very recently.

Another important factor is the ethnic and religious division throughout the country. Afghanistan is a multiethnic society, with a majority population adhering to Sunni Islam; Afghanistan's diverse demographics are important variables to consider. Only 23% of Afghans live in an urban environment; the vast rural areas, which are often inaccessible by car, are home to a very diverse ethnic population, including a breakdown of Pashtun (42%), Tajik (27%), Hazara (9%), Uzbek (9%), Aimak (4%), Turkmen (3%), Baloch (2%), and other (4%). Furthermore, religion plays a large role in Afghan, culture nearly 80% of all Afghans practice

Sunni Islam while most Hazaras constitute a substantial Shiite minority (Cordesman, 2014, 45). It is important to consider these cultural and ethnic aspects when evaluating development programs. Program in rural areas will need to be tailored differently than in urban areas, and regions where the majority Pashtun population lives will face greater challenges in transforming the lives of women, as Pashtun areas are some of the former Taliban stronghold areas.

Hypothesis

There is an observed connection found in the literature tying increases in women's status to positive political outcomes at both the national and international level (Hudson 2012, 98, 99. 101). There is also an observed correlation tying development programs to the betterment of women (increased health, education and economic status). What factors lead to development programs' effectiveness at elevating the status of women is what has not been determined. The literature leads one to discern that following development programs in the Islamic framework, and embracing an Islamic feminism model of interpretation will be most beneficial for women. By combining these observations and information, from the literature one can establish a general hypothesis regarding this issue:

> **H1** *In a comparison of UN and USAID programs in Afghanistan, those programs that work within the Islamic framework, will be more likely to have success in elevating the status of women, than programs that disregard the Islamic framework.*

It may appear contrary to the development and betterment of women to pursue a religious basis for elevating women; however, as outlined in the literature and theoretical framework, Islam is central to the Afghan identity. It transcends many cleavages including ethnic, religious

sects, and the urban/rural divide. The fight for women's rights must be in the context of the

Afghan identity and Islamic community (Rostami-Povey, 142, 2007). Islam has been a binding

factor in Afghanistan and has been a uniting factor when facing foreign invasion. As noted

previously, many Afghans currently distrust foreign intervention and view it as a threat to

Afghan society. By embracing Islam, and working within the framework of Islam, aid groups

will be better able to connect with the Afghan people. This means simple instructions such as

consulting the local Islamic leader (Mullah) when beginning an aid project in a local area. It also

means observing key facets of Islam and Afghan culture such as the social separation of women

and men. Simple acts, such as having classes for women taught by women, and having female

doctors, not men available to women. Paying attention to the cultural and religious confines of

the Afghan people will preserve the ever-important honor of Afghan women and will make the

projects and their outcomes for women more acceptable.

Methodology

In order to accept or reject the hypothesis, several different approaches can be taken. The

most in-depth approach would involve personal interviews at the regional level regarding the

opinions of the Afghan people toward specific development agencies, and individual projects

within these agencies. One could then compare the answers given by the Afghan people and

compare and contrast the results with regard to ethnic background, religious sect, and urban

versus rural divide. This study doe not have access to this type of in-depth data, so the Asia

Foundation survey of the Afghan people will be used in place of this data.

As stated by the Asia Foundation, "The survey is the longest-running public opinion poll in the country. Over 9,000 Afghan citizens across 34 provinces reveal opinions on security, political participation, the economy, women's rights, and development. This marks the ninth in the Foundation's series of surveys in Afghanistan", (Shawe 2013, 1). The survey has been tracking data regarding attitudes and norms of the Afghan people since 2006. This data will take the place of interviews needed to track change in attitudes and societal norms and should allow the study to identify major changes in the views of the Afghan people regarding women, as well as whether or not Afghan people embrace development programs or notice the programs at all.

Additionally, I will utilize data from the two largest development agencies at work in Afghanistan to identify the broader programs, goals, and accomplishments of each aid agency including, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). A broad overview of the programs designed to elevate women and practices in place at each agency; both USAID and the UN host several different individual projects at various locations that can range from educational programs, to job training or health clinics.

The main program focus of this study will be educational programs, and access to basic healthcare, as these are some of the most basic services denied to women under Taliban rule. The comparison will not be limited to the scope of gender-specific education, but will examine the efforts of both organizations as whole. It is important to not only grasp the efforts being put into educating young women, but to examine this information within the context of each program as a whole. This will allow the study to reveal any significant differences or similarities in how each

development agency pursues women's education. This information will provide the study with the basic program structures in place, and a solid base at which to compare the program features to the possible changes in attitude of the Afghan people.

This data allows for measurement caveats in this thesis; I cannot provide a true empirical or causal link between specific local or nation development programs put in place by the UN or USAID and the change in attitude of the Afghan people toward women without micro data regarding specific projects and attitudes of those who either participate in the project or live in the area where those projects are taking place. The study would require far more in-depth interviews and deeper regional date on programs put in place by the UN or USAID. The survey of the Afghan people does include questions regarding development agency awareness; however, the questions are not in-depth and cannot provide the necessary evidence to provide significant findings; however; the survey does provide a solid observable base upon which one can pursue further in-depth research.

The Survey of the Afghan people will highlight the several important factors to consider with regard to attitudes of the Afghan people and their views of women since 2006. The study does reveal what average Afghans believe regarding women and education, work and political voice. The survey also reveals broad attitudes such as whether or not Afghans feels the country s headed in the 'right direction' and why. As mentioned previously, due to lack of data in-depth data, I am not be able to study this project to at the micro level; however I have a significant theoretical base and literature base on which to pursue this study. To combat this lack of micro-level data, I will utilize the national level as well as a regional breakdown of data (when

available) from the Survey of the Afghan People in order to highlight ethnic, regional, and urban similarities and differences.

By using the survey data and broad program information from the UN and USAID one can begin to identify what programs are or can be more effective at elevating the status of women in Afghanistan. It is important to understand the goals and practices in place, especially with regard to development programs focused on women. The overview of USAID and UN programs in Afghanistan will allow one to be able to determine if and how these programs work to accommodate a respect for Islam.

This data can be combined with valuable information regarding attitudes regarding women's place in society, as well as the concerns of women at the national and regional level. The Asia Foundation has been conducting the Survey of the Afghan People since 2006; there are several years of data tracking social attitudes and concerns in each region- this data can help reveal what concerns, if any, of the Afghan people have been alleviated, and it will reveal and change in the social status of women in each region of the years. Simple questions, such as 'Should women work outside of the home?" or "Should men and women have equal access to education?" asked repeatedly over nine years will reveals certain trends in Afghan attitudes at the regional level.

The data findings will be examined from the both a regional and national perspective; one must account for possible differential views with regard to urbanization, ethnic group, and religious sect. With this information one will not be able to identify specific programs responsible for changing attitudes, but one can identify most likely identify if development

programs have been embraced at the regional level and why. To compliment the findings and to

counter for the measurement issues, the data chapters will include pertinent data from other,

similar development programs. The data should provide insight into programs used in other

nations, under similar circumstances, and will help substantiate more significant results.

