Inclusivity in the Classroom: An Exploration of Education Development in Afghanistan

Isabella Shahnaz Solheim

Master of Science in International Relations

Norwegian University
of Life Sciences

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Declaration

I, Isabella Shahnaz Solheim declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature ....

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Through the examination of Afghanistan's fragility and insecurity, discriminations of gender, disabilities and language and the interventions of the international community throughout the last forty years, the research in this thesis attempts to understand the underlying phenomena behind exclusivity in Education systems in Afghanistan. It will aim to answer the main research question of **identifying opportunities and challenges in recent educational development for improving the education sector in Afghanistan.** The methodology of this qualitative study utilized data from interviews conducted by the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (which included interviews with children, *Shuras*, ministry officials and educators) and produced her own interviews with three employees of the NGO. It also explored preceding literature surrounding state & peace building ideals, inclusivity, historical context & International Relations theories. This allowed a well-rounded understanding of the issues and experiences of individuals in the Afghan education sector. By analyzing educational development through a theoretical framework of constructivism, post-structuralism, feminism and globalism the researcher found two significant components. First, internal insecurity in a politically and socially unstable state greatly affects educational institutions and developments. Creating safer learning spaces is paramount to combating the lack of inclusivity in the state's education sector. Second, effective management and training of education professionals is significant in ameliorating education development. It also allows for such ideals of security and inclusivity to be operationalized through these social institutions at an earlier cognitive stage for children. Similar to other studies, this report found that the goals for most educational development processes are rooted in the Marxist "human capital" approach. It also studies however, Gramsci's more humanist perspective of the human capital approach by embedding its philosophical paradigm of social cohesion and change. This was evident as the Afghan Ministry of Education aims to develop the education sector in order to promote sustainable "socioeconomic development and social cohesion" in Afghanistan.
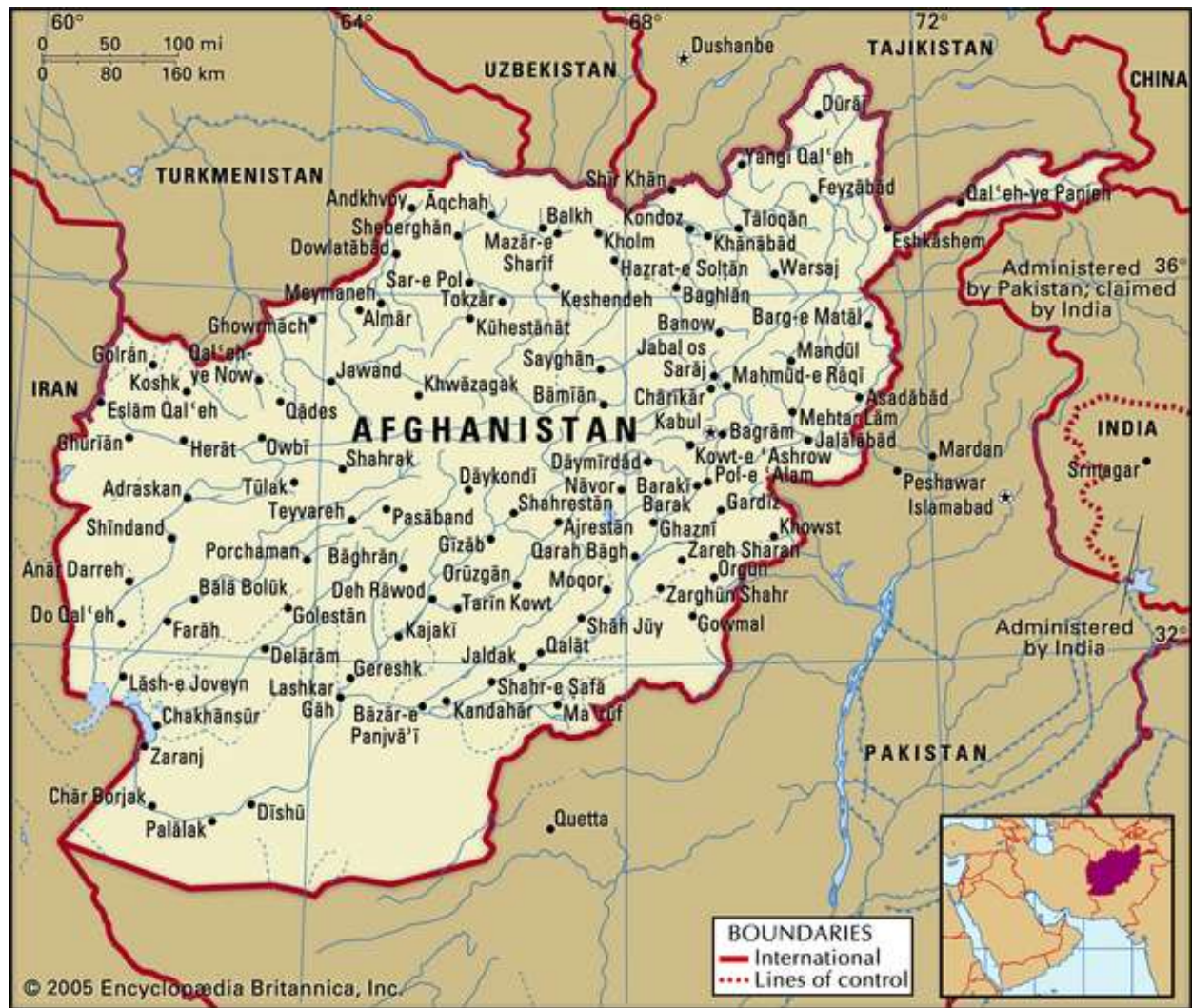
List of key words: education development, governance, teacher training, security, capacity building, international community, Islam, education, fragility and conflict, inclusivity, inequality, sustainable development goals, peacebuilding, state-building, socioeconomics

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List of Abbreviations

DACAAR Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
DFID UK Department for International Development
EFA Education for All
EU European Union
FCAS Fragile & Conflict Affected States
GBV Gender Based violence
GDP Gross Domestic Product
GII Gender Inequality Index
HRW Human Rights Watch
IIEP International Institute for Educational Planning
INEE Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IRC International Rescue Committee
ISAF International Security Armed Forces
MDG Millennium Development Goals
MOE Ministry of Education
MOHE Ministry of Higher Education
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization
CBE Community Based Education
CBS Community Based School
NAC Norwegian Afghanistan Committee
NESP National Education Strategic Plan 2017-2021

NGO Non-Governmental Organization
NRC Norwegian Refugee Council
OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RAWA Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan
SCA Swedish Committee for Afghanistan
SDG Sustainable Development Goal
UN United Nations
UNAMA United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF United Nation Children Fund
UNOCD United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
U.S United States
USAID United States Agency for International Development
USAF United States Air Force
WASH Water, Sanitation & Hygiene
WB World Bank
WHO World Health Organization

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Educational development in fragile states has been an increasingly important subject matter within the field of humanitarianism and international relations in the last few decades. Many NGOs that have worked towards improving education in fragile states discuss how undervalued this paradigm is in their strategies. In any state, mechanisms such as: professional development for teachers, inclusivity in education and rehabilitation or construction of schools are essential for developing education. This thesis will aim to discover and analyze the different components needed to develop the education sector in Afghanistan. Although focused on education, the study will touch upon other interconnected themes that will be justified with a broader approach. Amongst the broader issues discussed: access to education, fragility and violence in a state, globalization, gender-based discrimination and the rural-urban divide.

Education has always been a manner in which knowledge, skills and values are transferred between generations throughout history (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007). Humans have utilized education (even before formal education existed) to propagate ideals, cultures and manners to live cohesively in their versions of society and civilizations (ibid.). When Afghanistan was introduced to Islam in the seventh century, a framework for education appeared that would keep to Islamic teachings and create a platform for other methods of teaching to be implemented in the future. However, it is only in the last century that any other type of education (e.g Western-type education systems) were welcomed into the country (ibid.).

Discussed in further detail, Western Education was not brought in by colonial powers (as most colonized states had experienced). Specifically, Afghanistan was never colonized by neither the British nor French. It incorporated such western educational stylings (school semesters, grading frameworks, examinations etc...) in the early 20ᵗʰ century when King Amanullah returned from his travels to the west and engendered 'modernization' to existing schools (Matsumoto, 2008). If Afghanistan had been colonized, like many Muslim countries were, schooling would have been taught with a contour based in Christianity or secularity, thus distinctly splitting the two education systems. Differing from their colonized counterparts, Islam was always incorporated and included as a subject in centralized Afghan education systems (ibid.).

Islamic Education disseminates teachings of Islam, but also consists of many subjects including literature, history and even the Arabic language. In Islamic Education there are

madrasas[1] and *Qur'an* schools[2]. When translated from Arabic, *madrasas* are any type of educational institutions, whether sponsored by the state, private, religious or secular (Blanchard, 2005). However, in the West the word is predominantly used to describe institutions that propagate the religious teachings of Islam. That is to say, Islamic subjects such as "the *Qur'an*, the sayings (*hadith*) of the Prophet Muhammad, jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and law" are taught in *madrasas* (Blanchard, 2005). As illustrated, the definition changes depending on geographical, political or cultural context. For this thesis, unless expressed differently, the term will be that of primary and secondary Islamic schooling. It is significant to note that the Afghan *taliban*[3] were almost always exclusively men and boys. Most governmental education systems in Afghanistan are community-led which means a School *Shura* (Council) is appointed to 'manage' the *madrasas*, as well as general schooling (Ministry of Education[4], 2020).

According to the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Afghanistan, their aim is to develop education systems that uphold:

> … Islamic principles and respect for human rights by providing equitable
> access to quality education for all, to enable them to actively participate in
> sustainable development, economic growth, stability and security of Afghanistan
> (Ministry of Education, 2020).

However, there are many challenges in developing education that need to be managed according to the MoE. These challenges and limitations lie within the high numbers of children that are out of school (education gap), disparities between genders, the divisive nature of the urban and rural communities and the inadequate quality of education. As aforementioned, accessibility to education is a major issue in Afghanistan. The MoE discusses some of its chief concerns in detail. Firstly, over 40% of the population of appropriate school age do not have access to education in the country. Secondly, many thousands of schools are in unsafely constructed buildings and without proper sanitation facilities or drinking water (WASH facilities). Third, lack of safety and security for students impedes them from participating and enrolling in school. Fourth, female students in 200 out of 412 urban and rural districts do not

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[1] 'Madrasa': school for Islamic Education
[2] 'Qur'an school': where students memorize the Qur'an
[3] '*taliban*': literal translation is 'students' in *madrasas* (singular: talib*). This is differing from the Islamic fundamentalist political movement/organization. In the paper, when the word is in majuscule (Taliban) it will mean the fundamentalist group and when it is in minuscule (taliban) it will refer to the literal meaning (students).*
[4] https://moe.gov.af/en

attend school in grades 10-12. Further, almost 60% of urban and rural districts do not have any female teachers facilitating education (MoE, 2020). As reported by the MoE, education quality needs to be severely improved. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) describes good quality education (in conflict-prone zones) as a means to provide "protection, a sense of normality, a way of healing trauma, and hope for the future" (NRC, 2020). In the Afghan education sector, 70% of teachers do not have the minimum required qualification to teach. Teaching materials are finite and are not distributed evenly or quickly enough throughout the districts. There is also a distinct lack of vocational and technical study for general education in both western and Islamic schooling. From professional teachers to safe and inclusive learning environments, these are areas of concern for both "the government and its development partners" (MoE, 2020).

Pursuant to improving development projects, the Ministry of Education states that "decades of war, civil unrest, internal conflicts and political instability" have greatly hindered basic "social service delivery" (ibid.). They have particularly delineated the vulnerability of the education sector as it is the most susceptible sector to "insecurity, violence and discontinuity" (ibid.). The National Education Strategic Plan (NESP, 2016) published by the MoE, aims to develop education and address the above-mentioned challenges to ensure better education for all. Some of these targets include increasing enrollment of girls and boys, boosting teacher training (making sure they pass the national competency tests) and "equitably increase the number of students in Islamic schools", as well as increasing female participation in Islamic schooling (ibid.). For the year 2020, the MoE intends for all school-aged girls and boys to at least complete primary school and have a minimum of 14 million students (6.5 million girls) enrolled in school. Further, they would like female teachers in Islamic schools to reach at least 50%. They hope the literacy number will reach at least 8 million in the population for the year, as "one million new literates (60% female) will be produced" (NESP, 2016). They also aim to improve regional and gendered disparities by significantly lowering their rates. The issues that arise when discussing education in Afghanistan are compacted into five major challenges: weak will and capacity of governance and civil society; economic disparities; insecurity in the state; imbalanced participation and accessibility to education, (exclusion of women and girls); and a distinct divide between urban and rural provinces and districts.

This thesis works in tandem with the Norwegian Afghanistan committee (NAC). The NAC works towards cultivating some, if not all of these objectives throughout Afghanistan (NAC, 2020). The NAC brings in a nuanced understanding of the education situation in Afghanistan as they have established themselves in the country for over 40 years. They state that education is significant in improving the lives of countless children and adults (ibid.).

Objectives

This leads to the objectives of this research paper. The overall aim of this thesis is to understand how social inequalities and fragility of the state have led to an underdeveloped education sector in Afghanistan. It also aims to analyze why some of these inequalities have encouraged exclusivity, whether for female students or students from differing ethnic, linguistic or tribal backgrounds. Afghanistan is an interesting state to analyze as their institutions, governance, economy and security have been systemically disrupted for the past four decades. As it has been through many different types of invasion and conflict, the research can use comparable data from the last forty years to discern patterns that emerge in educational (under)developments. However, it understands the limitation of said data, as such invasions and conflicts can mean the data procured could be unreliable or sometimes unattainable.

The research will be investigating interviews that were conducted by a consulting firm, ATR. The firm was hired by the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) as a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) directive. The study will also include interviews of NAC employees led by the researcher herself. The interviews the researcher will conduct will add an individual and subjective dimension to the thesis that will explore details from personal experiences to opinions on education reform. The specificity of these interviews will allow a deeper analysis of the individual's private experiences and will allow the researcher to understand the situation at a profound level. The interviews from the NAC will act as complementing data for the findings and analysis of this thesis. The thesis will determine patterns found in the interviews and match them with the past and present frameworks of the theories presented. The thesis will touch upon models of modernism; religious, tribal and ethnic conflict; gender; documented historical observations; International Relations theories; and international interventionism.

From the research attained, three **overarching themes** have been discovered: fragility of the state; improving educational development and policy; and social fragmentation and inequality. The chapters in the literature review will set the premise for the entire paper. It will cover everything from historical facts; weaponization of education to subdue a population; modernist and traditional clashes; challenges and opportunities in educational development; and inclusive education. As will be noted in the historical portion in this thesis, development in education can occasionally have a negative domino effect that can be detrimental to the state. It can lead to the collapse of ideals for sustainable progress, as actors with strongholds in the community can develop systems that damage societal infrastructure. Or more simply put, developments such as these can be equally destructive as constructive.

Analysis

The theoretical and conceptual framework for the thesis will focus on four different International Relations (IR) theories to conceptualize the research questions. These will include, constructivism, post-structuralism, feminism & gender, and globalization. This thesis will illustrate the linkage between social interactions and collective ideals and how "material forces" such as education may be part of how those identities are established. By applying the IR theories of constructivism and post-structuralism onto the subject, the thesis will examine the use of language observed in the interviews conducted, as well as the general rhetoric, to understand how social reality is constructed in Afghanistan.

Improving education development is an important paradigm to explore. The designs of such developments in education however, must supersede antiquated ideologies (those instated by the *Mujahideen* or Taliban) and challenge traditional norms in a positive way in order for the society to thrive. As will be seen throughout the paper, mistakes in such developments can have dire consequences of conflict and violence.

As aforementioned, the analysis of educational development processes will be highlighted by primary and secondary data research (interviews and literature available on the subject, respectively). Some history will be necessary as it will be used to explain and underline the overarching issues and assumptions already produced in the literature. The thesis will emphasize how educational strategies and policies changed alongside the different ideologies and periods of conflict. However, in order to not overwhelm the research, the historical review will not go further back than the Soviet invasion in 1979 (if necessary, some exceptions will be made). This is a significant date as it placed Afghanistan in the midst of cold war politics. The periodized and historical research will then be based on Soviet governance, the Mujahideen, the 'rise and fall' of the Taliban and the U.S invasion since 2001- until the present year, 2020.

