

## **Socio-cultural barriers to policewomen in Afghanistan**

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**Abstract :** *The presence of women in the ranks of the security forces is one of the serious needs of society, without the presence of women in the ranks of the police the work of this security institution will be violated. The government is trying to attract women/girls to the police force with its pre-prepared plans. to prepare a series of services for them in advances, such as education, professionalization of women, in the leadership, administration and management, and combat sectors on the battlefield. The process of including women in the police force is also fraught with difficulties, which makes women/girls less interested in joining the police force. These difficulties can include insecurity in the workplace, misogynistic behavior by men, high-security threats, prevailing culture in the society lack of trust in women's work. Women only serve in the security forces in the big cities of the country. In rural areas, the presence of women in the security forces is considered taboo because the presence of women in the police, like in other departments, is out of the ordinary. In the first step, the government must pay the most attention to creating a healthy and safe environment for women.*

**Keywords:** *Police, Women, Society, Afghanistan, Society, and Culture.*

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### **I. Introduction**

Security is a phenomenon that has been one of the basic concerns for human beings since the beginning of human society and is one of the most essential needs of a society, on which the survival and development of any country and society depend. Its necessity in the official sphere, civil and private spheres is seriously felt. Ensuring security can be considered as the most natural and fundamental human right, the issue of security in different countries and cultures presented in industrialized and developed countries, economic security is considered more important and is considered more necessary after job creation, But in the Third World, especially in countries that are constantly under military threat, security is seen as protecting lives and preventing terror and disintegration. Afghanistan is the only country in the world where women have the lowest share in the police force. This problem can be mostly due to the collapse of the social system during the years of war, cultural values and norms, the prevailing traditions in society. In this regard, women in Afghanistan enjoy fewer human and social rights and freedoms. However, in recent years, the presence of women in society has increased and women have been provided with good opportunities to study and play social roles. But; Lack of open social space, insecurity, and homosexual structures of society are among the major challenges that make women less present in social spheres. Afghan women who were deprived of their basic human rights during the Taliban regime and could not work or study; With the formation of the new system under the auspices of the international community, These formal and systematic restrictions on women have been broken and are now gone. Women can be present in society for education and their social, political, and economic activities, and can be educated and included in the police and army forces and the field of politics with men, to play a role in leading society.

### **II. Historical background of the subject**

Without the presence of women in the social, political, and military arenas, we cannot talk about the social, political, and military balance of society. The historical problems of women can only find practical solutions with the widespread presence of women in the world of politics. Legislators and policymakers say women need to realize the need for a broad presence in the political and military arena, and to arm themselves with political and gender thinking to gain their rights. Citizens need the challenge to realize their rights, and in

this challenge women It should be a share and a hole for themselves, and the way to achieve democracy should be walked by men and women together (Yazdani, 2005: 72)

Women make up about half of the Afghan population. Most Afghan women work from home. A small group works outside the home in addition to their homework. One of the most important tasks for women is to participate in security services, especially the police. It is natural for women to cause incidents by dealing with men, whether inside or outside their homes. According to Afghan culture, women police should intervene in cases and events involving women. Therefore, it is necessary to have female police in every district and city.

The prevailing traditions are still troublesome for Afghan women, and women are always struggling with these troubles, we see the presence of women in security institutions from a historical point of view in the ranks of the police. During the reign of Mohammad Zahir Shah, about 8-9 women were included in the police academy and were assigned to work after graduation, but over time, although the security situation in the country was stable and strong, the flow of women to join the police force was very low. There was not much progress during the reign of Daud Khan and the 7th of Saur revolution, Only women doctors were allowed to work in the Ministry of Public Health as necessary after the fall of the Taliban regime and the Bonn Accords, the new government led by Hamid Karzai. In addition to a series of changes in the social and economic sectors, including the participation of women in the police force, the Ministry of Women's Affairs was established for the first time in the government, many women were elected to national councils as members of the Senate and Parliament. The first female police officer in 1967, three years after being given the right to vote, joined the ranks of the Afghan police started working at the provincial level in Bamyan, Afghanistan. Nahid is currently in charge of gender and human rights management, as well as the deputy governor of Bamyan province (Heidari, 2015: 20).