CHAPTER FOUR: AFGHANISTAN DATA AND ANALYSIS

The Work of the Asia Foundation and Life in Afghanistan

The literature review revealed two aspects that are central to raising the status of women: firstly, the obvious increased access to education, healthcare, employment, and political voice. The trickier, second aspect of raising that status of women is making sure that women have equal status and treatment in reality; far too often women are granted equality under the law, but this is not practiced. The practice of effective equality is very closely tied to attitudes and cultural norms. This common issue was highlighted in the literature review in the case of a woman in Zimbabwe seeking her rightful inheritance; she was denied on the grounds that a woman should be considered a 'junior male' and not a full adult with equal access to the law (Gordon 2012, 311). Similar notions permeate Afghanistan; one example is the murder of Safia Amajan, and Afghan parliamentarian who was shot to death outside of her home in 2006. Amajan was a democratically elected official who was denied bodyguards and official government transport (which other male officials were allowed), despite receiving death threats to her home (Coleman 2010, 174-175). Amajan was not taken seriously as a politician, and neither were her concerns over the death threats taken seriously by the Afghan government.

In Afghanistan, women are beginning to be taken more seriously, and answers in the Survey of the Afghan people reflect this. The Asia Foundation states (Shawe 2013, 106),

> "An overwhelming majority of Afghans (90%) agree with the idea that everyone should have equal rights under the law, regardless of their gender, including 59% who strongly agree. However, a higher proportion of women (66%) than men (53%) express strong support for equal rights under the law.

There is also a notable urban-rural split on this question: while 71% of urban respondents strongly agree, only 56% of rural respondents strongly agree that women and men should have equal rights under the law. (Shawe 2013, 106)."

Measuring changes in attitudes over time is very important. This allows the study to accurately gauge whether or not development has been effective in Afghanistan. One must compare data from 2006 to 2013 to determine if and what changes in societal norms and attitudes have come about. This data is complemented by examining the approaches of the UN and USAID development organizations in Afghanistan and will allow the study to provide more substantive results. By examining the Asia Foundation survey, one should be able to at least identify what development program features best work to elevate that status of women and whether or not embracing the Islamic framework is a critical factor.

The Asia Foundation Survey Results

It is important to first gauge the current attitudes and situation for women in Afghanistan. Nationally, over 57% of Afghans feel the country is moving in the right direction (note figure 1); this has only grown since 2006, indicating a shared optimism of the Afghan people. According to the Asia Foundation 'moving in the right direction means:

"When looking at the different responses to the question on why the country might be moving in the right direction, the top five issues were: Reconstruction (32%); Good security (24%); Improved education system (13%);Opening of schools for girls (13%); and the presence of the Afghan National Army (ANA)/Afghan National Police (ANP) (13%) (Shawe 2013, 18)."

One can also note two large factors indicating 'the right direction' being: improved educational system and opening of school for women. The average Afghan is taking note of changes in their society with regard to education, and with regard to education for women. Additionally, 83% of those polled strongly or somewhat agree that women should have equal access to education.

30

However; only 63% of Afghans feel that women should be able to work outside the home (Afghanistan Survey: Visualizing Afghanistan, 2013).
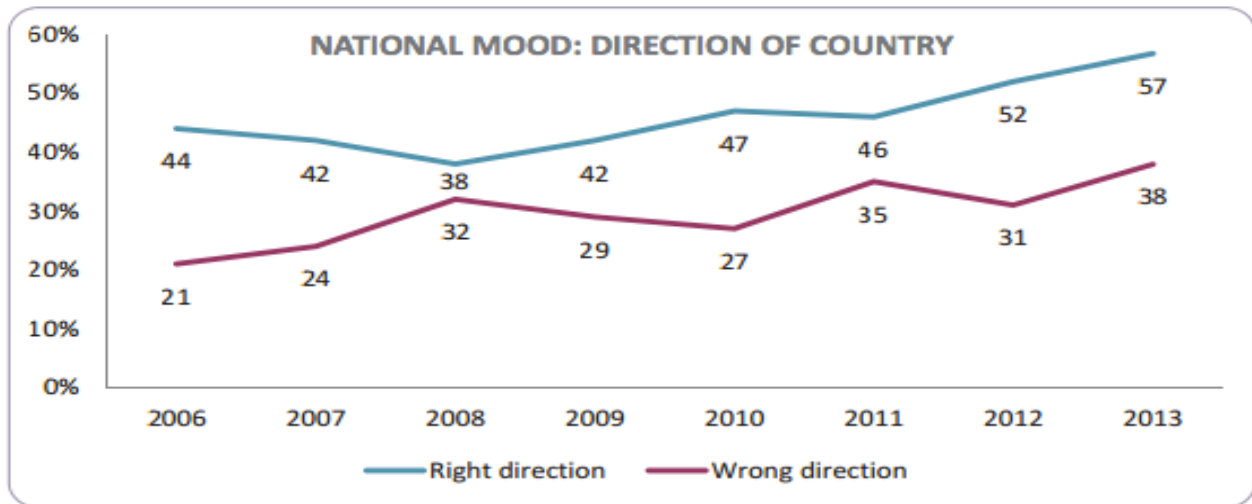

Figure 1: National Mood of Afghanistan 2006-2013, is the country moving in the right direction? (Shawe 2013, 16).

According to the Asia Foundation, nationally, "The biggest problems facing women in Afghanistan, respondents referenced the following top five issues: Education/illiteracy (27%); Lack of job opportunities for women (12%); Lack of women's rights (10%); Forced marriages/dowry payments (9%); and Domestic violence (8%)," (Shawe, 2013, 25). When broken down to a regional level, access to education is considered a more pressing issue in non-Pashtun regions. The survey highlights:

> "Across the country, illiteracy and the lack of education is identified as the biggest problem facing women in all regions, with the highest proportions recorded in the Central/Hazarajat (30%), North West (27%), and Central/Kabul and East regions (both 24%). Issues of illiteracy and education were mentioned least frequently in the South West (17%) region.
>
> The lack of job opportunities for women was particularly prominent in the North West (23%) and North East (21%), followed by the Central/Kabul (15%), Central/Hazarajat (14%), and West (11%) regions," (Shawe, 2013, 25-26).
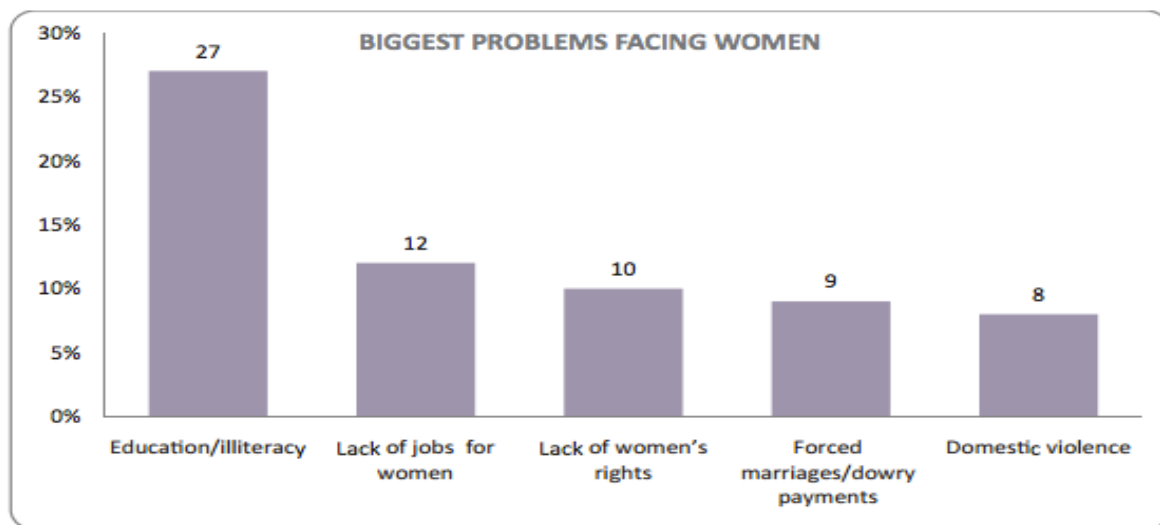
BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING WOMEN