For the better part of a decade, the Taliban's ideologies severely hindered educational development in Afghanistan. Women and girls were especially affected by this regime. The exclusivity of women and girls in education systems further meant that Afghanistan remained in a state of fragility (which will be further discussed in Part II of the Literature Review). Illustrating the differences from the early 1980s to the more recent 2018-20 will prove extremely relevant to this thesis. Through the information gathered from the analysis of the findings, the research aims to provide an overarching understanding of how one can ameliorate horizontal inequalities and socioeconomics by improving education, human rights and social cohesion. It will also attempt to demonstrate how these elements will improve post-conflict reconstruction and how they become a cycle that progressively improve together.

Research Questions

The study aims to answer three research questions (RQs) that explore the Afghan education sector and the different stakeholders and actors involved in the process. Firstly, it will begin with a literature review that will respond to some complementing questions about the background to allow a foundational understanding of the subject. The first research question (RQ1) aims to understand the opportunities and challenges that the Afghan education sector are facing. By answering this question, the study aims to comprehend how the state (MoE) handles education development processes and illustrates their priorities and objectives. The thesis will attempt to understand what capacities (in both material resource and will) they have to fulfil their National Education Strategic Plan (NESP). The thesis will also aim to explore how different stakeholders (governments, civil societies, I/NGOs) contribute to education development. It will also dissect what different resources (material, economic or human) are needed in order for education development to thrive. RQ2 is specifically targeted at comprehending how the NAC operationalizes education development on the ground. This question is asked in order to understand how INGOs work towards developing the sector and how the NGO deals with the present challenges. In the Discussion chapter, the thesis will consider how the NGO has adapted to the different ownerships of educational pedagogy (by Soviet forces, Mujahideen, Taliban, and the now centralized sector by the government). The politicization of education is a significant paradigm to consider. This is strongly linked to how internal (government and civil society) and external (international interventionists, other NGOs and the U.S-led coalition) factors affect how the NAC works in the country. It will be noted that these internal and external entities must work in tandem for improvements in the education sector to be possible.

The two main research questions addressed in this master thesis:

1. What are the opportunities and challenges for improving the education sector in Afghanistan?

2. Considering the opportunities and challenges in recent education policies, how does the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee operationalize these issues on the ground? How does NAC contribute to "inclusive education"?

Background questions taken into consideration throughout the research:

1. What effects do 40 years of conflict have on educational development in Afghanistan today? How have these conflicts been ingrained socially, politically and institutionally?
2. How have contemporary educational developments endured in conditions of destruction and regression?
3. What are the key differences between ethnic, linguistic, gendered, tribal and religious minorities? How do they affect educational development in Afghanistan?
4. How do horizontal and vertical inequalities (social, structural, political and institutional) affect Afghanistan's society?

Thesis Structure

The thesis will be organized by the following chapters:

The first chapter has introduced the subject, problem area and established some background on the subject. The second chapter will consist of a thematic background (or Literature Review) that will be split into three parts: *Context, Fragility & Education*. These different parts (and specifically Part I) will focus on understanding Afghanistan as a country using historical literature and contextualizing the state. The second part will explicate *fragility* as Afghanistan is considered a fragile and conflict affected state (FCAS). This section will aim to highlight the reasons for this and how it impedes educational development. The third part of this chapter will illuminate the reader on what education looks like in Afghanistan, its predominant actors, educational development processes, reconstructing and restructuring the sector, and will touch upon overarching ideals of globalization and culture. The fourth chapter of the thesis will explicate the theoretical and conceptual framework used to understand the thesis' content and research data. This chapter will feature brief definitions of constructivism, poststructuralism, feminist and gender theory and globalization. It will also explicate these theories in the context of Afghanistan through previous literature discovered. The fifth chapter will explicate the methodology used to collect and analyze the qualitative primary and secondary data. It will highlight how the research was organized as well as explicate the different analysis methods and theories utilized in the thesis. The sixth chapter will present the data findings and analysis. This section is focused on answering the research questions while connecting the data found to

the literature review. Further, the last two chapters, Discussion and Conclusion, will conclude the thesis by demonstrating the correlation between: collaboration amongst external and internal entities, insecurity, quality education, inclusivity and socioeconomic fragility. The Discussion section will interconnect the theoretical frameworks to the data and attempt to explain why they are important to the field. This section will also discuss the detrimental effects the Coronavirus[5] epidemic[6] or better known as **COVID-19** (SARS-Cov-2) has had on development projects (specifically educational development) in Afghanistan (World Health Organization, 2020; CDC, 2020, ICCT, 2020).

It should be emphasized that this thesis does not aim to generalize the concept of education development in Afghanistan. The scope of the thesis is limited to three provinces (out of 34) in the country and the information gathered from reviewing past literature. The main aim of this thesis is to explore the opportunities and challenges in educational development in an FCAS and further understand how an NGO works towards ameliorating a structural pillar such as education.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Thematic Background

Part one of this chapter will briefly depict Afghanistan's contextual paradigms in order to understand the makeup of the country. This section will serve as basic background for the paper and will briefly explicate: (national and civil) governance; the economy; security; religion; and, ethnolinguistic groups, tribes and religions that make up the population. Part two of this literature review will focus predominantly on conceptualizing fragile and conflict affected states (FCAS). This is significant to understand as fragility affects peacebuilding, state building and societal reconstruction. Fragility's effects on development processes have a direct causality with the gendered, linguistic or ethnic disparities in Afghanistan's education sector. Part three will focus primarily on conceptualizing education development. This section will first provide a historical overview of education and education development in Afghanistan. The rural-urban divide will also be addressed as the research shows how modernist and traditional ideologies have previously clashed amongst the population. Further, it will explicate the different actors involved in developing the sector (Ministry of Education, development partners

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[5] More information on COVID-19: https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1
[6] Epidemic: An illness or health-related event clearly in excess of normal expectancy. More information available: https://www.who.int/hac/about/definitions/en/

and I/NGOs). Third, part III will understand the importance of reconstructing learning environments and showcase different guidelines to ameliorate the sector.

Part I: Context

Geography

Afghanistan is a mountainous, landlocked country populated by roughly 32 million individuals. It is made up a plethora of ethnicities and tribes and is well-known for its conflicts. It is geographically surrounded by Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, China, Iran and Pakistan (UNESCO, 2013). Appendix 2 illustrates a summary of Afghanistan's key neighbors and influences.

Local Governance

Local governance has an important standing in villages and districts across Afghanistan, as these 'elders', councils or members of the Community Development Council (CDC) are all responsible for resolving disputes and guiding decision-making processes in the community (Gant & McCallister, 2010; and Ward, Mansfield, Oldham & Byrd, 2008).

First, the *Jirga* is a conclave of notable village elders that gather to resolve disagreements between members of the community and "make collective decisions about important social issues" (Gant & McCallister, 2010). These members will be made up of "those with "grey beards" … "people with white turbans" or *mullahs*[7]" (Gant & McCallister, 2010, p 2). These are all experts in Islam, but more specifically, they are centers of the social powers within the villages.

Second, the *Shura* are not much different, as will be further discussed in Part III, the *Shura* is the Arabic word for "council" or "consultation" (Gant & McCallister, 2010). This is also an assembly or "administrative body" that are part of large decision-making processes in the village/ district. The *Shura* is an "obligatory" entity in Islam as they are there to provide further guidance through Islamic principles and agendas (Cader, 2017).

Third the Community Development Council (CDC) will be discussed. The CDCs are seen as "key development partners at the village level" (Ward et al., 2008). Actors in development (education, security, infrastructural, etc…) use CDCs as a "point of entry to rural communities" and in 2007, the CDC became a legal entity independent of the national priority

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[7] **Mullah**: "title used to identify a religious functionary, cleric, learned man, or someone with religious education" (OISO, 2020).

programs such as the National Solidarity Programme (NSP). The NSP works strongly with community development projects and "community-based rural development" which is customarily the CDCs responsibility to systematize (Ward et al., 2008). NGOs such as "The World Food programme, UNICEF, MISFA and other institutions" are working towards further and better engagement with CDCs in order to "increase the outreach and effectiveness of their programmes" (Ward et al., 2008, p xiii).

Economy

Although a fast-growing economy, Afghanistan is one of the least developed countries as their gross domestic product (GDP) per capita has been extremely low for the last thirty years (UNESCO, 2013). There is however a steady increase in domestic revenue since the start of the U.S-led invasion (from $130 million in 2002 to approximately $2 billion in 2011) (UNESCO, 2013, p 10). Although the economic performance is rising due to "good harvest", the country's fiscal position was weakening at the time this report was being created in 2013 (World Bank; UNESCO, 2013). Agriculture and mining are both seen as the "largest drivers of [formal] economic growth", however with increased insecurity these situations may deteriorate. Half of the country's GDP is based on their agriculture; however, this is not always sustainable due to unstable weather conditions. The challenge for sustainable growth in the country is difficult to attain as not only do they have a low GDP per capita, their "social indicators are some of the worst in the world" (ibid.). Some of these informal economies are largely based on the opioid production and poppy cultivation. Other issues are rooted in funding of the state. Development activities, human capital and investments in the state are still largely facilitated "through international aid" (ibid.). Furthermore, although some economic growth is detectable more than half of the population is at risk of falling under the poverty line (UNESCO, 2013). Conflict and poverty are the main deterrents and challenges for development to overcome, especially the increase of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan (UNESCO, 2013). Multi-sectoral efforts will be essential to improve conditions in security and governance (Ward et al., 2008).

Security & Insecurity

Afghanistan is a war-ravaged country that has had to face a cycle of destruction and reconstruction over a short period of time. In the last two decades, reconstruction practices are severely hindered through: "centrifugal forces", making Afghanistan difficult to govern (as there is unstable leadership which leads to political insecurity); insurgency (by the Taliban,

DAESH - or the Islamic State, ISIL or ISIS - and other terrorist groups/ fundamentalists); "extreme weakness of modern institutions"; "widespread corruption"; and finally, the "lack of rule of law" (Ward et al., 2008, p iii). Insecurity has been on the rise since 2013, and it is a predominant hinderance in development and state reconstruction efforts (ibid.).

Firstly, one method to lessen and deal with insecurity would be to decrease the "presence of foreigners in the field" (especially "aggressive military" interventionists) and even reducing their presence at "the policy table" (Ward et al., 2008, p xiv). This should be left for Afghans and implemented through them in the fields as well (ibid.). More "integrated development approaches and community partnerships" could be an easier method to establish development and reconstruction with less pushback from the civilian population (ibid.). Exemplifying a diplomat that worked in the field, the international community needs to "create an environment of trust, to support the Afghan army and police as a people's defense force, and to leave development to civilian agencies. If you chase terrorists, you create an unstable environment." (ibid.).

Insurgency

One of the most prominent insurgency groups in Afghanistan is the 'Afghan Islamic militia'- the 'Taliban' (Qureshi, 2020). This group coalesced in 1994 following the departure of Soviet forces during the Afghan civil war (and further, followed in the footsteps of *Mujahideen* forces). At one point, the Taliban had control over 90% of Afghanistan and ruled until 2001. They took over the capital city of Kabul in September 1996 (ibid.). They have been described as "'a product of a society at war' for over twenty years in which 1.5 million people were killed and the country devastated" (Qurashi, 2020). Many of the earlier members were Afghan refugee students and Pakistani nationals coming from "Islamic religious schools in Pakistan" (ibid.). The word itself means "students" in Pashto and is most likely why so many students joined in its early phases of establishment. The group's members were primarily made up of Pashtun people and influenced their ideological prejudice against the country's "non-Pashtun ethnic groups" such as the Hazaras, Uzbeks and Tajiks (Qureshi, 2020). The extremely strict Islamic and patriarchal ideological stances stemmed from the *Pashtunwali*[8] codes of conduct. However, it must be noted that, "it was never a Pashtun tribal movement" (Giustozzi, 2009, p 55). The mainly *Sunni* ideology was initially based on anti-Soviet *jihad* in Afghanistan passed on by their Mujahideen 'counterparts' – as both preach the same language of 'holy war'.

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[8] Pashtunwali: are the Pashtun tribal codes that the ethnic group live by (Qureshi, 2020)

The Taliban has been documented to have committed various human rights violations during their tenure, killing "civilians and noncombatants" and targeting specific ethnic groups (namely *Shia Hazaras*) (Human Rights Watch; Qureshi, 2020). In the late nineties, the Taliban regime was recognized by Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia and the U.S (ibid.). Saudi Arabia even provided funding for the regime through Pakistan. Western support was brief, however, some "U.S diplomats believed that the Taliban would bring peace to a country wracked with internecine violence" (ibid.). The Taliban was mostly Afghan-oriented, through what is most likely "Islamic solidarity", and by sheltering Osama Bin Laden, they unintentionally (this is uncertain) "became part of bin Laden's anti-Western **global** *jihad*" (Giustozzi, 2009, p 56; and Qureshi, 2020).

Since U.S intervention in Afghanistan, the Taliban has experienced a "resurgence" and are slowly being designated the title of an "insurgency" (Qureshi, 2020). The insurgency is present in both Pakistan and Afghanistan (ibid.). The reasons for their successes and why some communities still support them are listed as: systemic corruption in the state; the growing presence of foreign troops (and subsequent deaths of Afghan civilians at the hands of said troops); and finally, the incompetency of the afghan state "to provide materially for its citizens" (ibid.).

Ethnicities, Tribes, Language and Religions

Kieffer (1982) describes 'Afghan' as a citizen of Afghanistan, regardless of ethnicity, tribe or religion. However, it is important to denote the multinational ethnolinguistic groups that populate the country. This kaleidoscopic group of ethnically diverse peoples constitute different languages, religious clusters and tribal affiliations. The population is described as 22% urbanite, while the remaining percentage live in rural areas. It must be noted, that ethnic fractures in Afghanistan is one of the reasons the country has faced such turbulent political structures, social inequalities and most importantly, fragility. The social inequalities and lack of social cohesion will be conceptualized further in a subsequent section in this thesis.

Ethnic Groups

Ethnicity is often considered a controversial subject amongst Afghans, as many will claim that most of the population will identify as 'Afghan' rather than their specific ethnicity. However, there are some that will maintain that ethnicity is an important subject surrounding

conflict the country has faced (Marsden, 2001). Figure 1 is a simple approximation of the geographical location of each ethnolinguistic group (Bellaigue, 2010).

The four largest ethnic groups found in Afghanistan are Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazara and Uzbeks. The Pashtuns make up around 40% of the Afghan population, while Tajiks are the second largest group. A further summary of all the ethnic groups can be seen in Appendix 1.
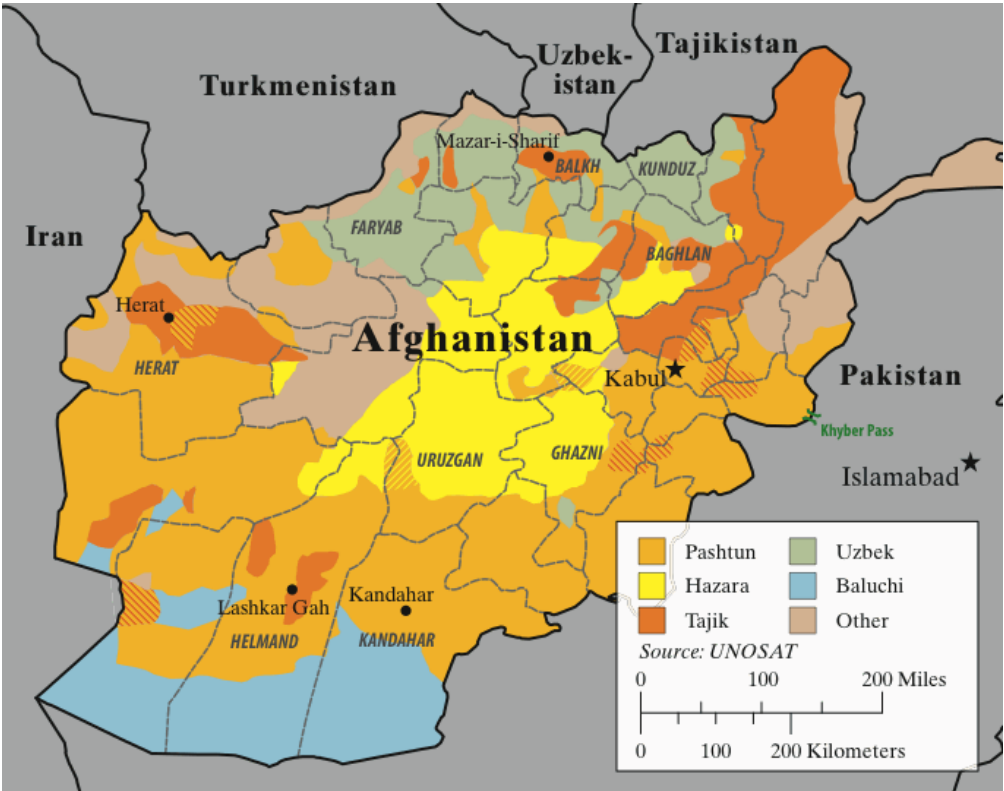
Figure 1: An Approximate Map of Afghanistan's Major Ethnolinguistic Groups

Language

Language is fundamental in understanding cultures within the ethnic groups in Afghanistan. Yet, another way in which the ethnic divide has presented itself, is the distinct discrimination between languages spoken in the country (Marsden, 2001). The multitudes of ethnicities will naturally result in a multilinguistic society. The languages spoken in the country include: 'Persian language' or *Dari* (51%), *Pashto* (41%), *Uzbek* (8%), *Turkmen* (3%), *Urdu* (3%) and *Arabic* (1%) (Hakala, 2012). Due to Bollywood's popular culture, mostly notably in Kabul, there is also a sizeable percentage of people who speak and understand *Hindustani* (Hindi) *(*Krishnamurthy, 2013).

