

# The Causes Violence against Afghan Women and Recommended Solutions

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**Abstract-** This paper tends to be about violence against women in Afghan society and offers some solutions for making a safe society for women. This paper also analyzes the UNAMA Report on the causes of violence against Afghan women in 2018. It also describes the experiences of an Afghan woman whose nose has been cut off by her husband and is published on The New York Times, and lastly the paper offers solutions that could help make a safer society for women.

**Index Terms-** Afghanistan, violence, solutions, women

## I. INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan, a country which has experienced more than 30 years of war, is not safe for women. Every individual suffers from the outcomes of war, specifically economic problems, poverty, unemployment, mental health problems, violence, loss, literacy and education related problems. However, women face peculiar challenges within the violent context of Afghanistan.

In Afghan Society, women lived completely in prohibition. They have kept silence against injustice while this silence explained some painful facts that could not be hidden. Although, in Article 22 Afghan Constitution it was approved that: "Any kinds of discrimination and privilege among the Afghan citizens is prohibited." "Afghan citizens both men and women have equal rights and duties in front of law."

A 2018 report from the United Nations Human Rights office in Afghanistan says that armed conflict has killed and wounded women and girls (350 deaths and 802 injured), and it represents a six percent decrease from 2017 (The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, 2019).

Domestic violence is another core problem within this country. WHO, World Health Organization, claims that approximately 90% of Afghan women have experience of at least one kind of domestic violence. Another form of violence is sexual harassment. Sexual harassment and especially in workplace is getting common her. Even the women police force is not safe from this phenomenon. To address sexual harassment against women in the police force and the workplace, the Ministry of the Interior worked on finalizing its internal complaints procedure, thereby implementing the decision made in July 2016 to establish such a mechanism, which, pursuant to the presidential order issued in 21 November 2016 instructing all security sector agencies to improve workplace safety for women. According to the report of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission released on 25 November 2017, entitled "Situation of Women Employed in

Defense and Security Sectors", of 579 female respondents in the police force, 20 per cent claimed that they had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace.

## II. SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The 2018 report from the United Nations Human Rights office in Afghanistan that I mentioned in the former part details as follow:

### Leading Causes of Women Casualties:

**Ground Engagements (50 per cent):** 576 women casualties (132 deaths and 444 injured)

**Suicide and Complex Attacks (16 per cent):** 185 women casualties (52 deaths and 133 injured) **Aerial Operations (13 per cent):** 156 women casualties (84 deaths and 72 injured)

**IEDs (non-suicide) (12 per cent):** 137 women casualties (43 deaths and 94 injured)

The aims of the larger research study were as follows:

- (1) To identify the traumatic and violent life events in the personal life of the women in Afghanistan
- (2) To identify the stressful and harmful events in the workplace of Afghan women.
- (3) To recommend some solutions for the mentioned problems

Based on above data, I can classify, cases of violence against women into five categories:

1. Physical violence
2. Sexual violence
3. Verbal and psychological violence
4. Economic violence
5. Other forms of violence

To give this research a very clear image, I have an example of severe cruel action applied on an Afghan woman, Reza Gul.

## III. REZA GUL'S STORY

In a news published by New York Times on Jan. 19, 2016, introduces Reza Gul whose nose is cut off by his husband in Faryab Province of Afghanistan. Reza Gul, 20 as of 2016, was attacked by her husband with a knife on in Shar-Shar, a village in an underdeveloped and Taliban-controlled part of Faryab

Province. During the six years Reza Gul and her husband, Muhammad Khan, 25 as of 2016, have been married, he and members of Muhammad Khan's family have regularly abused her, beating her and tying her in chains, explained Reza Gul's mother, Zarghona.

Mr. Khan regularly went to Iran for work, returned for a few months during which he abused his wife; then left Reza Gul with his family, Zarghona said. Zarghona said, "This infidel cut off my daughter's nose," "If I catch him, I'll tear him to pieces." The attack happened on Sunday afternoon, Zarghona claimed. The husband and wife got into a rage quarrel over Muhammad Khan having engaged with his uncle's 6- or 7-year-old daughter, with the intention of making her his second wife this year. In process of heat argument, Mr. Khan uncontrollably got angry, took a knife and cut off his wife's nose, explained Zarghona.

Post attack, the husband and one of his brothers placed Reza Gul on the motorcycle to take her away and finish her life, Zarghona said. Luckily, the event got attention of the village, led to a protest, and Mr. Khan fled for his life. Her mother went to the Taliban and asked them for assistance on the issue. 'Is this the Islam we are following? My daughter's nose chopped off? But you are doing nothing about it. I want justice.' Said Zarghona to Taliban. Reza Gul is currently hospitalized in northern Afghanistan and chances are there that she will be sent to Turkey for treatment.

#### IV. RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

- Increasing public awareness of the rights and social privileges of citizens. In particular, the legal status of women in the family and society by developing and implementing programs and extensive continuous education by the Ministry of Education, Higher Education, Hajj and Religious Affairs, Justice, Women's Affairs and other ministries.
- Creating job opportunities and income generation works for women to ensure financial independence and eliminate severe financial dependency of women to men.
- Creating administrative opportunities for women in the high levels of public and private agencies and institutions and involving them in decision making, macroeconomic national policy in order to ensure the permanent guarantees for the protection of women's role in public life.
- Creating effective strategies to combat superstitious traditions harming women's human rights, contributing continuation of patriarchal culture.
- Assuring appropriate, committed and expert capacities in the judicial system to eliminate the culture of impunity, and serious fight against those who continue to support impunity.
- Increasing of special attorney offices to fight violence against women, and increasing of the staff of these offices in all provinces, and making registration of marriage and the use of marriage contracts compulsory in the country.

- Ratification of the Law on Elimination of Violence Against Women and the practical implementation of this Law.
- Modifying and revising of some of the provisions of the laws that are in conflict with the values of human rights especially women's rights.
- Criminalization of some examples of violence such as rape and honor killings in the laws specifically in the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women and criminal law.
- Increasing Police's and security forces' awareness and knowledge of human rights standards to promote a spirit of responsibility and respect for human rights.
- Ratification and signing of the Palermo Protocol on human trafficking, to fight human trafficking especially trafficking of women and sexual exploitation of women.
- Creating facilities for women's access to justice and judicial authorities at central and provincial levels to enhance the enjoyment of legal protection of women victims of violence.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Reza Gul's case is just an example of violence that is experienced by women in this country and around the world. It is painful that Reza Gul and many other women experience violence from their own family members, whether that be their fathers, brothers, husbands, brother-in-law's or any other men in their family and from their society and colleagues. However, Reza Gul's story also highlights that during the decades of war and insecurity, women tolerated these challenges for the good name of the family, for the future of their children and for their hope and strong religious beliefs.

It is obligation of every citizen to raise his/her voice against this evil phenomenon. Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, said "We must unite. Violence against women cannot be tolerated, in any form, in any context, in any circumstance, by any political leader or by any government."

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#### Conflicts of interest

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