### **III. History of the police in the world and Afghanistan**

The term police have Latin roots and are composed of the two words (PO) and (lis) and express the concept of guardian of the city, order, administration, city sponsor. The organization regulates the ethics of peace and comfort and public health and provides public order and enforces the rules or is in charge of maintaining public order in a society (Amid, 1974: 339).

A government organization established to maintain order and security and to protect the property and lives of individuals, to protect the constitution, to prevent the occurrence of a crime, to detect a crime, to arrest a criminal, and to enforce a sentence. It is usually divided into two general parts: administrative police and judicial police Its broad meaning is any kind of monitoring and intervention that the government makes to maintain public order and the activities of individuals in society. By intervening and supervising the maintenance of order and regulations and their implementation, In this case, all government officials do police work. The limited concept of administrative police is all the measures that are taken to prevent crimes and irregularities and disturbances. The activity of the judicial police refers to cases when an anti-social act, ie a crime, has been committed. In this case, the judicial police try to discover the crime and gather evidence and arrest the criminal. The power and authority of the police are different in each country. The nature of the police as a means of enforcing the law is partly due to the nature of the law enforced by the police. (Aghabakhsh, 2004: 514)

In a democratic society, the police have the role of guarding the guardians of the legal and civil liberties of the people. Without the existence of the police, freedoms in society cannot be guaranteed because the police enforce the law and do not allow opportunists to restrict the legal freedoms of others. And deprive them of their rights. The simplest definition of democracy is the government of the people by the people, and for the people, if we look at this definition, we will see that the participation of the people in democratic systems is necessary. The question is, how is it possible for everyone to be a partner in the system? People's participation in the system is regulated by law, because when I say that every Afghan citizen has the right to participate in the system, this is where he defines the issue of rights, and on the other hand, the police have a primary role in enforcing the law. (Ahrar 2016: 9-12).

The police, in the sense of a police force under the title of protecting the well-being of the people, was first established by the King of France, Charles V, 1337-1380, in that country. This was the appearance of the issue because the military they dealt with the opposition of their king and created political and social problems. In 1829, the British police were formed, which consists of three parts. It was the evolved form of the French police, ie one part was in charge of law enforcement and administration, the second part was in charge of administrative affairs and the third part was in charge of espionage and security issues. and security issues in the late 19th century. The Europeans and Americans had underdeveloped law enforcement and intelligence agencies, which separated the two from each other, becoming the first division officers of their ministries of justice, and forming the second division of their security police. With the general social progress, this branch of administrative-military affairs of countries has gradually completed itself and other countries, including developing countries, have set up various police groups, including security and law enforcement police, to model such an establishment. , Spying and anti-espionage, etc. (Farikhteh, 2006: 232).

The police and the institution of the police have a history of a few thousand years, so after the emergence of human civilizations and the creation of structures in the name of the state, the police simultaneously came into being to ensure the security of cities and the protection of lives and property of the people and with the expansion of the powers of the state and the increase of the population, the police also expanded. The position of the police is also clear in the Islamic legal system; Because the leader of Islam, Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in his time, had appointed one of his companions named Sad Abi Waqqas as the guardian of the city, there have been police in Afghanistan since ancient times and they are named Kotwal, Amin, Amin Al-Mulk, Sarkar, Harakara Bashi, Amir Al-As, Zabat Beigi, and Soobdar. Recently renamed the police, the police became part of the administrative structure of the Afghan security forces during the reign of Ahmad Shah Durrani, and 269 years have passed since then. The first police training ground in this country was established in 1341 in Kabul, and so far many changes have taken place in this field (Humanitarian, 2016: 5-6)

#### **IV. The role of women police in security institutions**

The creation of a safe society and the elimination of all social dangers, as well as the pre-development and progress of the society, is based on the premise that the police have a series of duties and responsibilities to ensure the peace of the society., Not only do men have this responsibility. But the role and presence of women in the political and military process of the country have a great impact on the country's history. The proportion of women in Afghanistan compared to men, if we estimate, is more likely to be under torture, and there is an opportunity for such encouragement and cooperation to contribute to the rebuilding of the country. and work side by side with men in political, social, and military matters. Women should be given the same rights as men and efforts should be made individually and socially to include political activities and become a soldier. Afghanistan has reached political maturity and must decide for itself to make an impact on the political culture of the past and to create changes in its elements. Women have changed and women are being taken seriously and effectively in the political and military arenas. (Humanitarian, 2016: 10).