Islam

       The most prominent "cleavages" of Islam are *Sunni* and *Shia*. In Afghanistan, 80% of Afghans practice *Sunni* Islam (within the Hanafi School of Islamic law), while the remainder is a mixture of *Shia* and other strands of Islam. This simplification is to keep the discussion of this chapter focused. The *Sunni/Shia* discord has incited many civil wars across the Middle East throughout the years (e.g Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon) (Hansen et al., 2009). This is also true between terrorist organizations and fundamentalist groups. The mostly *Sunni* Taliban regime targeted and persecuted *Shia* Muslims. The *Sunnis* are divided as well by different schools of jurisprudence. As Afghanistan's *Sunni* Muslims mostly follow Abu Hanfa's school (Hanafism), the three remaining schools of Sharia in Sunni Islam are that of Muhammed al-Shafi, Malik ibn Annas and Ahmad ibn Hanbal (Hansen et al., 2009, p 5). These schools do not directly condemn each other, rather they "accept the legitimacy of their rivals" (Hansen, 2009).

Part II: Fragility

       As aforementioned, Afghanistan is considered a "fragile and conflict affected state" (FCAS) (OECD, 2020). This chapter will examine why states become fragile and how it affects peacebuilding, state building and the reconstruction of society. Fragility is important to consider when discussing education development in Afghanistan as many of the reasons it is in a context of fragility are social factors (these are explored in the Analysis & Findings chapter of this dissertation). These social causes of fragility are listed as: *weak state-society relations, lack of social cohesion, social exclusion, horizontal and vertical inequalities and weak civil society* (Mcloughlin, 2012).

What is a fragile state?
Table 1: The Five Dimensions of Fragility

Dimension	Description
Economic Fragility	Vulnerability to risks stemming from weaknesses in economic foundations and human capital including macroeconomic shocks, unequal growth and high youth unemployment.

Environmental Fragility	Vulnerability to environmental, climatic and health risks that affect citizens' lives and livelihoods. These include exposure to natural disasters, pollution and disease epidemics.
Political Fragility	Vulnerability to risks inherent in political processes, events or decisions; lack of political inclusiveness (including of elites); transparency, corruption and society's ability to accommodate change and avoid oppression.
Security Fragility	Vulnerability of overall security to violence and crime, including both political and social violence. These are connected to the impact of terrorism, homicide rates, 'battle deaths' and domestic violence.
Societal Fragility	Vulnerability to risks affecting societal cohesion that stem from both vertical and horizontal inequalities, including inequality among culturally defined or constructed groups and social cleavages.

Source: MacClinchy & Scott (2016, p 23)

The OECD's revised 2018 version of the "states of fragility" stages their multidimensional framework on how to improve governmental capacities and exit strategies from fragility. It is inherently difficult to gather data from "informal systems such as networks, institutions, processes and economies" (OECD, 2018). This is because peoples' perceptions are important when measuring fragility, and therefore becomes challenging when attempting to integrate new programs (ibid.). The whole idea is to progress through to sustainable development. This will overturn states in fragile contexts and recognize the need for a proactive attitude towards such states in order for changes to be made.

Davies (2009) points out her factors and how they influence capacity development. Discrepancies in governance, policies and economics are essential elements for fragility, as well as an incapability to ensure security throughout the state. Social needs (i.e. housing, education, safety) for the population is necessary in order for developments, investments and state plans to be effective in ameliorating the states fragility. Short term solutions can cause "spatial polarization" of ethnic or clan-based identities (Davies, 2009). Other examples of short-term solutions are the unstable nature of aid from foreign countries. This can also cause a level

of unpredictability, as such help can sometimes become unmanageable by governing bodies. Additionally, important decisions are being made by an "elite" group of "interdependent" individuals that further damage trust in the "states formal institutions" (ibid.). Defining a fragile state is problematic as there has been no consensus on what truly defines one. It is suggested that fragility, in its most basic form, is the lack of "capacity" and "willingness" of governments to develop functions that benefit the population (Davies, 2009, p 12). By 'capacity', Davies argues the ability to complete basic notions such as competent "economic development, poverty reduction… territorial control and presence, effective exercise of political power… [and] sufficient administrative capacity to implement policies" (2009, p 13). The "willingness" is rooted in supporting the inclusivity, safety and prosperity of the population. This is essential as the population are the ones that decide whether the power is legitimate or not. In a fragile state however, there is no strong public influence or population that is able to maintain such commands, therefore, the legitimacy of the government is questioned. The less civil service activities available to the population (inefficient healthcare, water and sanitation, education, law enforcement etc.) the worse the fragility and fragmentation of the state becomes.

As previously mentioned by Matsumoto (2008) the divisive nature of Afghanistan indicates the lack of inclusivity in civil society. In fragile states, Davis proposes that "citizens are polarized" in religious, tribal, ethnic and class clusters. There is a sometimes-violent history and lack of trust between them, thus rendering a socially incohesive society which leads to "failure, collapse, crisis and conflict" (Davies, 2009, p13).

Horizontal & Vertical Inequalities

Fundamentally, horizontal inequalities (HIs) refer to a type of inequality amongst "groups" (social, cultural, economic and political). While vertical inequalities (VIs) are considered a type of inequality that focuses on individuals (or within a household) (Langer, Venugopal & Stewart, 2011). The multidimensional facet of HIs are all conceptualized through social, cultural, economic and political aspects. First, **Social HIs** are concerned with levels of education, health care and living conditions. Second, **Cultural HIs** are predominantly focused on linguistics, values, practices and customs. Third, **Economic HIs** are quantified with "ownership of assets, financial, human… social" also including employment possibilities and income levels. Finally, **Political HIs** are rooted in unbalanced power dynamics among groups and lack of control over what happens with "the presidency, the cabinet, parliamentary assemblies". Political HIs are also expanded on the state having profound issues within

bureaucratic paradigms such as policing and "local and regional governments" (Langer et al., 2011, p 5).

According to Langer et al. (2011) violence and conflict are mostly present when dealing in a state with high levels of horizontal inequalities (HIs). These features often incite "violent group mobilization and conflict along ethnic, religious or regional lines" (ibid., p 2). Specifically, connections between socio-economic and political HIs provide the foundation for violent conflicts. Policies in post-conflict states are conventionally designed to reconstruct, stabilize and grow the economy and reintegrate "ex-combatants" (ibid.). As HIs are significant when considering the cause of a conflict, it is equally important for states to demand policies which reduce such inequalities at the 'post-conflict' stage. Such actions should be taken in order to avoid a reoccurrence of conflict and war.

It is difficult to justify the term "post-conflict" as it does not describe a state that is in inherent 'peace'. Langer et al. have decided to conceptualize the term by the state's ability to achieve "peace milestones". These include: "1) cessation of hostilities and violence; 2) signing of political/peace agreements; 3) demobilization, disarmament and reintegration; 4) refugee repatriation; 5) establishing a functioning state; 6) economic recovery; 7) and making significant progress towards reconciliation and societal integration" (Brown et al. 2008; in Langer et al., 2011, p 3).

Social Causes of Fragility

Societal fragility is based on different vulnerabilities of the population that can occur from 'vertical inequalities' (e.g "income inequalities") to 'horizontal inequalities' (e.g. racial, ethnic or religious) (Abel, Hammond, Hyslop, Lahidji and Mandrella, 2016, p 98). Societal fragility occurs when governing systems do not have enough 'coping capacities' to deal with: poverty; internally displaced people (IDPs) or returning-refugees to the state; infrastructure rehabilitation or management; gender inequalities; and "high urbanization" (ibid.). The strength of the Civil Society (local governance and community-led councils) also have significant impacts on governmental coping capacities to deal with different inequalities (horizontal and vertical). If Civil society entities are weak, there will be no possibilities for citizens to seek out "justice to address grievances" as well as hold actors accountable for their actions (ibid.). Consequently, the ability of citizens to even make such grievances also speaks to the level of societal fragility of the state (ibid.). The summary of all these points lead the OECD to disseminate the idea that the first components to societal fragility are mostly indicated by

"access to justice, accountability and horizontal inequality" while the second component is comprised of "vertical and gender inequalities" (Abel et al., 2016, p 98). The first component emphasizes social inequalities that are rooted in "unequal treatment of citizens" and discrimination based on ethnic, religious and racial differences. The latter component is determinant on engendered disparities in the private and economic spheres (especially "gender-based segregation and income" inequalities) (ibid.).

Part III: Education

Afghanistan has been deeply entrenched in wars and conflict that has lasted well over forty years. Consequently, this is also evident in its **education system**, as it can be seen as fragile as the state itself (WENR, 2016). It is argued that a "strong, equitable and balanced education sector is essential to peace, economic growth and social development in Afghanistan" (UNESCO, 2013, p 17). Following the dismantling of the Taliban, reconstruction efforts to remobilize and reform the education system have been put in place by internal (government, local NGOS, Ministry of Education) and external actors (INGOs and other international institutions). Within the population of Afghanistan, 3.7 million children are still out of school. 60% of these children are comprised of girls (UNICEF, 2020). During the sustained conflict, there are many challenges for Afghanistan's education system to raise enrollment in schools (principally in rural areas). Unfortunately, there is not enough data collected to gain more knowledge about the poorer and more remote areas in Afghanistan (UNICEF, 2020). Such difficulties in monitoring and evaluating is the reason this thesis explores such frameworks further. This chapter will look into education systems in Afghanistan, the manipulation of education as a tool to sustain conflicts, methods of establishing education in emergencies (EiE), inclusivity and further, culture & globalization in education.

Education in Afghanistan

Historical Overview

When the *Mujahideen* were in power in the early nineties, the infrastructure for education systems was "collapsed" in rural areas – as much of the fighting happened in these provinces (Samady, 2001). This war had torn through the education system, thousands of schools were damaged and destroyed, teaching and learning materials were essentially non-existent, while teachers were either victims of the conflict or had fled the country. As will be

noted throughout this chapter, the education system in Afghanistan was manipulated thoroughly by "internal and external powers for political purposes" (Spink, 2007, p 5). The historically FCAS has experienced severe social instabilities due to these manipulations of power within education. As Afghanistan attempts to reconstruct the state after many years of conflict and violence, there is surprisingly little research available in order to understand what contributes to these social divisions (Spink, 2007).

According to Matsumoto (2008), education has contributed both negatively and positively to the conflicts in Afghanistan. Historically, education was weaponized to sustain conflicts and intensify fragility in the country. The content of the education was colored heavily by whomever was in power at the time. Matsumoto states that education in Afghanistan has been exercised "as an ideological battleground where modernism, communism, Islamism and fundamentalism compete" (2008, p 66). This has further fragmented social cohesion, causing the state to be in a context of fragility.

The modernization of education in Afghanistan began at the start of the 20th century (ibid.). King Amanullah left Afghanistan in 1919 to explore western societies and brought such modern ideals back upon his return. He focused on education in order to "modernize" the country as he expanded existing schools and created new, more privileged forms of schooling. Foreign investment helped establish such institutions and even added to inclusivity of the population. Girls were allowed to study and were sent abroad to further their education. Although seemingly positive, this caused a rift between the youths and the older, more traditional generations (ibid.). The unintentionally divisive nature of the situation began as youths clamored cities to receive modern "westernized" forms of education. This in turn alienated the "traditional illiterate rural society" and caused substantial social incoherence and a fundamental urban-rural division. (Matsumoto, 2008, p 67). For Afghan society, this also had a cause and effect on the youth's sudden duality. The dichotomous standpoint of "urban youths" battling internally with modernist and traditional positions devastated social bonds (familial, ethnic or clan-based). This eventually led to conflicts and a widening distance between the two archetypes (Tawil, 2001). Not only was there an inadvertently negative emotional and social impact, but the state could not keep up with such skyrocketing educational developments (Matsumoto, 2008). The steep rise in graduates did not allow the state enough time to create jobs, consequently increasing unemployment levels at an exponential rate. With no possibilities for work, estrangement from traditional bonds and economic decline, youths were then easily ensnared by communist and Islamist ideologies (ibid.). This is wherein violence in the country

escalates as education is used as a "pedagogy of violence" after the Soviet invasion in 1979 (ibid.).

Historically, before the communist invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviet Union aimed to indoctrinate the ideas of "modernization, secularization and social mobilization" in Central Asia, while "purging" the Central Asian Muslim population of its "Islamic consciousness" (Benningsen, 1984). However, an Islamic religious revival commenced as "new pride in past glories, cautious manifestations of cultural nationalism and growing xenophobia" began to arise in Central Asia after the death of Stalin in the fifties (Benningsen, 1984). This revival of Islam is the reason for the *Mujahideen's* successes in later years. The Soviet "purging of Islamic consciousness" was perpetuated through 'Ideological Subversion' (Bezmenov, 1984; in Göralsson, 2016). This concept was a tactic used by the KGB as a brainwashing tool to indoctrinate Soviet propaganda into the subjugated population. This term is derived from Yuri Alexandrovich Bezmenov, a Russian anti-communist defector that expressed this form of "psychological warfare" was more commonplace than any other 'espionage' tactic depicted in Hollywood movies (ibid.).

As Afghanistan was already divided by the abovementioned issues, education became an "explicit ideological battlefield" inculcating violent behavior. This battlefield was then illustrated by the dichotomous "Marxist ideology vs Islamic militant ideology" from the Soviets and *Mujahideen* respectively (Matsumoto, 2008). Both educational systems will depict violence in their textbooks as they both "fight against agents of colonialism and western oppression" (ibid.). After the Soviet invasion in 1979, Islamic educational institutions (*madrasas)* became increasingly popular and the rejection of the ideological subversion eventually led to the demise of the Soviet subjugation in 1989. Between 1989-1993 more students ended up in these *madrasas* due to a lack of educational possibilities. This however, ensured yet another collapse in the formal education system as the Taliban began their ascension to power (ibid.).

Such politicization of learning materials did not however dissipate throughout the years. In 2005, Spink (2007) denoted the heavily politicized textbooks that were being used to teach children "ethnic hatred and intolerance". These textbooks highlighted "social division and violence" in an already socially divided state. This showcases the use of language as a divisive tool rather than a unifying one that can promote 'cultural nationalism'. It is suggested by Spink, that a "new curriculum", as well as improved "teacher capacities" must be propagated in order for Afghanistan to build up the state and provide sustainable peace for the population. This is brought back to the idea of the aforementioned issues around nationalism and the use of language in persuading states to become more unified. By changing the language in the

longstanding militant ideology centered education system, it may sway the new generation of Afghan children to gain more "social responsibility and national pride" while incorporating "ideas of unity and diversity" (Spink, 2007).

Educational Development

Educational development in Afghanistan truly began in the early nineties as UNESCO and various other NGOs endeavored to reestablish education systems and services in rural areas (Samady, 2001). The notion of education became the most pivotal measure "that would carry the country back to peace and prosperous development" while establishing "stability and security" in the state (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007, p 68).