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Education/illiteracy	24	29	28	30	31	25	29	27
Lack of rights/women's rights	18	13	13	11	7	15	10	10
Lack of job opportunities for women	0	9	11	13	15	2	14	12
Domestic violence	5	7	6	5	7	9	8	8
Forced marriages/ dowry	7	7	5	4	5	8	6	9
General healthcare	9	5	5	6	3	8	5	4
Poverty	2	5	6	5	2	8	4	3
Can't leave home	9	5	5	4	3	6	2	1
Under control of men/ men have power	9	3	1	1	2	6	2	2
Pregnancy-related healthcare	10	4	2	5	5	5	2	3
Don't know	1	3	11	2	13	1	3	4

Figure 2:The biggest problems facing women by percentage, in Afghanistan 2006-20013, (Shawe, 2013, 27).

These survey results highlight the top issues facing women since 2006 in Afghanistan, and it can be seen in figure two that concerns regarding education and literacy have continued to be a priority concern. Lack of job opportunities has also grown consistently, reflecting an idea that jobs and working outside of the home are becoming more important to Afghan women. One can also note a decrease in pregnancy-related healthcare concerns, which enforces the notion that Afghan women as a whole now have better access to health services during pregnancy and birth.

The survey responses also reinforce the notion that in the Pashtun majority regions of the southeast and southwest have been slow to change attitudes regarding women's place in society (as highlight in pg. 31 and below in figure 3). The Pashtun regions are the old Taliban

strongholds areas in Afghanistan; these areas are rural, underdeveloped and subject to more violence and instability than other regions of Afghanistan (BBC, Afghanistan Profile, 2014). The majority of Afghans are Pashtun, and it is critically important to further successful development programs in Pashtun regions to elevate women.

Across the country, illiteracy and the lack of education is identified as the biggest problem facing women in all regions, with the highest proportions recorded in the Central/Hazarajat (30%), North West (27%), and Central/Kabul and East regions (both 24%). Issues of illiteracy and education were mentioned least frequently in the South West (17%) region.

Figure 3: Biggest problems facing women in Afghanistan 2013 (Shawe 2013, 27).

Development projects have not gone unnoticed across Afghanistan; however different regions are more aware of certain types of projects. According to the survey:

> "Nationally, in 2013, the three most recognized categories of development projects were those involving reconstruction or opening of new schools (37% of respondents), building of roads and bridges (36%), and improving the drinking water supply (31%). These are all "hard" project types that have long-term benefits and employ or directly benefit large numbers of people," (Shawe, 2013, 56).

It is obvious that education is being made a priority by development organizations; however, it is also clear that in certain regions of Afghanistan that education of women is of very little concern

to the average Afghan. Over 60% of those surveyed nationally noted that they have received no

formal education. When broken down by gender a greater disparity is revealed "The percentage

of respondents reporting that they have no education rises to 76% for women, compared to only

44% for men. Lack of education is more common among rural respondents (63%) than urban

(48%) respondents," (Shawe, 2013, 64). As noted in the literature review, education for women

is the best foundation on which to increase all other development goals. With education

increases, the community and a whole is bettered: the health and wealth correlation. The major

issue is how to implement programs that will be embraced by the local culture. Education for

women is not seen as a priority in many areas of Afghanistan; and it is vital to make women and

their status in society a vital priority to have positive political outcomes in the future. It is

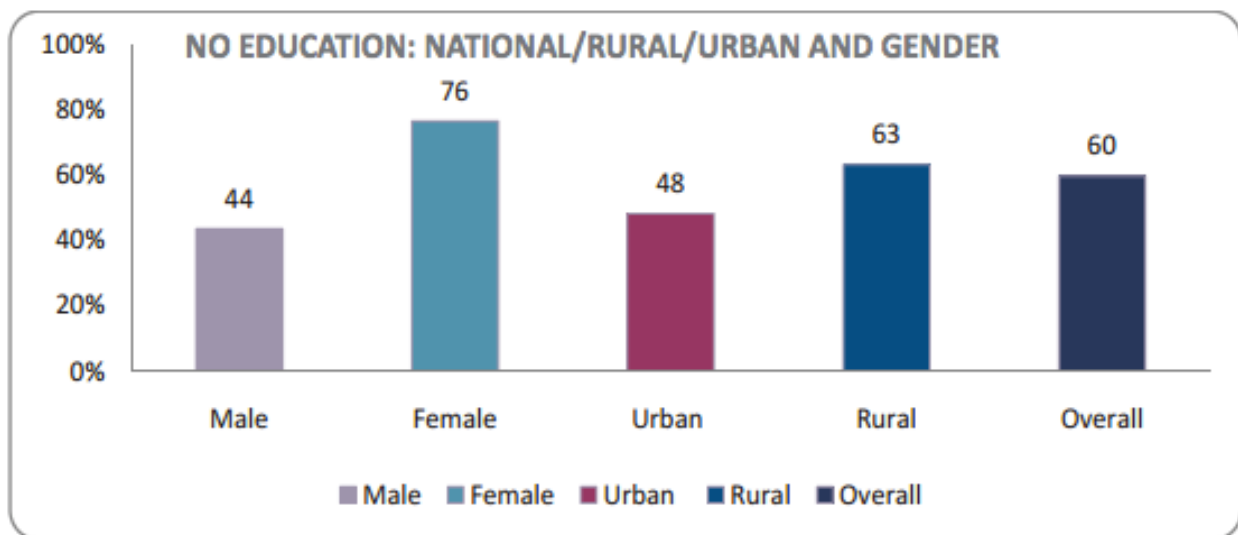therefore necessary to identify what programs features best promote women in society.

Figure 4: Lack of Education: 2013, Urban and Rural Breakdown (Shawe 2013, 64).

One interesting feature found in the survey again points to ethnic and regional differences

with regard to education attainment by women, "Hazara women (28%) were significantly more

likely to have had formal education at any level than women from any other ethnic group.

Hazara (14% of those surveyed) and Tajik (10% of those surveyed) women were most likely to

have high school diplomas, and Uzbek (3%) and Pashtun (5%) women the least likely," (Shawe,

2013, 66). Once again it can be noted that former Taliban stronghold areas have the lowest levels

of education. This repeated pattern reveals that development groups must create programs that

will be embraced by these rural, radicalized areas. Access to education is another important

factor. As shown in figure 5, respondents views have in favor of equal access to education has

declined since 2006 on the national level.

Fig.9.4: Q-81. *Some people say that women should have the same opportunities as men in education. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion?* || 2006–2013

	OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION: EQUAL FOR MEN AND WOMEN							
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Strongly agree	58	56	57	55	50	50	48	43
Agree somewhat	33	33	32	32	37	35	39	40
Disagree somewhat	5	7	6	8	7	9	9	12
Strongly disagree	3	3	3	4	4	5	3	4

Figure 5: Opportunities in Education 2006-2013 (Shawe, 2013, 111).