To ensure peace and justice with a stable role for women that is essential to all sections of society. Women can play an important role in terms of reducing the importance and stability of war from the point of view of an important official for stability of peace, If we look at the recent events in the country, they did not play a role in the conflict. Rather, they have become victims of war, suffering, and torture. Due to their innate nature, women rely on peace and friendship, compassion and humanity, and hate war and torture, That is why women stand by their brothers, not only for the sake of peace, but also for the sake of preventing and detecting drugs, child trafficking, crime, and women's physical efforts. They have played an important and decisive role in ensuring women's security and performing a series of duties, and they will continue to do so in the future, so we can say that the role and participation of women are necessary and important not only in the police but also in other departments, existence of female police officers to provide security for women to try to control police checkpoints, search houses, and entrance gates of government buildings. Female police officers are responsible for overseeing polling stations set up specifically for women, and thus the presence of female police officers in the ranks of the ANP is urgently needed to ensure the security of the presidential election, given the serious

challenges and dangers that threaten the people. It is important that Afghan officials, donors, as well as government and international missions involved in the training and education of Afghan National Security Forces, intensify their efforts to hold Afghan National Police accountable to women who make up half of the population. And increase the role of women police in society. If these efforts fail, the achievements of a decade with many problems will be lost and the path to stability, progress, and confidence in the ANP will be challenged. (Rahimipour, 2003: 25).

## **V. Challenges to the situation of women police**

Afghanistan is the only country in the world where women have the lowest share in the composition of the police force. This problem is mostly due to the collapse of the social system during the war years, the values and traditional culture that prevail in this country. In this regard, women in Afghanistan have fewer human and social rights and freedoms. In recent years, the presence of women in society has increased and women have been provided with good opportunities to have education and social roles, but the lack of social open space, insecurity and unisex structures of the international community, these official restrictions. And the system was broken against women and now it is gone, women can be present in society for their education and social, political and economic activities and to be educated and included in the army police force and the field. Politics with men, to play a role in leading society. In the police force, there is a female-dominated position for civil servants and police officers, but women use less of this vacancy.

One of the reasons is the reluctance of police officers and commanders and the recruitment of female employees. The lack of pressure from the Ministry of Interior and senior police commanders to recruit female employees to bring about reforms in the ministry has slowed the recruitment of female employees in the ministry. Negative treatment of women recruited by the police has always been one of the major challenges. Female police, unlike male police, do not have very basic equipment, tea brewing, office cleaning, and administration. Opportunities for them to grow to seem very limited, leading to inactivity in the female police force. At the same time, some police officers who lack the skills and motivation to serve their community are recruited simply to fill the positions assigned to women. These problems destroy trust in female police officers and worsen the behavior of male police officers towards them. (2010: 38-41).

## **VI. Traditional and cultural challenges**

Studies and research have shown that the habits, customs, values and cultural and religious beliefs promoted in our society have a direct impact on the employment and activity of Afghan women in society. A patriarchal society like Afghanistan believes that only women can involve the house and its affairs and do not allow their wives to work outside the home. While the religion of Islam does not have such an attitude towards the high status of women, many inequalities and prejudices are attributed to religion; whereas the philosophy of the principle of religion merges with social, economic, indigenous, and cultural beliefs and this process deviates from the main intentions.