As aforementioned, education services were heavily destroyed in FCASs and needed the support of NGOs through "the provision of textbooks, teacher training" and paying the teachers' salaries (Samady, 2001, p 78). Provinces such as Wardak, Farah, Ghazni, Kandahar, and Paktia were given such aid by UNESCO supplying schools with essential equipment, supporting student enrollment and teacher training (ibid.). Innovative methods of education development programs were introduced at the time as "skills training programs". These were established by Afghan NGOs and were adopted throughout the provinces (ibid,). These skills were linked to basic education and involved, 'carpet making, silk weaving and dye-making'. This yielded positive effects in the community as training in health education, literacy and numeracy intertwined with the preservation of the "nations cultural heritage" created greater employment opportunities (while compelling the population to "become literate and numerate") (Samady, 2001, p 78).

National Education Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021

The National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) is a document written by the Afghan Ministry of Education (MoE) to convey their plans for the education sector from 2017 to 2021. The "common goal" of the NESP (2016) is:

> "*to prepare skilled and competent citizens through the education system to sustain Afghanistan's socioeconomic development and social cohesion.*"

The changes and improvements established in the sector should "satisfy the material and psychological needs of individuals" while creating a "sense of shared social responsibility"

(NESP, 2016, p 3). There are three main policy objectives and outcomes stated in the NESP, these include: *efficient and transparent management; equitable access;* further, *quality and relevance*. These attributes are congruent to responsible, healthy and productive members of society that are prepared to contribute to their state as they are equipped for employment in the (international and national) labor market.

Increasing attendance in schools, enhanced teacher training, and refining program management will, in theory, realize the MoE's goals. There is, however, a pronounced disparity between rural and urban districts. The aim of the MoE is to close the gap between the urban and rural areas and create an equal improvement throughout. This will be made possible with the aid of cooperating ministries and other development partners. Although the MoE is the predominant authority when it comes to education, using supplementary programs devised by other government industries and ministries will allow further support in education development. Such ministries include ministries of: *higher education; labor; social affairs; martyrs and disabled; Hajj and Religious Affairs; Women's Affairs; and finally, of Rural rehabilitation and Development* (NESP, 2016).

Non-Governmental Organizations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are defined by Jelinek (2006) as "independent, impartial and neutral agencies, which provide relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and / or development assistance" to a state in conflict or fragility (p 4). NGOs work at a "grass roots level" to support people in need (ibid.). According to Jelinek, Afghanistan is considered one of the most challenging countries for NGOs to work in. This is due to the way the "operational space" is divided by military forces and sometimes hostile governments which perpetuate a "poor security environment" (ibid.). Activities from the early to mid-2000s saw an increase in violence and insecurity throughout the country, which significantly impacted and undermined development efforts. Such instabilities forced NGO workers to "scale down their work or suspend operations" in some areas of heightened threats of attack or kidnapping (ibid.).

The relationship between NGOs and governments can be somewhat unstable. At times, tensions between the institutions can stem from governments fearing replacement by NGOs; or the fear that NGOs could expose them for "lack of accountability and transparency with donor or public funds" (Jelinek, 2006, p 4). Differences in organization culture and structures can also cause some pressure between institutions. In the context of Afghanistan, NGOs must constantly 'redefine' their roles as they adapt to the volatile environment they are operating in (ibid.). The

indicated environments include: military or quasi-military forces implementing development and humanitarian work; insecurity in the state (fundamentalists, militaries and other armed forces); finally, political engagements with NGOs and collaboration between them. Although NGOs attempt to maintain their neutrality, it is difficult to disregard contextualities and local conditions and the necessity to be "sufficiently embedded to understand and influence the key agents of change" (Jelinek, 2006, p 5).

Norwegian Afghanistan Committee

This thesis has a distinct focus on how the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) works towards improving educational development. This NGO was founded in Norway in the 1980s as a response to the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. It established itself throughout the years as a professional relief and development NGO that aims to assist the Afghan population during conflict. Their objectives are to establish "long-term development programs and initiatives, and focus on environment and sustainability" (NAC, 2020). NAC works in three development capacities: Health, Natural Resources and Education. The NGO aims to improve education systems in Afghanistan through teacher training programs and aiding local communities and parents of school children to attain the "best education available" (ibid.). Their aims also feature the "universal right to education for all children", as further inclusivity for all marginalized groups in the education sector will allow the state to begin peacebuilding and state building ideals. As aforementioned, NGOs work within the community to build sustainable programs (that could survive without the external help of the NGO, if need be), management strategies and strengthening the relationship between the communities and their institutions. NAC includes parent teacher associations in order to keep a satisfactory organization culture in the schools implemented. These associations or committees receive training from the NGO and the "running of the school" becomes a development project for the community. There is a focus on 'better teaching' as teacher training can foster better quality education that is tailored to the needs of students. Such knowledge training is focused predominantly in rural areas - Badakshan, Faryab & Ghazni (NAC, 2020). Teacher training programs (TTPs) are created through NAC's "upgrading and reorientation courses". NAC also facilitates innovative teacher trainings as they include 'inclusive education' as a subject. The integration of these innovative teaching methodologies can equip the educator to circumvent discrimination and exclusion of their students.

Reconstructing Education

School Construction & Rehabilitation

As stipulated in the MoE's National Education Strategic Plan (NESP), the promotion of learning and equity within all districts of the state are principal aims in education development. Building permanent education facilities (not using tents), latrines (for better WASH facilities) and resilient structures (against possible hazards) are all used to establish and realize these objectives (INEE, 2010). INEE (2010) proposes guidelines when establishing facilities and services for better learning environments. The necessary facilities needed will be somewhat adapted to the situation in Afghanistan in Table 2 below.

Table 2: INEE Guidelines for Facilities & Services

Education Facilities and Services	
Location	Facilities constructed for education should be in areas in which the physical safety of the learners and educators is measured adequately. This means the whereabouts of the construction takes into consideration the area surrounding the school (safety from animals, natural disasters, fundamentalist groups etc.) and a space easily accessible for students and teachers. "Conflict and disaster risk assessments are essential" and should involve everyone from national authorities to community members. This must also be in collaboration with marginalized groups, as some locations may incite discrimination (ethnic, gendered, linguistic) - their physical and emotional safety must also be considered.
	The design and construction of the permanent education facilities must be considered in order to enable safety in schools: ▪ Safe site selection: As previously mentioned, the location of the learning site must be noted. This must also consider the structural integrity of a damaged school. The needs of the building must be evaluated "by qualified professionals" and

Structure Design & Construction	reparations and replacements of the edifice must reflect the needs and cost-capability of the NGO, community and government.
	▪ Inclusive and disaster-resistant design and construction: planning and building code standards must be applied to the construction (using either international or local standards, depending on quality of the local). These buildings must be resilient and should withstand "hazards and threats" such as landslides, storms, earthquakes and fires. The reconstruction effort should also enable an improved learning and teaching environment, with the use of adequate lighting, heating and ventilation in the building.
	▪ Maintenance & budget by local authorities/communities: the structure should be able to be maintained by local communities and local authorities at an affordable cost. This will somewhat guarantee that the buildings will be cost-effective as the use of locally procured materials will save on transportation and import costs and ensure more durability.
Disability needs	When constructing the educational facility, people with physical and visual disabilities should be distinctly considered in the design process. 'Special needs' students and community members must be accommodated (such as exits and entrances fitted for "wheelchairs or other assisted-mobility devices"). This also includes water and sanitation, and classroom design – which should accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.
Design & Maintenance of	The design of the learning space must be tailored to whom will be using the learning space. This means understanding the "sex, age, physical ability and cultural considerations of all users". There should also be added space for more classrooms if enrollment increases ("to enable a progressive reduction in the use of multiple shifts"). There should also be constant maintenance of all facilities within the building including:

Learning Spaces	furniture – desks, blackboards, chairs, as well as health and sanitation facilities. Such maintenance could potentially be contributed by members of the community, the Shura and more education personnel.
Sanitation Facilities (WASH)	WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) must be considered when constructing an education facility. Not only is this one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG6 - which aims to facilitate equitable and accessible water and sanitation for all), it is a pivotal aspect of school life that will permit more participation in learning (this will be established in the 'Findings' chapter of this thesis). This is wherein collaboration with the water and sanitation sector is significant as attaining: "solid waste disposal facilities" (containers and waste pits); "drainage facilities" (soak pits and drainage channels); adequate toilets and water for personal hygiene will help maintain dignity, safety and privacy. To prevent possible abuse and sexual harassment, there should be segregation of toilets for women/girls and men/boys. They should not only be easily accessible but in safe places in or around the school. "Sphere guidelines for school toilets call for one toilet for every 30 girls and one toilet for every 60 boys". However, as it is not always feasible to take such measures, there should be systems in place so boys and girls do not use the washrooms at the same time.
Safe Water and Hygiene (WASH)	As abovementioned, education environments should provide a safe water source and provide soap to keep up with hygiene practices. Hand and face washing should be established as daily activities.
School-based health and nutrition	School-based health and nutrition is a way in which education is interlinked with the health, nutrition and sanitation sectors. Programs attributed to health will promote healthy environments and developments for children and the community. This can include, "school feeding programs, communicable disease prevention… (and) provision of micronutrient supplements."

	This section concentrates on the use of local services to "support and promote learners' physical, psychosocial and emotional well-being". Educators and other education personnel (e.g Shuras) should receive training in identifying signs of distress, whether psychological or physical in students and subsequently refer said students to relevant services that may be able to help them. This system of referral can include: "counselling, psychosocial and legal services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and social services for suspected cases of abuse or neglect".
Local Services & Referrals	

Source: Adapted from the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook (2010, p 68-72)

Accessibility & Learning Environment

According to the INEE Minimum Standards handbook for education in emergencies, it is fundamental for reconstruction and development to facilitate *access* to education in states of conflict and fragility. Education is seen as a "vital resource" that can "provide life-saving knowledge and skills for survival" (INEE, 2010, p 54). The issues of accessibility and inclusivity are interlinked, as some vulnerable groups may suffer more during a crisis or conflict. This is due to the "previous patterns" that may have already enabled exclusivity in such education and health and which are "reinforced in the emergency response" (ibid.).

There is a responsibility from external and internal actors to promote learning for individuals where they have "access to relevant, quality education in secure learning environments" (INEE, 2010, p 54). Safer education facilities are fundamental for better learning in any emergency. In Afghanistan, physical protection of both students and teachers is lacking (NESP, 2016). This insecurity can demotivate children from going to school and discourage teachers from facilitating educational continuity. This is not only limited to physical protection; psycho-social support (PSS) is significant in building safer environments for students and teachers alike. Such holistic wellbeing can be beneficial for all those involved in the education process. As aforementioned, the construction of schools and rehabilitation of buildings and learning sites can promote and ensure educational continuity as there will be less risks that could potentially harm students, school faculty, NGO employees, *Shuras* and community members. Peace building ideals are also empowered when accessible and equal rights to education is present in the society (INEE, 2010). The education department (with the help of international and local NGOs) should aim to "reduce the obstacles" pertaining to exclusivity in

education, these include: gender discrimination, unpayable school fees, language barriers and physical barriers that disallow students to get to school (INEE, 2010).

Inclusivity in Education

The term *inclusive education* is an approach used to ensure the "presence, participation and achievement of all individuals in learning opportunities" (INEE, 2010, p 119). The diverse ethnic, linguistic, physical ability and gender of individuals in education should be considered when developing policies, facilities and practices (ibid.). The barriers of participation and learning stem from a range of physical, cultural, social and infrastructural concerns. The exclusion of groups can be rooted in "discrimination, lack of support to remove barriers or use of languages, content or teaching methods that do not benefit all learners" (ibid.). The solution is mainly rooted in teaching methodologies, as improving and progressing this element will support the aim of inclusive education for all. Inclusivity in education has many facets that should be considered when creating an inclusive education sector. Consequently, exclusivity in education can be a direct consequent of **discrimination.** This type of exclusivity can be enforced because of: *age, nationality, gender (or sex), disability, race, religion, language, ethnicity, culture, geographic location, political affiliation or socio-economic background* (ibid.). It is the responsibility of 'national authorities, humanitarian organizations and communities' to guarantee access to educational services for such marginalized and excluded groups. Specifically, the gendered, ethnic, geographic or linguistic paradigms of exclusion must be considered as such marginalization can maintain and "contribute to conflict" within a state (INEE, 2010, p 56).

Types of Education in Afghanistan

Islamic education

Afghanistan, as discussed in the introductory chapter, is a predominantly Islamic country. Four types of Islamic schooling exist in Afghanistan: Mosque school, traditional *madrasas* (first and second levels) and modern *madrasas* (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007). Formal Islamic education consists of three significant elements: first, it takes place in a designated education area *(*this can be in a *madrasa* or in a *mosque)*; second, special Islamic teachers are selected, most likely the *imam* of the mosque; third, the study material constitutes the *Qur'an* and the *hadiths* as well as some other Islamic literature (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007).

Shura

As previously mentioned in Part I of this chapter, the *Shura* have been utilized in politics and government all throughout Islamic history (Cader, 2017). The establishment of a *Shura* (a "council of experts") allow for management and mediation of disputes in "all facets of a Muslims life, including within the home" (Al-Humaid, 2003; in Cader, 2017, p 9). They are normally elected and chosen because of their important stance in the community. They have been predominantly utilized as a "preemptive Islamic method of conflict resolution…" further operated to "… minimize conflict between stakeholders" leading to positive comportments and resolutions (p 9). School *Shuras* are thusly used to guide students, teachers, parents and other school faculty at a local level. This encourages the attendance of students and teachers, reinforces effective results through their experiences and knowledge and if there is a conflict, resolve it with a peaceful and understanding approach (ibid.).

Western-type Education

Historically, philosophical understandings of education have influenced everyone from Greek philosophers (Aristotle & Plato) to "Islamic scientists and theologians" in the 8th to 15th centuries (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007, p 61). Subsequently, these Islamic philosophers further influenced European Enlightenment and Renaissance thinkers such as John Milton & John Locke (ibid.). The intertwining of these theosophical and philosophical paradigms influenced education as these intellectuals focused on learning and teaching, but also on the fashioning of ethics and morality. As has been illustrated in previous chapters, there are inherent links between education as a tool of peacebuilding and state building. This notion was studied by Emile Durkheim in the late 1800s which consequently instigated economic theorists to apply more utilitarian conventions in education (ibid.). Such conventions have a foundation in "efficiency" and "effectiveness". Out of the many theories in such utilitarian assumptions, the 'human capital approach' is the most employed. On a macro-level, the society views education as "an investment in the nations human capital" which will be utilized to "increase productivity" and incite "economic growth" (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007, p 64). Additionally, on a micro-level, the "benefits of attending school" for children, youths and adults are increasingly embedded in individual interest (well-paid job or competitive edge in the labor market) (ibid.). Globalization has led to education systems being altered in countries like Afghanistan wherein

the ideas of "decentralization, freedom of choice and school-based management" are instrumental for "increased economic growth" (ibid.).

As will be explored further in the theoretical and conceptual chapter in this thesis, "the structures of society determine social behavior" (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007). Utilizing a Marxist perspective in structuralism, education becomes a tool controlled by the "capitalist class" in order to serve "the interest of the state". Therefore, according to Karlsson & Mansory (2007), education indoctrinates the ideologies of the ruling class of the society. This imposes the idea that the capitalist educational system will determine the students "place in society" (ibid.). This is commonplace in most education in the West, as the students that "have a higher (level of) education will succeed in society" and therefore be of a different "class" upon graduating (ibid.). However, there are neo-marxist theorists such as Antonio Gramsci that does not only view education as a reflection of the dominating ruling class, but as a mechanism of social change and culture (Saha & Zubrycki, 1994; Kalrsson & Mansory, 2007). Culture of the students and organizational culture of the schools are "autonomous entities" that encompass constructed attitudes, norms, values and identities produced through their experiences and realities.