The Asia Foundation expands upon the survey question and again reveals the urban and rural
disparity:

"Urban residents (91%) are significantly more likely to support equal educational
opportunities for women compared to rural residents (81%). Across the country,
respondents from the West (21%) and South West (15%) regions were most likely to
disagree with gender equality in education, while those in the Central/Hazarajat region
(3%) were least likely to disagree. While Hazaras (88%) appear to be slightly more likely

to be supportive of equal educational opportunities for women, overall there were no notable differences across ethnic groups (Shawe 2013, 112)."

Another important feature highlighted by the survey is the confidence Afghan people place in various institutions and organizations, including the government, NGOs, and religious leaders. With regard to national and international NGOs, in 2011, 56% of Afghans placed "a lot" of confidence in international NGOs, in 2012 the number dropped to 53%, and then to 51% in 2013. Similar patterns can be found with regard to nationals NGOs, in 2011 and 2012 54% responded with "a lot' of confidence in national NGOs, and in 2013, it fell to 51% (Asia Foundation, 2013, 77). Since 2011 however, confidence has remained high in religious leaders, in 2011 and 2012 74% of Afghans reported "a lot" of confidence in religious leaders, in 2013 the number dropped to 66% (Shawe, 2013, 77). While there has been a drop in confidence levels in religious leaders; religious leader have been the highest rated in institution/organization in Afghanistan, compared to NGOs or the Afghan government, since measurement began in 2011 by the Asia foundation. This is a critical factor- Afghan people place more confidence as whole in the importance of Islam as opposed to the government, or NGOs. Noting this, and the information previously outlined regarding the importance of Islam and the family to Afghan people, it is vital that development programs recognize the importance of Islam in daily life of every Afghan.

These survey results begin to lay a solid foundation for analysis. There are several conclusions that can be drawn: the average Afghan is optimistic about the future of Afghanistan and is aware of the progress being made with regarding to opening schools in general, and with the greater access to education for women. Greater access to education is reflected in the

changing concerns of women overtime; the concerns of women are developing with greater

access to education and now the demand for jobs is becoming more important for Afghan

women. Women are also becoming less concerned with being unable to access basic healthcare

services relating to pregnancy; this is most likely a reflection of women having better access to

care, meaning more female, trained healthcare workers are present.

These changing concerns overtime also reflect that some areas are slower to change than

others. The more extreme, Pashtun Taliban areas have been slower to except women's access to

education and right to equal access to education. There is noted backsliding in these areas; and

aid agencies must be aware of this and programs and projects must be tailored to fit these rural

more religiously extreme areas.

The Work of the Afghan Ministry of Education

The work of the ministry of education complements the Asia Foundation data. The reality

of education and the challenges to providing education in Afghanistan are not something its

current government hides. The Ministry of Education report its top challenges openly online,

noting several key obstacles; "Approximately 42%, or five million of the estimated 12 million

school-aged children and youth do not have access to education. Over 5,000 schools are without

usable buildings, boundary walls, safe drinking water or sanitation facilities" (Afghanistan

Ministry of Education, 2014, web.).

The ministry also highlights challenges facing women and girls access to education

noting the staggering facts regarding the enrollment of girls in school; "Long walking distances

to school and lack of safe/proper learning environments are major impediment toward female

participation in schooling; [there are] no female students enrolled in grades 10-12 in 200 of 412 urban and rural districts, and 245 out of 412 urban and rural districts do not have a single qualified female teacher; [lastly] 90% of qualified female teachers are located in the nine major urban centers (Kabul, Herat, Nangrahar, Mazar, Badakhshan, Takhar, Baghlan, Jozjan and Faryab) (Afghanistan Ministry of Education, 2014, web.)." These facts once again highlight the rural and urban disparities facing Afghanistan, and the need for educational programs that are specifically structured to meet Afghan culture.

The statements released by the Afghan Ministry of Education give insight to the previously mentioned attitudes of the role of women in Afghanistan and further enforce the notion that it would be culturally unacceptable to send a young woman to school a mixed gender school, or a school taught by a male teacher. Sadly, it is not the norm to send females to attend school, as mentioned previously, 76% of women in Afghanistan have no formal education; so in order to encourage females to attend school, schools must be culturally acceptable- meaning their teaching methods and structure must fit into an acceptable framework where a woman's honor or reputation would not be damaged; i.e. gender segregated schools, and same gender teachers, and safe access for women travelling to and from school.

CHAPTER FIVE: DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AT WORK

United Nations Development Program

It is important to gauge the Asia Foundation survey results with regard to the work of the two major development organizations at work in Afghanistan. The UN has had several ongoing projects under the scope UN development Program (UNDP) in Afghanistan for over a decade (United Nation Development Program, 2013). The primary goals of the UNDP in Afghanistan are to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2020. The focus of the nine goals are: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; to achieve universal primary education; to promote gender equality and empower women; to reduce child mortality; to improve maternal health; to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; to ensure environmental sustainability; to lastly to develop a global partnership for development; and lastly, to enhance security (The Millennium Development Goals Nine Goals for 2020, 2014).

Despite this consistent presence in Afghanistan, the UN has made only modest progress with its Afghan UNDP with regard to women's education and empowerment. Currently, the outlook for Afghan women is bleak. In its program information, the UN stresses "In a war-torn country such as Afghanistan, providing women with the necessary skills to pursue a career is vitally important. While women often suffer the most in the aftermath of conflict, as they usually lack access to education, stable employment and equal rights, providing jobs for women can quickly lead to an improved quality of life for entire households." (UNDP Gender Equality Project II, 2012).

The challenge of dealing with a post-conflict, underdeveloped nation has driven the UNDP to become creative in developing programs that will be effective in Afghanistan. Since 2009 the UN has partnered with the Afghan Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Women's Affairs to require that local mullahs and community leaders receive training on the topic of women's rights as set out by Islamic law. The UN released a statement noting, "Leaders receive training on the consequences of early marriage, forced marriage and gender-based violence and discuss inheritance issues, including a comparison between what Islamic law says about a woman's right to inheritance and what happens in practice," (In Afghanistan, Mullahs Use Islam to Protect Women and Their Rights, 2014). Since the program's inception, it has grown from 500 mullahs to over 3,500 mullahs in several provinces. The UN also stressed that the program has been successful due to the fact that "Afghanistan's population is almost entirely composed of traditional communities strictly adhering to their local cultures and customs. As a result, people often trust only their religious scholars and mullahs, who are respected as wise and honest community leaders who safeguard society's values," (In Afghanistan, Mullahs Use Islam to Protect Women and Their Rights, 2014). This is a prime example of success driven by working within the Islamic framework, and by utilizing a feminist interpretation of Islam; it is not the only area where the UN seeks to work within Islam to achieve its goals.

The UN incorporates the Islamic framework into nearly every program affecting women. Under the Millennium Development Goals, two main project types affecting women include maternal healthcare and education projects. In a study regarding development in Afghanistan the UN concluded that ". . . gender equality and women's rights will progress further if set within an

Islamic framework," (Religious Inter-school Competition Inspires Young Leaders, 2014). The UNDP in Afghanistan thereforepushes educational projects that promote women within the Islamic framework by actively distributing materials regarding women's rights in Islam and by promoting annual school competitions among 1,500 students to teach women's rights (Religious Inter-school Competition Inspires Young Leaders, 2014).