While the religious leaders, practitioners, and real perpetrators of the rulings of the religion speak of the equality of men and women, there are still those who are not aware of the importance of the role of women and the prejudice and ignorance about the position of women in this country. (Zahedi, 2007: 38 )

The active presence of both men and women without a gender perspective based on meritocracy in power and politics is necessary for sustainable development. Physical, emotional, and behavioral characteristics have never caused any intellectual or administrative differences between men and women. In Islam and a society that has an Islamic culture, neither patriarchy is acceptable, nor feminism, but meritocracy is accepted in a traditional country like Afghanistan, it is clear that the prevailing customs and beliefs in society are inviolable, so the presence of women in security institutions and the sense of identity of other women with these women not only reassures women, but also the family. The prevailing tradition is to have a greater sense of security alongside women in the security sector. (Moblugh, 2005: 13)

## **VII. Social challenges**

There is a significant difference between men and women in terms of having desirable things such as wealth, power, prestige, and information. Just as women have always been the weakest link in the division of the power pyramid in society, and throughout history their share of economic and political power has been zero, so the inequality of social resource empowerment has empowered men to define both male and female roles. Violence against women, with all its controversies, is one of the most common social crimes and the authority of patriarchy. In the view of some, despite the influence of the culture of industrial society and the approach to modernity in Afghanistan, the traditional attitude still prevails in the country. In the traditional system, women do not have an independent identity and individual base. Some believe that limiting communication to extremes is The division of society leads, society is a set of women and men that we cannot divide into the society of men and society of women because it is inevitable and impossible for both sexes. (Zahedi, 2007: 14)

Women, who make up half of our country's population, must play an active role in all aspects of life, including economic, social, and political life, and the observance of equal rights with men is one of the most important Islamic issues. The Role of Women in Social Welfare They believe that the government has played an important role in establishing and maintaining the nuclear bourgeois family and the ideologies that make this form of family normal, they know Her the government means a set of institutions and organizations that are responsible for regulating the affairs of society, ie the administrative apparatus of the government, governorates, courts, police, etc., the government is not just a simple set of institutions but acts with these institutions in society. It controls and authorizes and, if necessary, has the support of law enforcement. Theoretically, the power of the state is unlimited. But in practice, belief in the government's non-interference in civil society and the private sphere limits this power. The discussion in this section is the important role of government in creating and consolidating private/domestic territories and thus the continued subjugation and exploitation of women. Importantly, the duties of women in the domestic sphere limit the role they can play in the public sphere and are thought to have the potential to do so. (Akhgar, 2004: 9)

We must always take into because our society is traditional, we must always take into account the considerations of our society for everything. The presence of women is not possible without the cooperation and participation of the people and without raising the level of political and cultural knowledge of all the people of the country, especially the presence of women in the military and security sector, but due to opposing mindsets in some families could not fill a thousand people in this institution, without the support of politicians, civil society organizations active in the field of women's rights and without changing the unfavorable mentality towards the performance of women's duties in the security forces, the level of women's participation in this force will not increase and social security And the people's psyche will not be provided. The presence of women in the Afghan National Police needs to be highlighted; there is a need to change the mindset in the community that the Afghan security forces need the presence of women for them to solve social problems. There are many factors, but the main reason that the security institution is a pioneer in this area is the social problems and traditional challenges in society, which, unfortunately, over the years, the mentality has not changed and the presence of women in institutions It has diminished security and the military arena. Without the presence of women in the Afghan National Police, we and social and psychological security will not be achieved

## **VIII. Political challenge**

Feminists believe that women are practically involved in political activities in the conventional sense, as we have said, women, women behave very much like men in choice. They are also members of trade unions. Some women are active members of trade unions and political parties. Among the members of local councils, members of parliament, union boards, etc., women are also seen to be politically active, even if some Feminists, on the other hand, have said that women often shy away from politics and that men's control over political organizations removes them from the scene. They also claim that women's political interests and activities are considered insignificant and marginal and hidden from history and that politics and everything that is considered political should be redefined. Feminism itself is a political vision and its theme is the struggle for the emancipation of women. For example, feminists have inevitably rediscovered the political activities of feminists



in the first wave of the women's movement. Other activities of nineteenth-century feminists and their writings have been ignored or, with new interpretations, considered to be personal or moral, while the main argument of feminists has been the slogan "everything is personal." Power is in society, and therefore the power relations between men and women should be in the spotlight. With the general practice of male domination over women, they are often overlooked, but even less attention is paid to male dominance in the domestic realm. (Abbott Pamela, 2004: 255).