Globalization & Culture

Culture

As Gramsci was born into a subaltern people, he was distinctly aware of the cultural, economic and political domination "of an imperial" force (Morgan, 2002, p 242). Describing culture in a Gramscian perspective, Morgan states that culture is "constantly shaped, reshaped, produced and reproduced according to the demands of material life" (2002, p 244). Culture manifests itself as a material force as concepts and ideas are strung together with language to transform themselves into notions of history (ibid.). As culture is constantly being reshaped, "the lives of individuals are conditioned by their cultural perceptions" but new occurrences and contexts can allow the established understandings of culture to be changed and expanded (ibid.). It is difficult however, to easily "acquire... the cultures of the world that lie beyond" the immediate scope and "intimate understanding" of the naturally familiar world that one has grown up in (ibid., p 244). Education however, can facilitate a form of acquisition of knowledge that allows the student to understand new culture outside of the initial "internalized" and "subconscious" culture (Morgan, 2002). Gramsci's development of the idea of "hegemony" and Williams's concept of "dominant culture" were composed through a cross-referential

method of understanding "cultural webs" as a product of history (ibid.). Culture is thusly seen as a "natural condition" that is sometimes used in class societies to conceal the realities of marginalization, inequalities or dominations over certain groups and "present them as necessary" (ibid., p 245). Those who have the power over "culture production" allow for a hegemonic process to incur a produced reality and meaning for those "who do not have power over or access to such production" (ibid., p 245). This is largely seen in the "invention of tradition" as the subaltern class will see tradition as a version of history that revolves around the dominating class, and in which "meanings, attitudes, and forms of discourse" will be established through the division of real lived experience and produced meaning (ibid.).

Globalization in Schools

As aforementioned, globalization processes inspired new schooling systems and curricula. It is therefore important to note how such globalization can influence "local practices" for educators (Brooks & Normore, 2010). Brooks & Normore argue that the is a lack of exploration into the intertwined relationship between globalization in localized education paradigms. These notions are linked between "worldwide discourses, processes, and institutions affecting local educational practices and policies" (ibid.). Further, they suggest consideration to the idea of "Glocalization" - an integrated gesticulation of global, national and local ontologies (ibid.). To establish and sustain appropriate and meaningful educational experiences for students, educational leaders must have a basic understanding of the comprehensive features of 'glocalization' (ibid.). Educational leaders must be willing to gain knowledge of the following "glocal literacy" domains. They list nine "glocal literacies" that should be developed (but this thesis will emphasize the first): *cultural literacy; pedagogical literacy; moral literacy; political literacy; economic literacy; organizational literacy; spiritual and religious literacy; and finally, temporal literacy* (ibid.).

As this has been identified in various sections of this thesis, the understanding of culture is paramount to understanding behavioral norms of groups within a population. The understanding of organizational culture is based on "ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs…[and] norms that knit a community together" (ibid., p 58). Brooks & Normore's 'glocalized cultural literacy' was relevant to focus on, as educational leaders must understand that "multiple cultures" exist concurrently in a 'glocalized' world. It is also significant to consider that the individually constructed reality of said cultures profoundly affect education

(ibid.). This is looked at further in the International Relations (IR) theory of constructivism in the theoretical and conceptual chapter of this thesis.

Globalization is distinctly due to technological advancements and the multinationalism of most states. This perpetuates a wider, 'global' perspective in ways of understanding while simultaneously advocating a narrowing of cultural differences. Additionally, Spring (2008) states that cultures are metamorphosing into one "single global culture" (p 334). Moreover, these ontological and epistemological shifts in knowledge procurement must in theory, influence how subjects in schools should be taught (Brooks & Normore, 2010). Such macro-culture does not dominate entirely of course, as further subcultures exist within the dynamics of school structures. Some of these subcultures are established through educators and students that share similar values and assumptions, and have a "strong influence on leadership practice in schools" (Wolcott, 2003; Brooks & Normore, 2010, p 58). Aside from subcultures, there is also the idea of 'propriospect' which is the theory of "acquisition of culture". This is essentially the idea that every single person has an "individual culture". This is illustrated by how people "construct a unique cultural experience rather than adopting… group organizational values and norms" (Brooks & Normore, 2010, p 59). This is a significant paradigm for teachers and educational leaders to consider, as it allows them to recognize individual values, beliefs and histories (ibid.). Similarly, this literacy connects with cultural pedagogy as an approach to children's culture. Such differences in experiences and cultures will remain linked with the overarching idea of a 'glocal' culture (ibid.).

Chapter 3: Theoretical & Conceptual Frameworks

This following chapter will outline the different theoretical frameworks used in this thesis. It will illustrate how theories of constructivism, post-structuralism, feminism and globalism were used to conceptualize the thesis topic and its subsequent research questions. The research data centered on the distinct points of view, beliefs, values and norms of a group of diverse people from differing backgrounds and genders. It will become easier to comprehend how and why states and individuals behave a certain way by utilizing these theoretical frameworks to conceptualize these ideas. Applying a **constructivist** scope to the subject, this chapter will focus on 'individuals' as part of a structural paradigm - as identity and immaterial foundations play large roles in the construction of a state as we see it today (Wendt, 1992). It will also however, use a **post-structuralist** *discourse* analysis of the language used to understand these constructed realities (Hansen, 2017). To further understand Afghan social identities and cultural meanings, it is also important to indicate the use of **feminist theory**. This will add a significant dimension of feminism and gender in the analysis of power and further global and local subordination of women. Finally, the concept of **globalism** will be understood. This concept will not be utilized as specifically as the previous three, but rather, to serve as a foundation to establish the theories' application to the processing of this thesis. The transformationalist globalist perspective unquestionably influenced the scope of exploration within this thesis (McGrew, 2017). Using these frameworks, the researcher is able to compile a more comprehensive understanding of the idea of inclusivity in the Afghan Education sector. By dissecting the state's culture, values, identities and history, the researcher was able to comprehend how the interactions (both national and international) have driven Afghanistan to exclusivity and fragility in the education sector and to an extent, their society. As aforementioned in the contextual section of the literature review, the lack of social cohesion and marginalization of large groups have encumbered the reconstruction of Afghan society.

Social Constructivism
Definition

Constructivism is a theory that categorizes world views as 'socially constructed' (Theys, 2017). Theys exemplifies Alexander Wendt's (1995) illustration of social construction by explaining that "500 British nuclear weapons are less threatening to the United States than five North Korean nuclear weapons" (Theys, 2017, p 36). This showcases how the 'identifications' are not explained through *material structures* (the nuclear weapons) rather, the meaning produced and specified to the material structure – the immaterial *ideational structure* (ibid.).

This is due to the intersubjectivity between the states; the social relationship the U.S has between Britain greatly differs from the relationship with North Korea.

Two central concepts of constructivism are illustrated by 'identities and interests' and 'social norms' (ibid.). The first concept, identities and interests, is comprehended by states having multiple socially constructed identities. Identities are how an actor understands 'who they are', which consequently motivates their interests (ibid.). The latter is described as "a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity" (Katzenstein, 1996, p 5; in Theys, 2017, p 38). Certain identities will be paramount to the development of social norms. This means that when a state adopts an identity, they are "expected to comply with the norms (and behavior) that are associated with that identity" (Theys, 2017, p 38).

However, constructivist theories and paradigms can range in a plethora of kaleidoscopic meanings. Although presented in different forms, simply put, constructivism is a theory about learning and knowledge production established through individual human experiences.

Constructivism in Education

The influence of constructivist-based pedagogy has been widely praised by educators throughout the last 40 years (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002). This form of pedagogy supersedes 'behaviorist educational practices'. Behaviorism began as a psychological paradigm that was swiftly adopted by the education arena in the 1960s (ibid.). Structural reformations in methods of teaching became guided by *how* teachers stimulated better learning for their students. Behaviorist techniques allowed for a way in which to measure such learning though the students observed behavior (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002). However, years after its implementation, such positivist linear methods proved ineffective as they did not account for the complex reality that is a classroom.

Constructivist theory used in education is largely applied in a variety of contexts. The main three lesson designs inspired by constructivism are that of "curriculum mapping, teacher education, and school leadership" (Brooks and Brooks, 1993, p 7). By linearity, it is meant that the popular, yet somewhat narrow understanding of education is related to neo-liberalism, behaviorism and other positivist approaches. Education has become an "economic good", as parents search for the best schooling systems in the "education markets"; governments and legislators focus on the economic benefits of the society; while university students search for education that will have substantial financial rewards in the future (Savage, 2017). This is also described by the aforementioned Marxist human capital approach. However, this linear system does not account for improvement in student learning. This is because learning is not defined

in such narrow specificities, rather, it is a complex procedure that fundamentally opposes such linear archetypes (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Student's "knowledge" is not easily conveyed through "linear precepts of measurements and accountability", or their "behavior" (p 8). It involves the "internally constructed" understanding of how their world functions (their 'propioaspect' or individual culture). It must be noted however, that the quality of any learning environment cannot fully define/measure the diverse nature of knowledge and expression (ibid.). This is not to say that such linear classroom practices are inadequate or conflicting. It is merely stating that the extensive research into the subject of education has established that classroom practices "specifically designed to prepare students for tests, do not foster deep learning that is applied to new settings" (ibid.). Brooks & Brooks (1993) thus recommend that 'school districts' reevaluate 'philosophical underpinnings' of the dominating models of education.

The change towards a more 'constructivist classroom' advocates students to develop their own meanings in their learning. Examples of school projects that could facilitate such meaningful learning can be anything from "process writing, problem-based mathematics, investigative science, and experiential social studies" (p 9). Brooks and Brooks (1993) have contrived five overarching foundations that are featured in a 'constructivist classroom'. First, "teachers seek and value their students' point of view" (p 9). This is how teachers foster better learning as they "cue" their lessons in connection to the student's individual perspectives. Second, any 'classroom activities will challenge students' suppositions. When 'meaningful classroom experiences' occur, such suppositions are either contradicted or confirmed. Regardless of their age, every student arrives to a classroom with previous life experiences that define their realities. Third, teachers will tackle issues that are *relevant* to the learners by recognizing the significant part the learner plays in their learning environment. Fourth, the "teachers build lessons around primary concepts and big ideas" (p 9). What is meant here is that students will sometimes be unable to demonstrate deeper understanding of the non-constructivist curriculum. This is because the curriculum itself is presented in too many 'small, disconnected parts' which hinder the student's ability to apply concepts to other contexts. Finally, assessment of student learning is embedded directly into daily activities in the classroom (ibid.).

Poststructuralism
Definition

While constructivism asks "what?", poststructuralism asks "why?". Poststructuralism is a way in which to view the world through a scope that continually questions accepted "truths" and "knowledge" by describing them as "subjective entities that are *produced* rather than *discovered*" (McMorrow, 2017, p 56). This means that knowledge and values are not identifiable through objective fact, as such objectivity does not exist. Moreover, poststructuralists believe that *beliefs* and *facts* work to fortify "the dominance and power" of certain actors in society – which McMorrow describes as the 'elites' (2017, p 56). This is similar to the aforementioned way Gramsci understood culture production in the previous section. The theory also illustrates the improbability of the attainment of objective "universal laws or truths", as the world does not exist "independently of our own interpretations" or subjectivities (p 56).

Discourse Theory

In poststructuralism, similarly to constructivism, language is fundamental to understanding the world's realities and how to make sense of them (Hansen, 2017). Language is naturally "social" and allows us to use a system of shared codes to convey our thoughts to others. Michel Focault defined the word "discourse" as "a linguistic system that orders statements and concepts" (Hansen, 2017, p 162). Terms and words utilized in conversation are never "neutral" and the choices between "one term over the other" have social and "political implications" (Hansen 2017, p 162). Hansen exemplifies these implications with the word's "genocide" and "tribal warfare". One will provide a strong moral pressure on the international community to act (genocide), while the other will not (tribal warfare). This showcases how post-structural application to language is not seen as a "neutral transmitter" – but as an element that truly produces *meaning* and holds power over actions.

Deconstruction, as Jacques Nerrida (1930-2004) explicates, is a term in metaphysics that inculcates how language is actually made up of "dichotomies" (Hansen, 2017) or "binary oppositions" (McMorrow, 2017). Dichotomies are described as "a division or contrast between two groups that are completely opposite or different from each other" (Oxford Learner Dictionary, 2020). Hansen utilized examples of political dichotomies such as "developed & underdeveloped", "modern & premodern" and "civilized & barbaric". These dichotomies are not neutral, there is a distinct hierarchal undertone that suggests one is "superior to the other" (Hansen, 2017, p163).

To fully understand and be critical of world politics, one must examine how these dichotomies are used in political discourse. Such dichotomies are evident for example, in how Western politicians will describe the "other" non-west and its political actors. A current political example would be U.S President Donald Trump describing Kim Jong-un as a "madman" and condemning his "brutal regime" in North Korea (Davis, 2018). This will place Trump, and by default the "west", as the opposite, *sane* and *gentle* through binary opposition.

The concept of power is again considered through a Foucaltian lens. Focault defines 'power' as something "productive". This means it is produced by discourse and must be recognized by others to even exist at all (Hansen, 2017). A popular debate amongst International Relations (IR) scholars is how "western scholars have gained knowledge about non-western peoples by describing them as inferior, backward, underdeveloped…" (p 164). This not only places "Western" people as opposite – superior, forward and developed – it completely disregards the idea of a "foreign identity". This subject will be looked at further in the subsequent 'Feminist and Gender Theory' section.

Feminist & Gender Theory
Definition

International feminism exists to promote "equality and justice for all women" (Kinsella, 2017, p 191). Feminism began as a simple concept of "making women visible" (Smith, 2017, p 62). Three major issues are highlighted when considering feminism and gender in world politics: gender-based violence (GBV); gendered exclusion of women in the state; and socially constructed gender norms (Smith, 2017).

Firstly, violence against women has been generally understood as something that affects most countries (Smith, 2017). This seems absolutist, but it is not rooted to any particular economic or political systems, rather, it is a mixture of culture, religion and constructed gender norms perpetuated throughout an often-patriarchal history. Violence against women is also illustrated in both private (e.g domestic) and public spheres (e.g the workplace or via 'sexual violence' in times of war) (Smith, 2017, p 63). Due to hegemonic masculinity, it is clear that there are little to no spaces where women have the *exact* same social, political or economic rights as men. It must be noted that this is not always the case, some matriarchies will not experience this, but it seems to be a general norm. Gendered violence is found in "peaceful" non-fragile countries as well as conflict ridden states. This showcases that categories of stability and peace are abstract, and the impreciseness of such categorization presents a constructivist way of thinking about insecurity compared to other theories (e.g. liberalism and neo-realism)

(ibid.). Secondly, the absence of women in decision-making structures and other institutions highlight the 'invisibility' of women in the state (ibid.). It is the case that "men are predominantly in charge of state institutions, dominating power and decision-making structures", which showcases an exclusionary paradigm in 'high politics' (military security, sovereignty and the state) (Smith, 2017, p 63). Third, this gendered exclusion of women elucidates further the traditional perspectives that neglect gender as an issue and the impact that is has on women in global politics. As women are excluded from establishing themselves in these "domains of power", their "experiences and contributions are not relevant" (ibid.). This is why such socially constructed gender norms must be deconstructed and exposed in order to disintegrate the "normative ideas of what men and women should do" (Smith, 2017, p 64). Gender, as it is generally understood is a way in which we capture our "individuality" and by which method we interact with "families, classrooms, work-places, and cultures" (Kirby, 2017, p 270). The evaluation of 'Gender' as a subject comes from feminist theorists, however some scholars who examine gender relations will not always identify as 'feminist theorists' but rather as constructivists (Kirby, 2017).

According to Smith (2017), these social constructs mean that "masculinity is often associated with rationality, power, independence and the public sphere" while "femininity is often associated with irrationality, in need of protection, domesticity and the private sphere" (Smith, 2017, p 64). It is significant to indicate how gender can affect many aspects of local and global society as the cohesion between genders could ensure improved developments in social fragility.

The researcher of this thesis has a scope of feminism that is limited to North American and European principles – this has been historically problematic regarding feminist studies throughout the last century (Bell et al., 2019). The methodological issues surrounding female researchers is pronounced heavily in plenty of feminist theories in International Relations as well as other studies (ibid.). Bell describes such ideals when speaking of the "metaphorical waves" of feminism throughout the years. The homogenization of women's experiences overlooks complexities of many women's realities. Many feel they do not fit into such confined borders, which consequently lead to theories such as intersectional feminism. Intersectionality separates itself from the "white feminism" of the West to acknowledge that women have different identities and different realities (Crenshaw, 1991; Hooks 1991 in Bell et al., 2019). This qualitative analytic framework, alongside transnational feminism, has been utilized in this thesis as it interconnects different "matrices of oppression… [such as] gender, race and class" (Bell et al., 2019, p 7). As will be illustrated in this chapter, transnational feminism is

determined by how capitalism and globalism have negatively impacted individuals through classes, genders, sexualities and races; and further recognizes inequalities amongst these typologies (Mohanty, 2003; in Bell et al., 2019).