With regard to healthcare, working within the acceptable cultural framework has helped to lower the level of maternal mortality from 1,900 death per 100,000 in 2007 to 400 deaths per 100,000 in 2013 (Sakine, 110, 2007 and WHO, 2014). This is exponential drop has happened due to several factors including an increase in trained female midwives in Afghanistan. The UN notes, "Midwifery training programs, organized by international agencies, national ministries and the United Nations, are addressing the need in Afghanistan for more skilled maternal care. And Afghanistan has been making important progress in reducing maternal death rates -- showing a 22 percent decline since 2000"(Chiti-Strigelli, 2012). Midwives allow women in remote areas to access basic healthcare, and having trained female midwives in not an affront to Islamic values, whereas seeing a male doctor would be considered inappropriate. The work of the UN is consistent with the data reflecting a decreased concern of women regarding access to pregnancy related healthcare. While one cannot directly link the UN programs causally to this drop in concern, a pattern can be established reflecting the success of these types of programs utilizing female healthcare workers to treat Afghan women.

The program goes beyond the training of female midwives; the promotion and increase of contraception was also successfully implemented under Islamic values in Afghanistan. Doctors from the UN elaborated on the program in a WHO bulletin

> "We updated contraceptive information, used quotations from the Koran (the holy book of Islam) on birth spacing, and educated women and men about correct use and common non-harmful side-effects. Short written guidance for couples on oral and injectable contraceptives was given to all 3,708 families in the project. Each method had a verse from the Koran, approved by the mullahs (religious leaders), advocating two years of breastfeeding/pregnancy spacing. . . Simple instructions for use were included. Non-literate women found family members or neighbors who could read the instructions, and mullahs used the instructions to educate communities" (Huber, 2010, web).

The success of such programs is in large part to the UN working within the framework of Islam. Huber goes on to add "Regular interaction with community leaders, mullahs (religious leaders), clinicians, community health workers and couples led to culturally acceptable innovations. . . The contraceptive prevalence rate increased by 24–27% in 8 months in the project areas," (Huber 2010, web). Without the inclusion of local mullahs and the Koranic backing utilized by the UN, the program would not have been a success.

Scholars and aid workers repeatedly point to the inclusion of Islam as the turning point of a program's success. Even under the Taliban government in the 1990s, UN Habitat manager Samantha Reynolds recalls when approaching a local Mullah at the time:

> "He agreed with . . . all of our goals for his village, except he refused to allow women to participate . . .He quoted the Koran, trying to make a point about women not being allowed out of the house. But we quoted the Koran right back at him. Our workers were all trained in the relevant passages from the Koran and the Hadith to make the case for women's participation. The local Mullah had no choice but to agree with us," (Coleman, 2010, 190).

Similar training for UN workers in other sectors is also available. The UN publishes materials regarding land and inheritance law to help train current UN Habitat workers on the Koranic context and how to best approach local communities (Sait, 2010).

Outside the context of UN programs, working within the Islamic framework has been successful in promoting women's education. In 1989, Sakena Yacoobi, a Shia refugee living in Pakistan, wanted to start a school for young women; she immediately went to the Mullah in the refugee camp for his support. With the support of the Mullah the school grew to accept 15,000 students (boys and girls). Yacoobi stated "The reason I was so successful in getting kids in school was because I respected the local culture; I was very sensitive to the local culture," (Coleman 2010, 169-170). Other scholars note that in promoting women's rights and empowerment in a Muslim society, the use of the Islamic framework broadens the discourse and makes the fight for women's rights more inclusive, and a stronger force for change (Rostami-Povey 2007, 143).

The inclusion of Islam is necessary in the Afghan context. Several examples from UN programs and other similar programs in Afghanistan highlight the success gained from working with the Islamic framework. Islam provides a way for NGOs to connect with the local community and promote programs and empowerment on terms that are acceptable to the local culture. Islam provides legitimacy to the programs in the eyes of the Afghan people. Using an Islamic framework also allows for inclusion of men and religious leader in the discourse of women's empowerment. The Islamic framework does not exclude anyone from the community and it allows the community to be more invested in programs. This community investment will

help programs gain even more legitimacy and will make the programs stronger and more resistant to extremist, oppressive viewpoints. It will be very important that these programs remain strong, relevant, and resistant to outside oppressive forces as troops and funding withdraw from Afghanistan. As noted before, women and Islam are central to all Afghani people; in order for women to be elevated, the Islamic framework is necessary.

When examining USAID programs, the need to work within the Islamic framework becomes more prevalent. USAID has also been successful at promoting women's rights and education in Afghanistan, however many projects have been met with hostility from the Afghan people and Americans. USAID has a distinct approach in its programs, which shies away from working within the Islamic framework; this approach will have negative consequences and slow the progress of elevating women in Afghanistan and will leave programs weaker as troops leave Afghanistan.

USAID in Afghanistan

Since 2002 USAID has provided more than $17 billion in aid to Afghanistan to assist in three main programs goals: firstly, economic growth led by the private sector, secondly, the establishment of a democratic and capable state governed by the rule of law, and lastly the provision basic services for its people (USAID Afghanistan: About Us, 2014). Similarly to the UN, USAID has promoted education, maternal health and women's empowerment. USAID highlights in its website that "The 2013 Survey of the Afghan People by The Asia Foundation found that 72 percent of Afghans are satisfied with the availability of education for children. A strong education system that includes professional teachers and high-quality learning materials

and methodologies is essential to Afghan economic growth, democratic development, and stability," (USAID Afghanistan: About Us, 2014). While from the outset this is appealing, one must note that the same 2013 survey of the Afghan found that 76% of women have no formal education, and that 60% of the total population have had no formal education (as mentioned previously). Afghans may feel satisfied with the current educational situation; however, this is in no means a victory for Afghanistan. The Asia Foundation survey also highlighted that since 2006, access to education and literacy has been the top issue for women in Afghanistan.

To remedy this situation, USAID has worked to rebuild 680 schools, of which 10% are female-only schools. Furthermore, the agency states "USAID's education projects invest in teacher training for women, development and printing of materials and textbooks that portray women in non-traditional ways, as well as basic furnishings to facilitate girls' attendance," (USAID Afghanistan: Gender & Participant Training, 2014). The establishment of 68 female only schools is admirable; however, more all female schools must be established. As highlighted by the Afghan ministry of education previously, the establishment of all female schools with female teachers is critical to maintaining enrollment of young women. It is considered unacceptable to send women to a mixed gender school. USAID does not mention working within an Islamic framework to achieve any development goals. It is obvious that USAID is working with in the cultural framework of providing gender-segregated education; but there is no mention in any materials regarding Afghanistan about sensitive to the Islamic perspective or that USAID works with local Mullahs to promote projects.

On the contrary, USAID makes a point to not promote its work within an Islamic framework. In 2009, then current USAID's legal counsel, Gary Winter, stated

> "The agency [USAID] would never fund any program with a religious purpose. The legal test goes beyond that to [include] endorsement of religion, indoctrination of religions, excessive entanglement with religion. We have to try to accomplish our secular purpose while still not violating these legal principles," (Lynch, 2009).

