**WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN: ACTIVIST, TALIBAN, AND PUBLIC VIEWS**



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# Introduction

Millions of women, especially those without equal educational experiences, skills, or qualifications, women of specific classes and social groups, have long been doomed to inferior lives in terms of their capacity to grow personally, their choice of employment, their standing as citizens, and their ability to influence leadership and decisions at the national level that have an impact on their local lives (Weiner, 1986). Women are practically prevented from receiving education around the globe, especially in countries with patriarchal and conservative government forms. Afghanistan is one of those countries where women have suffered for decades. Today, women are prevented from educating themselves, or the government has imposed restrictions on their education. This restriction has a substantial negative impact on women's daily activities. It limits their access to public gatherings, travel, study, and other activities. Studies also show that educated women are more likely to have more opportunities, and "better-educated women that do work are more likely to work in non-farm activities" (Anderson, Reynolds, Biscaye, Patwardhan, & Schmidt, 2021, p. 200). Education for women has been cited as an essential factor in the development of feminism by several authors. Women's higher education institutions sprung up simultaneously with the first waves of feminism in the United States (Plutzer, 1993, p. 149). The denial of education for women can have severe consequences for society and individuals (Orfan, 2021). Taliban restrictions on women's education in Afghanistan have led to high illiteracy rates among Afghan women, which has limited their participation in society (Mashwani, 2017). The Taliban's return has raised fears that women's rights, including access to education, will be further diminished (Women, 2022). Despite Taliban efforts to limit women's education, evidence shows that there is opposition among Afghans to this action. This study compares three views on women's access to education: The Taliba, the activists, and the public. When I say the Taliban, I refer to the official Taliban, both male and female activists, and public both male and female. I have collected data from Twitter individually, from every single group, and the data collection took place between December 1, 2022, and March 30, 2023, through an Application Programming Interface (API). This API allows individuals to retrieve up to 3200 maximum rows from a single account (Kitzie & Ghosh, 2016). Every single process is done through machines; there are no human decisions on the data. Using tools from Natural Language Processing and text analysis, I use sentiment analysis to determine whether a piece of text is positive, negative, or neutral based on the information contained within it. I tested my hypotheses through content analysis (Evans & Clark, 2015). The technique is outlined here and consists of a set of methods I created for conducting systematic investigations of texts. Also, the study uses quantitative content analysis to analyze the tweets and test the hypothesis and sentiment analysis to assess the tone of each tweet related to women's education (Evans & Clark, 2015; Kitzie & Ghosh, 2016). Twitter operates as a network in which individuals rapidly disseminate and exchange thoughts; individuals can share their thoughts and feelings openly through the use of various forms of media, including text, photographs, videos, etc. (Karamouzas, Mademlis, & Pitas, 2022, p. 1).

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