Islamic Feminism

Moghadam (2002) discusses Islamic feminism (IF) in an Iranian scope and states that middle eastern women's studies are constantly in flux and discussion between "veiling and Islamic identity, feminisms among Arab/Muslim women, orientalism, universalist values, and cultural relativism" (p 1136). These all impact and somewhat misrepresent how feminism is regarded in the Middle East (and Central & South East Asia). She illustrates the need for a more "inclusive and cross-cultural understanding" of the global feminist movement, as this can further motivate the "applicability [of feminism] to Muslim societies" (Moghadam, 2002, p 1136). Moghadam uses Iran as an example to illustrate the relationship between Islam and feminism. It is relevant to denote that there are various similarities between Iran and Afghanistan.

Historically, Moghadam claims that Iran "had two revolutions". The 'populist revolution' which terminated the monarchy and began what is now known as the Islamic Republic of Iran. Then further, an 'Islamic revolution' that "marginalized or eradicated leftists and liberals and instituted a draconian cultural-political system characterized by the rule of a clerical caste" (Moghadam, 2002, p 1137). This shift in power dynamics in the 1980s instated Islamic law to deal with criminal and personal jurisdictions and added the "compulsory veiling for women" (ibid.). It also began the exclusion of women and diminishment of their social and legal status (ibid.). Religio-politics not only "compromised women's autonomy", it "reinforced male domination" and further "created a set of gender relations characterized by profound inequality" (Moghadam, 2002, p 1139). However, changes began in the nineties in the Islamic republic as the state worked on reversing these policies on gender relations, women, and the family (ibid.). Consequently, the death of Ayatollah Khomeini began the "(re)establishment of capitalist society" through an *economic liberalization* and furthered Iran's participance in global economy (ibid.).

Islamic feminism (IF) is defined as a movement for women who have kept their religious identity while promoting "egalitarian ethics of Islam by using the female-supportive verses of the Qur'an in their fight for women's rights". It is also very specifically tailored to women's access to education (Moghadam, 2002, p 1144). Moreover, Islamic feminists are undercutting the 'clerical agenda' through various forms: as will be discussed, engagement in

the feminist *ijtihad*; endorsing democratic ethics in Islam; reinterpreting the *Qur'an* in a female-positive perspective; re-appropriation of the veil or *hijab* - as a fashionable choice to "facilitate social presence rather than seclusion"*;* and finally, the deconstruction of *Sharia* law (in terms of sexual health, family and personal status law) (ibid.).

Islamic feminists claim that the religio-political marginalization and inequity in gender relations is rooted in societal dispositions rather than a "natural or divine" paradigm. Furthermore, many Islamic feminists refer directly to the *Qur'an's* scripture and "issue the right to *ijtihad* (independent reasoning, religious interpretation) and the right of women to reinterpret Islamic law" (Moghadam, 2002, p 1144). The 'revisionist approach' or 'feminist theology' allows a decentralization from the clergy as the sole interpreters of the *Qur'an* and place a woman in the role of interpreter as her needs demand it (Najmabadi, 1998, p 71; in Moghadam, 2002). By deferring the power over to women, it will challenge foundational concepts of the republic and possibly emancipate women from the imbalanced jurisprudence (ibid.). It is also important to have open communication with other female Islamic activists and further ameliorate the relationship with secular feminists. This breaks down the cultural divide and allows for intersectionality and transnational interactions between the sometimes "hostile" exchanges between religion and secularity (ibid.).

Feminism & Gender in Afghanistan

Women's rights in Afghanistan have made some minor advances during the last two decades. As will be noted in this following section, the U.S-led coalition in Afghanistan and the treatment of women in the country by Taliban forces allowed Afghan women's issues to consequently move to the "centre stage of global politics" (Zulfacar, 2006; in Ahmad & Avoine, 2016). Historically, the issues are rooted in political struggles, armed conflicts, health disparities, gender inequality, domestic and sexual violence and finally, exclusivity in political decision making (Ahmad & Avoine, 2016). It is noted that they are "trapped in between different conceptions of modernity, nationalism and cultural conception of their bodies" (Kandiyoti, 2005; in Ahmad and Avoine, 2016, p 2). When noting the Gender Inequality Index (GII) in 2013, Afghanistan was placed 149th out of 152 states (ibid.). This "alarming" number showcased that the inequalities between men and women are substantial and that unfortunately, "gender policies derived from international aid have not been successful" (Fluri, 2011; UNDP, 2013; Ahmad & Avoine, 2016). However, it is important to denote the agency and resistance Afghan women are exhibiting as they are not "gendered slaves in need of saving by the West" (Ayotte & Husain, 2005, p 113; Ahmad & Avoine, 2016, p 1). To exemplify women's agency,

the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan[9] (RAWA) will be mentioned. RAWA was established in 1977 and fight for women's rights and social justice in Afghanistan (RAWA, 2020). A number of female Afghan intellectuals founded this organization in order to increase the number of women's involvement in socio-political activities in the state (health, education, income generation and politics) (ibid.). After Soviet occupation, the organization fought in the "war of resistance" against misogynist standpoints and worked towards abolishing gender inequity (RAWA, 2020). RAWA's perspective on Western interventionism in Afghanistan, is similar to what will be discussed by Bahri (2014) in a following section: "freedom and democracy cannot be donated, it is the duty of the people of a country to fight and achieve these values" themselves.

Women's security has been a long-standing issue in Afghanistan over the past forty years. However, it was a historically significant time for gender studies in late 2001, as the U.S government was able to "partly justify their use of military force" in Afghanistan through feminist discourse. This included the "women's liberation" effort - language that the U.S heavily promoted to manipulate such military action (Boddington, 2011). Boddington (2011) attempts to investigate how feminist concerns superseded mere justification (or national interest), as it also facilitated more damage to the welfare of Afghan women. This would be evident in the violence and instability that ensued for the following two decades. Boddington's essay stipulates two important issues; first, the use of neo-colonialist rhetoric to "garner national public support" for war in Afghanistan and second, she questions why women's security has yet to improve in the years since the war began (2011, p 1). As was indicated in much of the literature reviewed, such neo-colonialist discourses in which they 'demonized and essentialized' Islamic culture was evident and the disregard for the historical culture of the country furthered women's insecurity in the state (ibid.).

As explained, the rhetorical framing of 'fighting for women's rights' was a strategic move in the security aims of the U.S (Boddington, 2011). However, this brought about additional obstacles as the victimization of Afghan women "in need of liberation by U.S military forces" engendered colonialist and patronizing stances in the representation of these women (ibid.). This Westphalian model and perspective further articulate women as 'vulnerable entities' in need of protection (ibid.). U.S ideologies utilized language as a tool for manipulating symbols to affirm power and control. For the world, the "forced veiling" under

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[9] http://www.rawa.org/rawa.html

the Taliban became the "universal symbol" for women's oppression in Afghanistan (ibid., p 2). This "paternalistic" and "Orientalized" discourse further constructed the idea of Afghan women as "victims", thus removing their agency (Boddington, 2011, p 2). Furthermore, the demonization of Islamic culture is perpetuated by using the *burqa* as a symbol "of the Taliban's oppressive policies". This problematized and vilified the *burqa* (as a symbol of oppression*)* more so than the aggression and oppression of the Taliban itself (ibid.). The discourse extended far beyond Afghanistan, as the rest of the world regarded the garment as connoting oppressive behavior to anyone wearing it (ibid.). Further, this repeatedly delineates feminism in the aforementioned constricted scope of Western ideals and values (Bell et al., 2019). This also refutes the idea of other conduits to "social equality", such as "Islamic feminism" (ibid.). These intersectional issues within feminism also outline the concerns of emphasizing "culture" as an "artificial religio-cultural divide between nations" which in turn propagates the dichotomous discourse of "East" versus "West" and 'oppressed' versus 'free' (Hansen, 2017; and Boddington, 2011).

UNAMA has described the *Mujahideen* epoch as the darkest chapter in history for Afghan women (Boddington, 2011). Sexual violence and strict Islamic codes of behavior were imposed by the war lords (*Mujahideen*) and women were unable to seek out sufficient healthcare or education. These actions would not have been possible without the U.S facilitation of the oppressive *Mujahideen* government (as they trained and supplied them with weapons to fight against Soviet forces). This created the foundation for the Taliban regime to rise up to power (Stabile & Kumar, 2005; Boddington, 2011). Boddington illustrates how such "abuses of human rights, including extreme forms of gender-based violence" (GBV) was neglected until global terrorism became a priority for the U.S. Thus, the geopolitical strategies of foreign powers argue and justify the use of military interference through the scope of "humanitarian assistance" (ibid.). This delineates the actual objectives (impeding global terrorism) using a guise of humanitarian aid. The 'oppression of women' in Afghanistan must then be observed through a historically accurate lens that allows an understanding that such notions were not shaped by factors such as "inherent misogyny" in Islam or "modernization", but through the persistent and "chronic conflict" that has been supported by foreign states for decades (Moghadam, 2004; Boddington, 2011).

Masculinity

There is a distinct lack of scholarly research on how Afghan *men* view efforts of gender equality and women's rights (Bahri, 2014). Bahri's (2014) initial explorations into Afghan

masculinity in Kabul has led him to observe that the international community's efforts in realizing gender equality/equity in the country have not worked. They have, instead, provoked "conservative" and "defensive" reactions from Afghan men. This is due to the Western ideologies of feminism, discussed previously in this section, which lacks sensitivity to intersectional feminism and culture. The insensitivity, Bahri (2014) claims, of the international community in regards to the culture of Afghanistan has further incited "disdain for gender equality and women's rights" amongst men in Kabul (Bahri, 2014, p 163). While the Taliban was in power, the discriminatory and violent treatment of women was "notorious" and depicted heavily in western media (ibid.). When the U.S announced that they would invade the country (to predominantly oust the Taliban forces), it also involved "saving" Afghan women from further Taliban subordination (ibid.). This is particularly rooted in highly problematic Orientalist[10] suppositions. Having an outsider, saving "Afghan women from Afghan men" showcased a long-standing imperialist design and neo-colonialist ideas of gender politics (Bahri, 2014, p 164). Afghan women have been unable to gain more independence and rights as societal practices exclude them from various components of society. These components range from: lack of education; inability to compete in the labor markets; all while facing "restrictive codes of behavior"; "gender segregation"; and having minimal positions in political power (Moghadam, 2002; and Bahri, 2014).

The changes that gender equality will incur are too different for them, their resentment and cynicism of the West was showcased as many claimed that the notion of women's rights is Eurocentric and goes against their religions and customs (Bahri, 2014). This reiterates the fact that *modernization*, in the eyes of some Afghans, equals to *westernization*. These issues are looked at further by Daun, Arjmand & Walford (2004) in the following section.

Globalization
Definition
Globalism is often conveyed as the political power of an "external force" operating in many different states (Baylis et al., 2017, p 10). However, the constructivist perspective delineates how these traditional modes of thinking about globalism is politicized and does not consider the ever-changing social norms and identities of actors within a state. Constructivists believe that globalism can be molded into creating "cross-national human rights and social movements" (ibid.). This also intertwines the dialectic relationship between local and global

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[10] Edward Said's Orientalism depicted the exaggerated and distorted differences between Arab cultures and Europeans & Americans. Often describing the culture as "uncivilized", "dangerous" and "backward" (Said, 1978).

entities. Globalization however, is sometimes considered the contemporary mode of Western imperialism, as well as the "latest phase of capitalism" (ibid.). It is 'uneven' in its effects throughout the world as it seems to be a "western theory applicable to only a small part of humankind" (p 12). This further alienates the 'non-western world' as various modernization theories are founded and established in the West. The representation of liberal capitalism's successes in the western world further perpetuates the divides and economic disparities found in some poorer nations (ibid.). The idea of economic globalization can also be seen as exploitative, as the richer capitalist nations are able to use the justification of globalization as a method to exploit poorer ones (ibid.). There is also the issue of accountability in "global governance". This is wherein post-structuralist questions of whom should exercise responsibility of transnational social movements are asked; "…who is responsible and democratically accountable?" (ibid.).

Globalization in Islam & Education

Globalizing processes in most Islamic countries have inspired new forms of education developments to arise (Daun et al., 2004). These developments however still adhere to the values and morals that Muslims specifically want for their children. It is difficult for most state-run education systems (such as the one found in Afghanistan) to find the "optimal balance between the demand for *moral* and *values* education and education enhancing cognitive and technical skills" (ibid., p 5). Globalizing processes not only require a new form of competitiveness between students, but also adds pressure on governments to legitimize "multi-religious and multi-cultural demands" (ibid.).

Western-type education in Muslim countries cannot be spoken about without deliberating the immense power of colonialism. When colonized, many Muslim countries were forced to adhere to secular laws. Colonial states introduced and implemented a new type of education: Western-type education (ibid.). It is then interesting to denote how Islamic countries which were never colonized by Christian colonizers also introduced more "modern Western-type education"– namely, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran and most importantly for this study, Afghanistan. These western types of education thus introduced ideas of "differentiation of society and individualization", concepts that were not commonplace in either the *Ummah*[11] or *Sharia*[12] (ibid.). Furthermore, most colonies experienced a decidedly higher rate of living

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[11] Arabic word for «community». Considered a supra-national Islamic community. For more information on *Ummahs*: http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2427?_hi=0&_pos=1
[12] 'Divine Law in Islam'. For more information on *Sharia* law:
http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0473?_hi=1&_pos=2#match

standards as the economy flourished (ibid.). Subsequently, such positive elements became overshadowed by "political differentiation, stratification, individualization and secularization" (Kramer, 1997; Tibi, 1995; Daun et al, 2004, p 8). These dividing factors and deviation from religious jurisprudence caused Muslims all around the world to equate 'modernization' (or globalization) with 'Westernization'. This in turn, meant such modernity or Western style of life was rejected by a majority of the Muslim population. The accelerating properties of globalization came when most Muslim countries were in a "period of nation-state construction" (Daun et al, 2004, p 10). This is especially true in non-colonized countries like Afghanistan. The relationship between Islam and the state has also gradually changed in the Muslim world. This is consequent of a few divergent influences: first, non-Islamic religions and other groups in society demanded fairer power relations; second, the extent of modernization and economic development; lastly, peacebuilding and development strategies were defined after reconstructing   the   nation   (ibid.).

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter will convey the methods and methodology used to collect and analyze the data procured in this thesis.

Research Design

'Research Design' is necessary to demonstrate how the research has been conducted throughout the process. This thesis explored opportunities and challenges of the education development in Afghanistan. This multifaceted subject needed a qualitative method as the flexibility of the method allowed a more general understanding of the subject. Consequently, it should also consider the quality of the research. Unlike a quantitative research method (QT) that presents the "reliability, replication and validity" of data, the research will substantiate the importance of the concepts discussed in the study through a qualitative approach (QL) (Bryman, 2012, p 46). The criterion of the 'trustworthiness' of the study include the ideas of *"credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability"* (Bryman, 2012, p 49). *Credibility* was shown in the study through the truthfulness of the data findings. The research showcased the *credibility* by first creating a rich context with in-depth descriptions of the secondary data. Second, it triangulated the information by utilizing more than one source of data. The interlinkage of the data collected and the subsequent findings, analysis and discussion, thus verified the *credibility* of the study. The contexts, assumptions and paradigms of the study were thoroughly portrayed and should, in theory, be *transferable* to another study of similar context (Trochim, 2006; Yilmaz, 2013). *Dependability* was proven through the presentation of how the data was both collected and analyzed. Similarly, to transferability, the research clearly stated the paradigms used to inform the study as well as any biases and values present in the thesis (Trochim, 2006; Yilmaz, 2013). The *confirmability* of the study was contingent on whether the research was able to disallow preceding values to "intrude [on the study] to a high degree" (Bryman, 2012, p 49). Appreciating this criterion for quality assurance, the study used a form of cross-sectional research design. It completes such a design through three semi-structured interviews with select participants and document analysis of transcribed interviews facilitated by the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) (which were named *'ATR Interviews')* (ibid.). Cross-sectional research is also often associated with QT methods (in order to prove causality, internal and external validity, replicability, etc.). However, this form of qualitative

"conversational interview" supported the search for understanding the influence that lived-experiences have on educational development in Afghanistan. This notion of "influence" connotates "causality" proving that QL research can also somewhat aim to examine "cause and effect" (Bryman, 2012, p 63).