This limited legal approach has extended to also include a rejection by USAID to translate the Koran and train USAID workers on how to use the Koran to combat extremism in Kyrgyzstan. In 2006, USAID rejected an offer from the University of Montana to work with the university to translate the Koran from Arabic into local Kyrgyzstani dialects to combat extremist Islamic massages and promote moderate messages such as the notion that suicide is against the teaching of the Koran (Lynch, 2009). The rejection of USAID to utilize Koranic training in its work can be alienating to locals, and foster mistrust of USAID.

This outlook creates a further problem in Afghanistan, where many rural sources of education and outreach are concentrated in local mosques (Coleman 2010, xii) and many interactions require knowledge of Islam to gain approval by locals. It also creates a problem where USAID project will lack legitimacy at the local level due to the exclusion of local religious leaders (Mullahs). As previously outlined by the Survey of the Afghan People, religious leaders have consistently been the institution in which Afghans place the most confidence (Shawe 2013, 77). It is vitally important to include religious leaders in the discourse of local aid programs, as they have a voice of legitimacy in society.

In a study produced by USAID contractor, Creative Associate International, the group states:

USAID is politically and perhaps constitutionally constrained in its ability to support Muslim schools: U.S. public funds cannot be seen as flowing to religious schools . . . That said, in many parts of the Islamic world, current U.S. foreign policy is viewed as hostile to Islam. Muslim communities are not seeking support from anyone beyond the Islamic tradition; some Muslim groups supported by Creative projects were reluctant to receive funding that originated from the United States government directly lest they be labeled as representing American interests, (Moulton 2008,43).

USAID does work within an Islamic framework, but in a limited capacity. USAID allows contractors to work with Muslim schools and non-secular organizations; however, the organization has received public outcry when it was found out USAID funds were used to rebuild historic mosques in Iraq (Lynch, 2009). Legal restrictions and public outcry from US citizens hinders the impactful work USAID can accomplish, according to the Washington Post:

Still, some scholars say that restrictions on USAID and other American civilian agencies have undercut the United States' ability to win the hearts and minds of Muslims in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia, where Islam plays a central role in public and private life.

Karin von Hippel, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said military commanders have been given much more freedom to fund Islamic causes -- such as rehabilitation of mosques and assistance for religious schools. She argued that U.S. civilian agencies need to be given the same flexibility. Von Hippel said many officials have simply steered clear of Islamic charities because they do not understand how they function and fear that their careers could be harmed if they inadvertently support an entity that later turns out to be linked to militants, (Lynch 2009).

This flexibility is necessary, especially when working in the Afghan context. As previously stated, Afghan women are a symbol of family honor (Skaine 2007, 5, 73), and it is important that their position is not compromised when it comes to participating development programs. Working within an Islamic framework allows their honor and reputation to remain intact and provides a great acceptance of women's participation in programs. USAID has partnered with community based education programs, which allow more than 105,000 young women to attend more informal schools and avoid travelling unsafe distances alone. USAID is unclear in the

nature of the community based education programs, whether or not the majority are run out of

mosques, homes, or other organizations (USAID Afghanistan: Education, 2014).

USAID's work in the healthcare sector is very similar to the practices of the UN. USAID

has focused training midwives to better serve rural populations and allow for women to be seen

by a female healthcare worker. Over 2,000 midwives have been trained by USAID, and USAID

works to provide local Afghans with access to contraception (Skaine 2007, 106). USAID does

not elaborate on the details of the program; this includes the contraception education, and types

distributed. Unfortunately, without proper education about contraception and family planning

women face great obstacles to successfully obtaining and using contraception (Skaine, 2007,

107). Promoting contraception within an Islamic framework would be beneficial, as it would

alleviate stigma surrounding contraception and its use.

The UN and USAID share similar goals, but differ in practice. USAID faces legal and

political pressure to back away from a non-secular approach in its development projects. Isobel

Coleman (2004) with the Center for Strategic and International studies remarked on the United

State's approach to women in Afghanistan "The United States has advocated women's rights as a

moral imperative or as a way to promote democracy. In so doing, it might have compounded the

difficulty of its task, by irking conservative religious forces,"(Coleman, 2004 web).

Alienating the most trusted institution in Afghanistan can hinder progress for women in,

and make projects much harder to accomplish. It is not surprising that US has publically backed

away from women's projects in Afghanistan recently. In a statement from a senior Whitehouse

official in the Obama administration, the official remarked "Gender issues are going to have to

take a back seat to other priorities. . .There is no way we can be successful if we maintain every special interest and pet project. All those pet rocks in our rucksack were taking us down," (Hudson 2012, 202). This view as women as a pet project, instead of an important building block in political stability will hinder US efforts in Afghanistan.

The current presidential administration must change its views on women as an integral part of creating stability in Afghanistan. The literature has revealed the importance of women's empowerment with regard to positive political outcomes; and secondly it has revealed the importance of working within the broader cultural constructs of a nation when attempting to empower women. Creating development programs geared toward educating women and providing women with access to basic medical care can better succeed when the programs are utilized in an Islamic framework.

Islam provides credibility, inclusion, and community involvement and investment in development programs. This inclusion and community involvement is vital to the success of the programs as US troops and development funds withdraw from Afghanistan. The data in this study suggests that greater legitimacy and community involvement are linked to programs that utilize an Islamic framework; so it is incredibly important that development agencies utilize an Islamic framework in their projects. As mentioned in chapter two, there are caveats to this data; this study does not provide the micro data, such as personal interviews and analysis of individual projects on a regional level, to establish a significant causal connection between utilizing an Islamic framework and more successful development programs for women, it does however establish a pattern of success in utilizing this model.

The data has revealed several examples where utilizing and Islamic framework has created more acceptance of development programs, and greater success in the programs. Utilizing Islamic framework is not only useful in addressing the empowerment of women, but in community development as whole. The case of Sakena Yacoobi, and her school for Afghan refugees is a prime example. Yacoobi approached the local Mullah in the refugee camp and worked with him to establish a school for girls, which grew to become an educational program for boys and girls, reaching 15,000 refugee children (Coleman 2010, 169-170). She credits her success to working with the Mullah and creating a program acceptable to the average Afghan (Coleman 2010, 170).

This example is one of many which reveal the pattern of success in utilizing the Islamic framework. Afghans trust Islam, and utilizing an Islamic framework is the best option to pursue women's empowerment in Afghanistan. Training aid workers in feminist, moderate interpretations of the Koran will allow deeper connections and access to the local Afghan community. This deeper trust and connection will allow aid programs to flourish in the long term and will provide Afghan women with the stability and success that has been lacking for so long in Afghanistan.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

In 2006, UN Secretary General Kofi Anan remarked "The world is starting to grasp that there is no policy more effective in promoting development, health, and education that the empowerment of women and girls. And I would venture that no policy is more important in preventing conflict, or in achieving reconciliation after a conflict has ended," (Hudson 2012, 95). Women are the key to promoting lasting stability on the international scale; the literature has revealed correlations between the empowerment of women and gains in health, education, GDP, and political stability (Hudson 2012, 98). It is important that scholars and policy makers understand the best ways to elevate women in the developing world in order to increase political stability.