The issue of politics in Afghanistan is immature and political parties and political competitions have not yet reached the necessary maturity and the issue of women's political participation in political and social life has been a very difficult issue that depends entirely on the serious and persistent struggles of women. Today, Violence Against the People of Afghanistan Women are forced to endure many times the oppression of men just because they are women. The existence of conscious and awake women in the political and social arenas can increase the imaginary distances that exist in human societies. Eliminate and facilitate the field of understanding and understanding in a better and clearer way, and let them walk the single path of social and political happiness together and side by side with their brothers. When civilization reigns in society and people become urban, women automatically come out of the four walls of the house and take part in all walks of life. This participation naturally draws women into politics, but social relations within the country alone do not seem sufficient for the presence of women, because the world today is like a small village that has influenced the internal political relations of countries. Sovereignty is a very complex issue that countries with strong economies usually have the most influence on, and that is why our politicians make mistakes one by one because it depends on foreign countries. They have not yet found the right answer to it, so in this predicament, women must first fight in the field of politics and culture, and the field of education must be favorable for them, and they must be freed from economic dependence on the people, and later the field of politics will open for them better than men because with all the negative aspects, women have a kind of traditional immunity and a kind of respect that can be realized in a short time. (Sarabi, 2004: 14)

#### **IX. Family restrictions prevent interested women from joining the police force**

Police commanders in Herat province say they cannot hire enough female officers because traditional families do not allow talented and interested women to join the police force.

In an interview with IWPR, many Afghans expressed the general perception that when women work outside the home with men, they may become embroiled in "corruption" - which is more commonly referred to as various forms of sexual misconduct.

Police officers have even been disappointed with the recruitment of women to positions that are entirely for women, such as the efforts of suspected women. Even though public awareness and various campaigns have been launched in this regard, and women have been given the right to work in the light of Islamic law and Afghan civil law, women cannot move against this accepted moral principle in society (<https://iwpr.net>).

#### **X. Women's participation in the peace process, problems, and hopes**

The security crisis and the ongoing war in Afghanistan are something that the international community has not yet been able to implement the peace they are seeking. What marks a turning point is the victimization of women, who must be the victims of this ominous phenomenon.

Recent global research has shown that women are not the cause of violence. Afghan women have suffered the worst violence in history. Most insiders know the root of this violence in war. War is what brings about the most dangerous events and is considered the main cause of misery and violence.

Fawzia Kofi, an activist in the women's supply chain, said the move would further help raise awareness and mobilize women to join the peace convoy. It is impossible to achieve peace and eliminate the phenomenon of war until the causes of war are eradicated and scrutinized, She describes the causes of war as follows: In Afghanistan, there are different types of wars, traditional, local, land-based, water-based, and sometimes war on

women, and internationally, war on interests. Be; But in any case, the main victims are women. In the history of the armed struggle that we have witnessed, the woman has not been a messenger of war.

Meanwhile, war and violence have risen sharply across Afghanistan. According to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, more than a dozen cases of violence against women have been reported across the country this year alone. Violence ranges from self-immolation to suicide, addiction, beatings, exchanges, forced marriages, obstruction of social activities, rape, and more.

## **XI. Conclusion**

The most important factor that can help the security of a community is to build trust and cooperation between the police and the community, when the police are successful in having the community with them and all sections of the community from the university professor to the municipal cleaner have this feeling and to feel responsible that the police are the children of this community, even if it is very small, to provide spiritual assistance so that the police can better ensure the security of the community.

In all countries where there is comprehensive security, the main factor is the trust of the people of that country in the police, which has provided the ground for any cooperation with the police. All Afghans want to live within an effective, accountable, and transparent system with strong law enforcement agencies in which female police officers can also play a role. Since women make up half of our society, it is not enough to have a male police officer alone, and it is not possible that in the absence of a female police officer, he made the efforts of houses or women, or some cases, especially cases of violence resolved against women by policemen. The first female police officer in Afghanistan took office in 1346 AH, three years after the granting of suffrage to Afghan women, but political developments in recent decades in the country have diminished the role of women in the ANP, even after the fall of the regime. Taliban in 1996, women were barred from serving in the ANP.

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