Subsequently, the research questions (RQs) were answered through the data collected. This will be explored further in the Analysis & Findings (chapter 5). The first RQ was answered through the use of primary data (researcher's in-depth-interviews & *ATR Interviews*) and secondary data (previous literature on the subject and state document analysis). While the second RQ, which is a sub-question to the first was mostly answered through the primary data. See Figure 2 for a simplified visual of the Research Design.
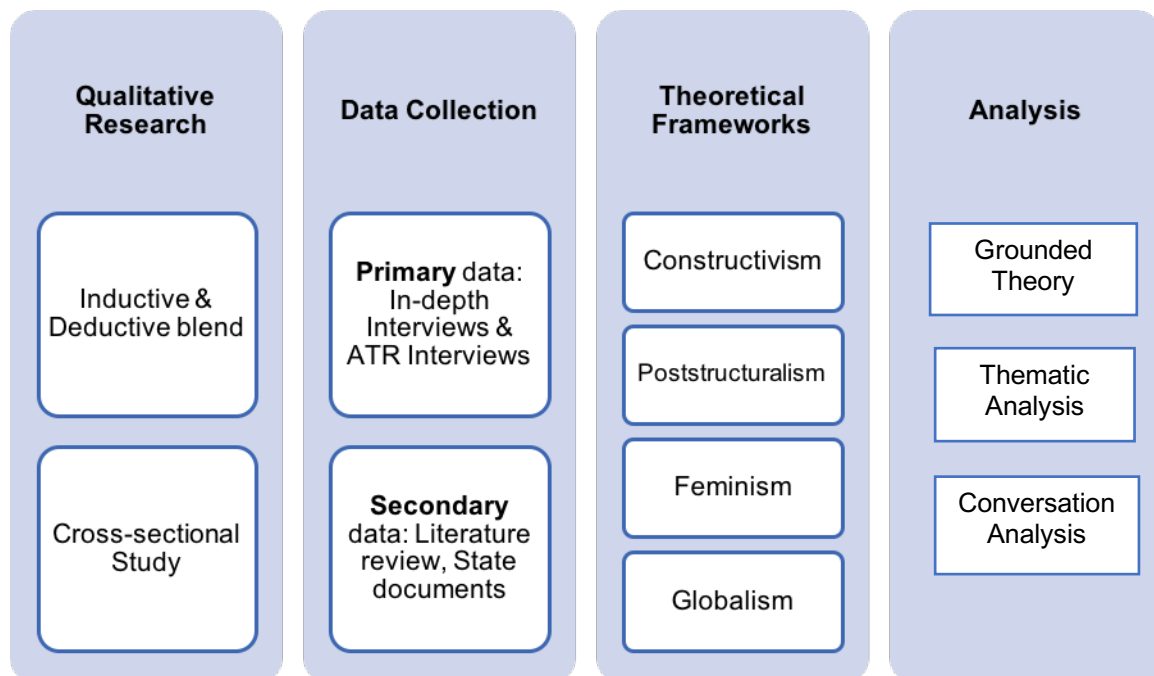
Figure 2: Research Design

Theoretical Framework & Values

The theoretical frameworks shaped everything from the construction of research questions to the approaches of data collection and analysis. These frameworks are less philosophical and more specific to what "interpretive community" was used to inform how the analysis is theorized (Creswell, 2013). The previous chapter established how theories of *constructivism, post-structuralism, feminism and globalism* were used to conceptualize the thesis topic and its subsequent research questions.

Social Constructivism

The researchers' *modus operandi* throughout this study was clearly influenced by the social constructivist paradigm (SC). It is evident in that the researcher wished to "seek understanding of the world in which they live and work" (Creswell, 2007, p 20). This is a simplified way to elucidate that researchers find a way to apply subjective meanings to peoples' lived experiences. This means that the objective of finding 'meaning' in experiences becomes complex – but does not aim to compress such views, rather, finds a way to revel in the complexity (Creswell, 2007). By utilizing this paradigm, the researcher sought to depend on the participants perspectives of the context of their realities. This also meant that subjective meanings were not simply "imprinted on individuals", rather, the joint experience that the researcher had with her participants (in her in-depth-interviews) allowed such meanings to be developed socially as it was happening. Implying then, that the theory/pattern the researcher wanted to inductively generate was constructed as the research was being realized.

Values & Biases

To help the reader understand the actions and findings of this thesis, it is important to discuss what kind of personal biases may have interfered with the research itself. The subjectivities of the researcher affect areas of the study such as "choice of research area, formulation of research question, choice of method… [and] interpretation of data" (Bryman, 2012, p 39). Durkheim's (1938) idea that one should have no "preconceptions" when conducting research is not feasible because of how much researcher's values impact the work they produce. As the research is based on personal accounts of experiences, for both children and adults, the researcher has found that "sympathy" and "close affinity" to the subjects was impossible to avoid (Bryman, 2012).

According to Bryman it is essential to keep some "reflexivity" within the paper so as to explain any of these possible biases. To adequately analyze participants beliefs, experiences and realities it was important to capture their backgrounds and context that influenced these elements in their lives. This was not achievable in one part of the study as the transcribed documents (*ATR interviews*) collected for analysis were not managed or conducted by the researcher herself[13]. The research observed the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee's values, but was not able to understand them with complete pervasive comprehension. It was also important

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[13] More information on this in the Strengths & Limitations chapter

to distinguish between the researchers views and that of the participants. This was easier to accomplish during the in-depth-interviews as the researcher was able to control what was asked in the interviews while being wary of any questions that could "lead" the participant to a certain stance (Bryman, 2012).

Research Population, Participants and Sampling

This chapter describes the research population sampled and studied. The collection of individuals and documents were selected as they held similar characteristics according to the researcher. The homogenous commonality between participants was appropriate for the research being conducted (Silverman, 2014). The sampling was completed by using a subset of the population. Subsequently, the sampling techniques are a combination of *intensity* sampling and *homogenous* sampling. Intensity sampling was used in this study to explore different components of education development in Afghanistan. While the homogenous sampling was used to focus on participants that have similar "experiences, beliefs and backgrounds" (Jacobs, 2013). The participants of this thesis vary as the research has examined two sets of primary data that have allowed for an informed and well-rounded study.

Participants

ATR Interviews (Norwegian Afghanistan Committee)

The initial sets of data given to the researcher were documents produced by ATR Consulting[14], an external firm that evaluated the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee and how they supported education development in three different provinces in Afghanistan. The documents themselves are in-depth interviews and focus group discussions conducted with: twenty-four School Children; six Members of a School *Shura*; one School Administrator; two Teachers; four Key Informants – two Provincial Directors of Education Management, one Head of a Teacher Training Center and one District Education Director; one CDC Member; and a Family of five. For coding purposes, the researcher grouped together the ATR Interviews in 5 categories: School Children, School Faculty, Local Community & Governance, Key Informants and the Case Study. From students to the Ministry of Education (MoE), the data provided a decent grasp on the realities of the education sector in the specific Badakhshan, Ghazni & Faryab. Through these experiences, elements of capacity building, reconstruction, security and international intervention were all found as significant themes during the data analysis. These

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[14] Website for 'Assess-Transform-Reach Consulting' (ATR Consulting): https://atr-consulting.com/

were described as *"ATR interviews"* so as to simplify the interpretations during the findings and analysis (See Appendix 3 for a full list of participants).

Interviews by the Researcher

In order to achieve further information about the education sector and education development processes in Afghanistan, the researcher conducted three additional in-depth interviews. These participants were chosen as they are Afghan employees of the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC). The previous 'ATR Interviews' were predominantly focused on gaining information on how NAC operationalizes on the ground and how they support educational developments. These added interviews allowed for more details on education development from the point of view of employees of the NGO itself. Firstly, the differing experiences of these participants was invaluable for the researcher to gain insight on contemporary education development processes in Afghanistan. Second, all participants have experienced some form of exclusivity and gave the researcher detailed accounts of these occurrences. The participants are all located in Kabul (Afghanistan) and will remain anonymous in this thesis. The interviewees will be identified through shortened characteristics to simplify the Analysis & Findings (5) chapter, these include: Interview 1, 'University Student'; Interview 2, 'Education Specialist'; and Interview 3, 'The Doctor'. Appendix 4 identifies more details of the participants to showcase their significance and relevance for the research.

Sampling

The sampling type applied to this research is the concept of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a strategic way in which to sample participants that have been chosen contingent on how relevant they are to the previously established research questions (RQs) (Bryman, 2012). This non-probability form of sampling strategy initially allowed the researcher to understand the units needed to be sampled through these research questions developed at the preparatory stages of research. Through the RQs developed, the researcher established 'who' and 'what' type of units were to be sampled (i.e people, documents, organizations, etc…) (Bryman, 2012). Several of these units are reflected in the 'Participants' chapter of this thesis but do not mention the documents, departments and organizations also studied. The categories that were recognized through the RQs in order to choose appropriate candidate units and contexts were framed as: *students, teachers, education professionals, non-governmental organizations & professionals (NGOs) and other elements of the education sector*. This guide

for the units and contexts was chosen in order to gain as many different perspectives (multiple realities) on a certain activity (Bryman, 2012). The specificity of the categories established by the RQs left a diminutive possibility of sampling "wide populations" or "random sampling" through probability sampling.

Qualitative Procedure
Inductive vs. Deductive

This thesis employed an exploratory research method regarding aspects of educational development and social construction in several regions in Afghanistan. It is important to denote that the study applied many differing concepts and theories throughout the study. For this study, the line between deductive and inductive research strategies seemed difficult to completely individualize (Bryman, 2012). However, this thesis applied a predominantly inductive strategy to the research, with components of a deductive capacity. The researcher used the deductive method by testing and pairing International Relations theories against the data collected. This meant that the research used the aforementioned preexisting theories before data analysis was even completed. Nonetheless, the research is predominantly inductive as the concepts and theories have been developed after the data analysis. This can also be known as grounded theory, "theory derived from data, systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process" (Bryman, 2012, p 387). However, one must demonstrate the importance of analyzing and testing existing theories (Silverman, 1993, Bryman, 2012). This is why both strategies have been undertaken throughout the research process. The aim of this thesis was to not only improve knowledge on the subject but also to develop theories pertaining to the aforementioned subject. As formerly stated, when comparing deductive to inductive research, qualitative analysis will ensure that the conceptual and theoretical framework will emerge as the researcher goes along.

Research Data Collection
Documents

Document collection and analysis for this thesis was utilized predominantly for content analysis. For example, documents pertaining to the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Afghanistan such as: the 'National Education Strategic Plan (2017-2021)' were relevant for the researcher to investigate as it explicates how the state has dealt with education development in Afghanistan. The use of documents in qualitative (QL) research is mostly noted as an advantage as it is "unobtrusive" and "non-reactive" source material (Bryman, 2012, p 543). The researcher

had to assess whether the documents studied were *authentic, credible, representative and meaningful* (Bryman, 2012). These assessment procedures helped guide the researcher in what type of documents should be engaged with and what documents should be considered more critically. One significant form of document collection is the official documents deriving from the state. The state as a source brought about significant textual data for the researcher (Bryman, 2012). Specifically, the researcher utilized the states' documentation of 'laws, regulations, bills, strategic plans, operation plans, policies, reports, statistics and strategies' to inform her study (Ministry of Education, 2020). These documents demonstrated *authenticity* when using the above-mentioned criteria of assessment. As authenticity is based on the "official" character they hold (Bryman, 2012). The second form of document collection employed was that of official documents deriving from private sources (Bryman, 2012). These heterogeneous types of documents were given to the researcher freely by a non-governmental organization, the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC). These documents are fully transcribed interviews, focus group discussions and a case study. The documents are not public domain and the participants are mostly anonymous. By mostly anonymous the researcher is referring to their anonymity in this thesis. The documents were a profoundly essential part of this research (Bryman, 2012).

Interviews

The interview is the most widely used method of collecting data for qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). This method was employed in this research in order to synthesize ideas and meanings alongside the documents analyzed. This simplified how the researcher was able to answer the research questions. Structured/ semi-structured interviewing was applied to the data collection as it focused more on the interviewees point of view. Although an interview guide was created - as the researcher wanted to adhere to the semi-structured framework - the often negatively regarded "rambling or going off on tangents" by interviewees was encouraged as it gave insight to the context in which the participant was re-constructing their reality (Bryman, 2012, 471). This also led to new questions being developed interactively as the data collection was progressing, staying true to the research designs' inductive nature. The flexibility and discursive nature of this method is illustrated as the specific questions asked by the researcher morphed and adapted throughout the conversation had with the interviewee (Bryman, 2012). The researcher asked the same (or at least similarly articulated) questions to each person interviewed. However, whatever they decided to focus on or speak more about was intrinsically

more significant as it reflected their thoughts, "…patterns and forms of behavior"[15] (Bryman, 2012, p 471).

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis, conversation analysis and grounded theory were used to analyze the data in this thesis. Thematic analysis (TA) is one of the most used approaches when it comes to qualitative analysis. This research adopted the strategic use of 'Framework' – "a matrix-based method for ordering and synthesizing data" (Ritchie et al., 2003, p 219; in Bryman, 2012, p 579). By constructing such a matrix filled with codes, the researcher was able to catalogue each theme and subtheme that developed throughout the data collection and analysis. These themes were established through patterns found when reading the 'transcribed documents'.

Conversation Analysis allows an awareness of *how* things are said as well as *what* is being said. The approach of Conversation Analysis (CA) (similarly to Discourse Analysis) operates within the model that language is not only a medium in which we communicate with our subjects, rather it is to be treated as a "focus of attention in its own right" (Bryman, 2012, p 522). CA was implemented in the 'interview' and the 'transcribed documents' analysis section of this study, as it concentrates on the interaction of naturally occurring situations or "naturally occurring talk" (Bryman, 2012; and Silverman, 2014, p 337). The ideas of *indexicality and reflexivity* ethnomethodology with CA helped understand these actions. Firstly, through indexicality, the researcher was able to understand the participant in accordance to how they 'act' (the spoken words as well as the silent pauses). Secondly, reflexivity is congruent with how talk is "constitutive of the social context in which it occurs" (Bryman, 2012, p 523).

Grounded theory was utilized in this thesis as theories were derived as the data collection was happening (Bryman, 2012). The relationship between theory, analysis and data collection were all working at the same time as the researcher conceptualized the findings. The way in which the researcher was completing the analysis in tandem with the data collection meant that research referred each one back to each other to form the discussion and conclusive chapters of this thesis (Glaser and Strauss; Bryman, 2012).

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[15] Further explanations on the Interview Guide can be found in Appendix 5.

Coding
Visual coding tools

The coding phases used to analyze this data were organized through the aforementioned matrix. First, an initial read through of every interview was completed, in order to get a comprehensive overview of the data; second, the researcher began preliminary coding, which meant generating simple codes to organize the data thematically; third, a more focused coding was realized in order to combine "similarly coded data" into bigger categories and themes; fourth, the researcher reviewed and refined the codes and themes and named them accordingly, using concepts from academic literature as well as previous NAC reports that allowed an understanding of how the NGO itself organizes and codes their data. Table coding was used in order to conceptualize the findings of the analysis through sectioned columns. Table 3 exemplifies the order of how each section was analyzed as well as the meaning of each concept[16].