This study reveals that utilizing an Islamic framework in designing development programs geared toward women can be important and beneficial. It has revealed patterns of success in utilizing this framework and outlines the important community involvement and ownership that comes with utilizing an Islamic framework.

This thesis has other shortcomings, it lack concise measurements beyond opinion polls over time, and it does not provide empirical findings of whether or not USAID is more or less successful than the UN at elevating women. I am unable to prove my hypothesis without micro data of each UN or USAID project or without similar data regarding Afghan attitudes of each project. It is very difficult to prove what features of a development program change cultural

attitudes; however, this study does highlight patterns of success using the Islamic framework and it highlights the survey data that reveals the importance of Islam in Afghanistan.

This study is able to reveal several personal success stories of utilizing an Islamic framework and cultural sensitivity; and these successes can be correlated with the importance of Islam in Afghanistan. Beyond identifying patterns, I am not able to prove my hypothesis. I would like to study this further; unfortunately I was not able to obtain more in-depth data regarding individual UN or USAID projects. I was also unable to gain interviews with anyone associated with USAID or the UN. Hopefully, I can provide more in depth findings by pursuing this over a longer period of time as a dissertation.

The patterns highlights in this thesis are important, Afghanistan ranks in the bottom ten nations on the UN Human Development Index (Human Development Reports, 2014, web); it brings several challenges including ethnic cleavages, religious-sect cleavages, as well as rural and urban divide. This study has shown that despite the ethnic and geographical challenges facing Afghanistan, there are common cultural features that permeate all Afghan society in the form of Islam. The role of women and Islam are at the center of these common features- and they are the keys to obtaining stability in Afghanistan. It may seem counterintuitive to promote Islam in a country that was torn apart by radical Islam; however it is the gateway to elevating women in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is unique; it has undergone several foreign invasions, coups and occupations- throughout each political event the Islamic identity of the Afghan people has remained. Islam is considered the fabric of Afghan society and in order to achieve real progress

for women in Afghanistan, one must work within the current societal framework (Coleman, 2010, 202). "Cultural whiplash' will create failure, this has happened repeatedly in attempts to 'modernize' Islamic societies (Hudson 2012, 202); two examples of this include laws banning the wearing of a hijab (headscarf) in Turkey and Algeria. Both attempts were met with hostility and many women continued to wear a headscarf as a symbol of political subversion and a fight against secularism (Coleman 2010, xxii). Often times women in these contexts felt that their identity was under attack and will act in a reactive manner to the outside force that is seen as taking away their identity (Rostami-Povey 2007, 130).

Women are used often used as political pawns during times of conflict; they are symbols of the family and society (Kalyvas 2006, 171, 262). Threats to the delicate social standing of women in a society by outsiders can cause outrage. In the past in Afghanistan, the West (and USSR) has been seen as illegitimate; and attempts to 'modernize' and create a more secular society in Afghanistan have created a polarizing force and caused oppression of women to worsen (Rostami-Povey 2007, 132). Noting all of these factors, one must pursue and agenda to elevate women within the Islamic context. Using the rhetoric of Islam is the only way to gain mass support and legitimacy for women (Rostami-Povey, 2007, 134). Working within the Islamic framework will create an acceptable and organic way to subtly change the society. Changes that are embraced and promoted by the community will be lasting as opposed to changed that have been imposed by an 'imperialist or colonial agenda'. Rights and status cannot be imported, the society must embrace these changes or they will fail (Rostami-Povey 2007, 130).

Working within an Islamic framework allows programs to be embraced by local communities and encourages the participants to take ownership of the projects. The program becomes part of the community as opposed to something pushed on the Afghans be outsiders. This grassroots effect unites and mobilizes communities and can be more effective than a 'top-down approach' (Hudson 2012, 208). Additionally, this approach of community involvement and ownership creates programs that will not be attacked (politically or physically) when foreign troops leave Afghanistan. Examples such as mosque-based education centers would protect women from Taliban attacks in high risk areas (Hudson 2012, 207). Involving men is also vital; as mentioned repeatedly, involving local Mullahs provides projects with immediate legitimacy and social acceptance. It is also important to involve Afghan males in projects for women-Koranic teaching must also include the role of men, otherwise projects and programs will flounder (Hudson 2012, 177).

Working within an Islamic framework allows Afghans to 'build upon their roots and opposed to giving up on them' (Hudson 2012, 173). Hudson elaborates further, "This approach validates core concepts of the self-image and at the same time helps individuals transcend misconceptions with newer more equitable way to view women," (Hudson 2012, 173). Stripping away the identity of a group or country and imposing a new, foreign way of life is not beneficial to progress.

Women must be able to establish their own independent identity in Afghanistan and must have access to education in order to do so. Lasting change must be made in Afghanistan; Afghan women have repeatedly undergone cultural pendulum swings, from secular modernism to

extremist ideologies. The only way to counter backlash and create real lasting change for women in the Afghan context is to promote women's rights in the Islamic context. Credible, lasting change via development program for Afghan women must be established through an Islamic framework.

REFERENCES

"Afghanistan Country Profile." *BBC News*. BBC Monitoring, 24 Sept. 2014.
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-12011352 (Web. 18 Oct. 2014).

"Afghanistan Ministry of Education: Where We Are Now." Afghanistan Ministry of Education.
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2014. Web. http://moe.gov.af/en/page/2022 (20 Oct. 2014).

"Afghanistan Society and Norms – Gender Roles: Women." OPERATIONAL CULTURE
AWARENESS TRAINING - AFGHANISTAN. *University of West Florida and Center for
Information Dominance: Center for Language, Regional Expertise and Culture United States
Department of the Navy*, 2010. Web.
http://uwf.edu/atcdev/afghanistan/Society/Lesson3GenderRoles2Women.html (17 Oct. 2014).

"Afghanistan Survey: Visualizing Afghanistan" *The Asia Foundation: Afghanistan.* The Asia
Foundation, 2013. Web. http://afghansurvey.asiafoundation.org/ (20 Oct. 2014).

Asaju, K., & Adagba, S. 2013. "Women's Participation in National Development in Nigeria: The
Imperative of Education" *Journal of Public Administration & Governance*, 3(1), pgs 37-69.

"Poll Says Afghanistan 'most Dangerous' for Women." *BBC News*. BBC, 15 June 2011. Web.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13773274 (24 Oct 2014).

Badran, Margot. 2006. "Islamic feminism revisited". *Al-Ahram Weekly On-Line*, *781*, 9-15.

Bouta, Tsjeard, and Georg Ferks 2002. "Women's Roles in Conflict Prevention, Conflict
Resolution and Post Conflict Reconstruction." *Netherlands Institute of International Relations.
Clingendael*, http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2002/20021102_cru_bouta.pdf (April
2014).

Coleman, Isobel. 2004 "The Payoff From Women's Rights." *Foreign Affairs*. Vol 83. Web.
http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/59896/isobel-coleman/the-payoff-from-womens-rights
(20 Oct 2014).

Coleman, Isobel 2010. *Paradise beneath her feet: how women are transforming the Middle East*.
New York: Random House.

Collier, Paul 2004. "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." *Oxford Economic Papers* 56.4: 563-95.

Cordesman, Anthony 2014. "Afghanistan and the Growing Risks in Transition." *Center for
Strategic and International Studies.* http://csis.org/publication/afghanistan-and-growing-risks-
transition (June 30, 2014).

Chiti Strigelli, Gaia. *"Rewarding the Heroic Work of Midwives in Afghanistan."*UNFPA. United Nations, 20 Jan. 2012. Web. http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/news/pid/9866 (19 Oct. 2014).

Elborgh-Woytek, Katrn, and Monique Newiak 2013 "Women, Work and the Economy: Macroeconomic Gains from Gender Equity." *International Monetary Fund*. N.p., Sept. 2013. https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2013/sdn1310.pdf (July 20,1014).

Enamorado, Ted, Luis -Felipe López-Calva, Carlos Rodríguez-Castelán, and Hernan Winkler 2014. "Income Inequality and Violent Crime: Evidence From Mexico's Drug War." *The World Bank: Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit*. The World Bank, June 2014. http://wwwwds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2014/06/24/000158349_20 140624090206/Rendered/PDF/WPS6935.pdf (20 July 2014).

"Gender Equity Project Afghanistan GEP II" 2014. United Nations Development Programme. United Nations, 30 June 2014. http://open.undp.org/#project/00071928 (20 July 2014).

Girl Rising 2013 Dir. Richard Robbins. *Vulcan Productions*, DVD.

Goldstein, Joshua S. 2001. W*ar and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gordon, April A., and Donald L. Gordon.2012. *Understanding Contemporary Africa*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Press.

Hassan, Riffat. "Women's Rights in Islam: Normative Teachings versus Practice." *Islam and Human Rights: Advancing a U.S. Muslim Dialogue,* The CSIS Press, Washington D.C. 2005. Pgs. 43-66.

Huber, Douglas, Nika Saeedi, and Abul Khalil Samadi. "*Achieving Success with Family Planning in Rural Afghanistan*." UNFPA. World Health Organization, Mar. 2010. Web. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2828781/ (19 Oct. 2014).

Hudson, V. (2012). *Sex and world peace*. New York: Columbia University Press.

"Human Development Reports." International Human Development Indicators. *The United Nations*, n.d. Web 24 July 2014. http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries (24 Oct. 2014).

"In Afghanistan, Mullahs Use Islam to Protect Women and Their Rights." UNDP Afghanistan. *United Nations, n.d.* Web. http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/womenempowerment/successstories/in-afghanistan--mullahs-use-islam-to-protect-women-and-their-rig.html (19 Oct. 2014).

Jaric, Vesna 2014. "It Takes a Community to End Violence Against Women." Web blog post. UNDP Serbia: Our Perspective. *United Nations,* 05 Mar. 2014. http://www.rs.undp.org/content/serbia/en/home/ourperspective/ourperspectivearticles/2014/03/05/it-takes-a-community-to-end-violence-against-women.html (20 July 2014).

"Jewelry Making Brings Hope to Impoverished Women in Herat" 2014UNDP in Afghanistan. *United Nations,n.d*. Web. http://www.af.undp.org/content/afghanistan/en/home/ourwork/womenempowerment/successstories/JewelryMaking/ (20 July 2014).

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink 1998. *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP.

Lynch, Colum. "In Fighting Radical Islam, Tricky Course for U.S. Aid." *Washington Post*. The Washington Post, 30 July 2009. Web. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/29/AR2009072903515_2.html (19 Oct. 2014).

Macdonald, Sharon, Pat Holden, and Shirley Ardener 1988*. Images of Women in Peace and War: Cross-cultural and Historical Perspectives.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin.

Mir-Hosseini, Ziba 2006. "Muslim Women's Quest for Equality: Between Islamic Law and Feminism" *Critical Inquiry*, The University of Chicago Press. Vol 32, Issue No.4 (Summer 2006), pp. 629-645,Web. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/508085 (31 OCT 2014).

"Millennium Development Goals Nine Goals for 2020." *Millennium Development Goals*. United Nations, n.d. Web. http://www.af.undp.org/content/afghanistan/en/home/mdgoverview/ (19 Oct. 2014).

Moulton, Jean. "MADRASAH EDUCATION: What Creative Associates Has Learned." *Creative Associates* n.d Web. http://www.creativeassociatesinternational.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/EMC_Madrasah.pdf (19 Oct. 2014).

"Our Key Challenges." *Islamic Republic of Afghanistan- Ministry of Education*. E-Government of Afghanistan, n.d. Web. http://moe.gov.af/en/page/2020 (18 Oct. 2014).

"Religious Inter-school Competition Inspires Young Leaders." UNDP in Afghanistan. United Nations, n.d. Web. http://www.af.undp.org/content/afghanistan/en/home/ourwork/womenempowerment/successstories/YoungLeaders/ (19 Oct. 2014).

Rostami- Povey, E. (2007). *Afghan Women Identity and Invasion*. New York, New York: Zed Books Distributed in the USA by Palgrave Macmillan

Sait, Siraj, et al 2010. *A Training Course on Land, Property and Housing Rights in the Muslim World*. Nairobi, Kenya: United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Print.

Shawe, Keith, Shahim Amhad Kabuli, Shamim Sarabi, Palwasha Kaka, and Zach Warren. "Afghanistan in 2013: A Survey of the Afghan People." Washington DC: Asia Foundation, 2013. Web. http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/2013AfghanSurvey.pdf (20 Oct. 2014).

Skaine, R. (2008). *Women of Afghanistan in the post-Taliban era : how lives have changed and where they stand today*. Jefferson, N.C: McFarland & Co.

United Nations Development Programme 2013. *UNDP Representation Office in Washington. United Nations, n.d.* http://www.us.undp.org/content/washington/en/home.html (April 2014).

United Nations Millennium Development Goals 2013 .*UN News Center. The UN Department of Public Information,* Sept. 2013. http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_2_fs.pdf (April 2014).

UNDP in Afghanistan: Gender Equality Project II 2012. *UNDP in Afghanistan. United Nations*, http%3A%2F%2Fwww.af.undp.org%2Fcontent%2Fafghanistan%2Fen%2Fhome%2Foperations%2Fprojects%2Fwomens_empowerment%2Fgepii.html (20 July 2014).

"USAID Afghanistan: About Us." *USAID Afghanistan*, 10 Sept. 2014. Web. http://www.usaid.gov/afghanistan/about-us (19 Oct. 2014).

"USAID Afghanistan: Education." *USAID Afghanistan*, 14 Oct. 2014. Web. http://www.usaid.gov/afghanistan/education (19 Oct. 2014)

"USAID Afghanistan: Gender & Participant Training." *USAID Afghanistan*. 19 Oct. 2014. Web. http://www.usaid.gov/afghanistan/gender-participant-training (Web. 19 Oct. 2014).

"What Is Life like for Women in Afghanistan?" *Amnesty Australia*. Amnesty International, March 3, 2014. Web. http://www.amnesty.org.au/afghanwomen/comments/31306/ (1 Nov 2014).

WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, The World Bank, and the United Nations Population Division. *Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2013*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2014. Web http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.MMRT   (19 Oct 2014).

"Women in Afghanistan: The Back Story." *Amnesty International; Women's Rights in Afghanistan*. Amnesty International, n.d. Web. http://www.amnesty.org.uk/womens-rights-afghanistan-history#.VE0sIovF-nc . (26 Oct. 2014).

World Bank (2013). *Opening doors: gender equality and development in the Middle East North Africa*. Washington, DC: World Bank.