Table 3: How the Data was Coded

Meaning Unit	Codes	Sub-Themes	Theme
The analysis began with finding data in all interviews that expressed the same ideas – these are known as 'meaning units'	This is wherein the generalization of the initial data analysis of the "meaning units" produced different codes to organize them thematically	Further analysis of initial codes allowed for even more focused coding to create larger categories	Finally, the researcher named the groups of codes in order to organize and simplify the analysis process

Strengths & Limitations

One of the strengths (and limitations) of this study is the use of qualitative (QL) research in leu of quantitative. QL research had the ability to analyze what actually happened in a naturally occurring setting and apply meaning to those experiences (Silverman, 2014). To analyze the experiences in educational systems of different Afghan nationals in inherently different education settings and systems needed the flexibility of the qualitative method. As QL

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[16] See Appendix 6 for all coding details, including how the codes were identified and a table conveying the data coding schema

research is more rooted in studying people in a more natural context, its flexible nature allowed the study to understand processes as well as the outcomes and provide meanings and some causalities in the findings and analysis chapter of this thesis (Silverman, 2014). However, the limitation of the study is also the fact that a non-quantitative approach was used. A quantitative or even mixed-methods study (performed through ethnographical research) would have potentially found more accurate and quantifiable depictions of experience in Afghan Education systems. It would have depicted processes of inclusivity in the Afghan education system over time rendering the research more externally valid. This type of research would have taken away the "anecdotal basis" of the study (that qualitative research methods can sometimes create) and allow a more credible and "scientific" method of cause and effect and generalizability of the study (Silverman, 2014). Further, an ethnographical study in educational decision-making processes and classrooms would have allowed a much deeper understanding educational development. However, the qualitative research conducted in this study found many relevant concepts and ideas that can be used to facilitate further research. The limitation and strength of the study only showcased that the next time such a study occurs, a "division of labor" between quantitative and qualitative studies would be beneficial in understanding the phenomena identified in the Findings chapter. This would allow the qualitative researchers to find the 'how' and the 'what', while the quantitative researchers to answer the 'why' (Silverman, 2014, p 402).

Ethical Considerations

There are many ethical implications during qualitative and quantitative research that should and must be expressly considered when embarking on social research. In this thesis, these are summarized by questions the researcher asked herself: *Could this harm participants? Is there a lack of informed consent? Is this an invasion of privacy? Is there deception involved?* (Diener and Grandall, 1978; Bryman, 2012). These four principles overlap with each other but are useful to surmise whether one is investigating a subject with integrity and a clear conscience. Another ethical consideration is that the data was collected in line with the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD). However, the research was handed into the NSD for confirmation after the interviews were completed. This was the lack of knowledge of the researcher that it had to be done in time, but in the end, it followed the ethical guidelines stipulated by the NSD. All information gathered from journals, books or the internet were all correctly cited in the extensive reference list at the end of this thesis, as plagiarism must be considered when taking part in any study.

Chapter 5: Analysis & Findings

This chapter will present the findings of all the interviews conducted and analyze the discoveries in order to answer the research questions of this thesis. This will also include some analysis of secondary data (journals, documents, theoretical frameworks) as they connect with the primary data. There will be an overview of the challenges and opportunities found in education development today, and how the education system in Afghanistan is slowly becoming more inclusive with the aid of NGOs like the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC). It will conclude that such aid must work in tandem with Government ministries as only then will improvements in education development be sustainably achieved. It will also find that sustainability is the goal for most of the Afghans working in the education sector, as they tear away from the concept of a 'rentier state' in their hopes to become self-reliant and independent from foreign aid. The foundation for analysis was established through the literature review and theoretical framework chapters of this thesis. Table 5 conveys the central themes found in the primary and secondary data, and was used as an organizational tool to adequately complete thematic analysis for this findings chapter. The themes were developed using the different experiences and opinions of all the interviews combined and utilizing themes found in the literature review of this thesis[17]. These themes have been coded to understand them more simply. See Appendix 8 for and overview and details on the themes explored in the following chapters.

Table 4: Central Themes

Concepts & Notions	Sub-Theme	Central Theme
Teacher Quality (trainings and diplomas) Capacity Building Community Training Modernization Teacher to child ratio Communication between governance (local and state) Health Education	**Quality Education** **Workforce Development** **NGO Support** **Inclusive Education** **Constructivism**	**Improving Education Development**

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[17]For further details on themes see Appendix 8 and for thematic coding please see Appendix 6.

Child led activities Lack of Accessibility Supporting marginalized groups Gender Exclusion Linguistic Exclusion Rural/Urban Divide Discrimination Job Insecurity Underage work Better Communication Religion	**Feminism** **Rural/Urban Divide** **Flexible School Policies** **Inclusivity** **Economic Disparity**	**Social Fragmentation & Horizontal/Vertical Inequalities**
Accessibility Security Religion Violence in Schools Warzones Health services Development focus Shelter & WASH facilities Work force Development Dependence on external actors Governance & Civil Society Poverty Reduction	**Rentier State** **Reconstruction** **Security / Safety** **Civil Governance** **Government** **Urban/ Rural Divide** **Economic Disparity** **Globalization**	**Fragile State**

Part I: Opportunities & Challenges

Part I of this chapter will tackle the first research question: **What are the opportunities and challenges for improving the Education sector in Afghanistan?** This section will provide insight on the issues the Ministry of Education (MoE) has faced in order to take more ownership and establish legitimacy in the Afghan education sector. As noted in Part III of the literature review, newer policies in education development have established a need for more inclusive education, school reconstruction and restructuring, as well as more thorough training

in management and teaching programs. Part I of this chapter will inform the study by first understanding the opportunities and challenges of the education sector in Afghanistan. It must be noted that most of Part I unintendedly conveyed more challenges than opportunities in educational development as these were the findings in the data.

Initially, it will explicate different elements of **Education Development** such as: quality education, student learning, the (historical and contemporary) differences between Islamic & Western-type education systems, and how a constructivist-based pedagogic system is slowly becoming the norm in teaching methodology. This section will also marginally discuss religio-cultural paradigms to understand how education was politicized and used as an ideological tool to indoctrinate children.

The second section of Part I discusses the **Reorganization, Restructuring, Resources & Management** of the education sector. This section will examine the different steps taken to improve school management and civil society while explicating the importance of communication between the two entities. This section will also aim to understand the different **Resources** needed (human, material and financial) in order to achieve improved education development. The human, material and financial resources will be spread throughout the sections, but will begin with understanding the significance of teacher education (TE). TE is meaningful as a standard in human resources, as the different trainings they receive will allow for more critical thinking, contribute to stronger early childhood development (ECD) (in order to foster social change in the future) and ameliorate children's education in Afghanistan *en masse*.

Third, the chapter will discuss education developments' most prevalent challenges – **Inclusivity, Education Barriers and Discrimination**. This section will find that limited financial resources and economic disparities are one of the principal reasons that children do not go to school. This section will be organized by the social, cultural, economic and political horizontal inequalities (HIs) established by Lager et al. (2011) in the secondary data. Inclusivity is the overarching basis for all these inequalities as without them, a more inclusive education system would be possible.

Fourth, **Gender Equity & Equality** was meaningful to explore as its own paradigm as the issue was so prominently stated throughout the interviews. This section will also be organized using Langer et al.'s HI framework while also touching on the OECD's societal fragility framework. This portion of the findings also expands on the urban-rural divide in regards to feminism. As established in the secondary data, feminism and gender is viewed comparably different in rural and urban settings.

Fifth, discourse on **Security and Safer Learning Environments** will be recognized as security is a principle challenge for education development. Moreover, the impact of safer buildings, WASH facilities and basic school amenities fosters physical safety for children in school and consequently cultivates better learning. This is also connected with 'resources' as such material necessities are essential for developing the education sector adequately. Additionally, concepts of the urban-rural divide are reiterated in developing and modernizing the state as the chapter delves into the public health system in Afghanistan. This section tackles the issues particularly in the scope of the novel Coronavirus epidemic (COVID-19), as education development has been paused and the education system is virtually non-existent (Interview 3, May 2020).

The last section in Part I emphasizes issues in **Governance** and civil society as seen throughout the research. This section will speak to the overall fragility and weaknesses of the governing systems in Afghanistan. The responsibilities and importance of the School Shura and how the interest of the state emphasizes how "structures of society determine social behavior" (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007).

Table 6 illustrates a summary of the findings in order to convey the opportunities and challenges for improving education development in Afghanistan. The opportunities listed are all of the elements that are already in place to help improve the education sector. While the second column expresses the difficulties and challenges that education development processes face.

Table 5: Opportunities & Challenges for Developing the Education Sector (RQ1)

Opportunities	Challenges
NGO Support	Lack of teaching and learning materials
Capacity building (trainings for teachers, communities and students)	Relevance of teaching materials
More student involvement & responsibilities	Unstable school life (absent teachers, lack of materials, discrimination)
Community based activities	Lack of teachers / Low teacher-child ratio (especially female ones)
Health Education & Disaster Risk Reduction	Socioeconomic inequalities
Some care for special needs students	Gender exclusion

Relevance of teaching materials (small changes)	Discrimination (disabilities, language, ethnicity)
NESP 2016 Document (Ministry of Education's Intentions)	MoE's inability to fund more projects (for each district department of Education)
	School Rehabilitation / Construction
	Lack of WASH facilities
	Insecurity (war, insurgency, health risks)

Education Development

This section of the chapter will aim to understand education development and its different elements and concepts as was found in the findings of the primary and secondary data. It will illustrate everything from quality education to student learning, differences between Islamic and western education and how Afghanistan is leaning towards a more constructivist-based pedagogic system. This section will also describe how education has been used as a political and ideological tool to indoctrinate children in the state with ideas ranging from fundamentalism to communism.

In the 1990s, developing education in Afghanistan became an important and prominent paradigm as various NGOs endeavored to reestablish and reconstruct the Afghan education systems. The idea started as education would bring the country "back to peace and prosperous development" and establish stability and security in the state (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007). This is echoed by the Ministry of Education's National Education Strategic Plan (2016), as it aims to "sustain Afghanistan's socioeconomic development and social cohesion" through the education system (NESP, 2016). It is also important to foster a "shared sense of responsibility" between students, educators and education authorities. As has been established in the introduction to this chapter, education development is constructed through a plethora of concepts that formulates its meaning. The aims of developing education in Afghanistan boils down to: quality of education, quality of teachers, increased inclusivity and equitability, safe learning environments and as final goal, producing productive members of society ready to contribute to their state (NESP, 2016). Education means something different to most of the interviewees, the notions of what education means to them is demonstrated in the following statements:

Personally, I believe that education is for increasing the knowledge of people as much as possible. As made through standard education so that every person that is educated can bring positive changes into themselves and finally, it's the country… which will lead the country to be more sustainable and survive better (University Student, Interview 1, May, 2020).

"… when I think about school, my future and serving to my country, peace building and development of my country comes to mind" (Student, FGD1, ATR, 2019).

"School is a place of learning knowledge and education. I come here to become an educated person and serve to my people in the future… 'learn knowledge from the cradle to the grave'" (Student, FGD2, ATR, 2019).

Quality Education

As has been noted, quality education is lacking in the education sector. It is difficult to attain adequate quality education as the teaching materials are not specifically developed for contemporary (21st century) Afghanistan (Interview 1; Interview 2, May, 2020). First, some of the materials are adapted from foreign countries, which interferes with teachers' abilities to make their students understand and conceptualize subjects in an Afghan setting (Interview 1, May, 2020). Second, some textbooks that are given to students are reused and are no longer relevant to today's society (ibid.). Although lacking in basic teaching materials, some of the government schools NAC supports had teachers using maps, storybooks, simple materials (such as beads and wood to showcase mathematical equations) and libraries (albeit with a limited selection of books) for establishing deeper and more meaningful learning (FGD1, ATR, 2019). However, there is still a distinct need for more education materials and facilities like computers, laboratories and updated textbooks (FGD1, ATR, 2019). Table 6 portrays the students wants and needs.

Table 6: Findings - Students Wants & Needs

Interviews	What they do not want	What they want
FGD1, FGD2 & FGD3 (ATR, 2019)	- Lack of teaching and learning materials - Inconsistency in school - Impolite students - Absent teachers - Discrimination - Girls don't want boys disturbing them at school (FGD1) - Parents disallowing their kids to go to school (specifically girls, but also relevant to some boys who have to work instead) - Conflict and disorder	- More teaching & Learning Materials (books, chairs, boards, laboratories, projectors, computers) - Equipped library (with more books) - Qualified Teachers to be "confident about their subjects and lectures… and ability to control the students" (FGD2) - Be present and on time - All students to respect the teachers - Everyone to adhere to laws including: teachers, students and custodians - Cleanliness - Discipline - Green areas - Better conditions of schools and a better building standard - Electricity in some schools

Islamic & Western-type Education

The Doctor's Experience

One interviewee's experiences in radically different education systems allows a first-hand understanding of the historical education systems in Afghanistan and neighboring countries during times of conflict (Interview 3, May 2020). The interviewee was enrolled in primary and secondary school during the Soviet Occupation (1979-1989). Throughout the

occupation, the textbooks, cartoons, theater and television were all based on Soviet and Russian perspectives and ideologies (ibid.). Even the literature was based on Russian authors such as Leo Tolstoy (1828 - 1910) and Maxim Gorky (1868 -1936) (ibid.). Communist ideology was evident in her studies as the interviewee was taught that "the rich take the right (of) the poor people… they are cruel people…" (ibid.). This was to entrench the idea that society is dominated by the *bourgeoisie* (or capitalist class) and treads upon the proletariats through a disproportionate distribution of wealth. This is one way in which 'ideological subversion' (or psychological warfare) was utilized by the Soviet Union as they attempted to reconstruct and reproduce the Afghan population's realities and cultures (Bezmenov, 1984; Morgan, 2002). This affected her relationship with her wealthy grandfather as the communist education she was receiving "fooled" her and indoctrinated these beliefs into her as a young girl (ibid.).

The Doctor described further occurrences of ideological subversion in her early childhood which included posters around the school depicting the Mujahideen as devils with "horns and tails". The teachers would maintain that the Mujahideen were "not good people… they are against the development, against the woman right, against the education…" which she claims is now comparable to the current Taliban ideology (ibid.). The first time the interviewee saw the Mujahideen on television, she was shocked to find that they looked human. When the first civil war began in 1989, and the Mujahideen began killing people on the street, she claimed it reminded her of that poster and how she then believed that the portrayals of them as devils was actually (metaphorically) correct.

While the Soviet Union worked on indoctrinating ideas of communism, modernization, secularization and social mobilization in countries like Afghanistan and Iran, neighboring countries like Pakistan had a radically different experience in education. The Doctor's cousins in Pakistan experienced the opposing 'Islamic militant ideologies' in their learning. Their textbooks were encumbered with violent depictions against Soviet soldiers. She exemplifies a mathematical problem given to her cousins at school that said: 'if there are 10 Russian soldiers and you kill two of them, how many are left?' (paraphrased, ibid.). The information differed drastically from her Russian education as the information her Pakistani counterparts were given were filled with "messages of jihad, war… [and] very strict Islam" (Interview 3, May 2020). This was difficult for her to understand when she was a child. Although they were from the same family, the radically different education systems they experienced inculcated vastly different views on important aspects of society and politics. Evidence of the 'ideological battlefield' between "Marxist ideology vs Islamic militant ideology" that was stated by

Matsumoto (2008) is showcased through the Doctor's experience with these divergent archetypes. As an example, this form of early childhood development structure established ideologies in women's rights and roles as the two polarized education systems respectively taught one that women have the right to achieve equality and equity (Soviet Education), while the other was taught traditional gender norms based in religio-cultural paradigms (Islamic Education). This led the interviewee to conclude that "we cannot accept each other", as even discussing it only led to internal conflict within the family (Interview 3, May, 2020).

Islamic Education

When discussing Islamic and Western-type Education, another interviewee explicates that education systems in Afghanistan:

[Our education] should be like the Western education… Teaching all the religions… This makes the student to understand what other religions has. The students in Afghanistan, they would never have a basic concept of what other religions are (Interview 1, May 2020).

An understanding of other religions could broaden the minds of young Afghan students and equip them with a wider cultural lens. This could consequently contribute to a more complete and inclusive education system, as well as society (ibid.). As stated in the 'Religion & Islam' section of the Literature Review, the two prominent cleavages of Islam in Afghanistan are *Sunni & Shia*. As was established in the chapter, the Afghan population is predominantly *Sunni*. The interviewee argued that there are major issues in the understanding and knowledge production between the two Islamic cleavages. As he stipulates that even in Islamic studies (in both *madrasas* and Western-type schooling), they do not teach the students about the "other" Islam. Most schools in Afghanistan teach about *Sunni* Islam, but will not explicate issues in a *Shia* perspective (and vice versa, however it must be noted that the *Shia* are the minority). This is not typically problematic as there are certain areas in the cities that will be clearly demarcated *Sunni* or *Shia*. This limits discrimination and horizontal inequalities between the religious clusters in schools as students will customarily enroll in schools that teach their religion. However, the interviewee exemplified a situation in the

twelfth grade during an Islamic lesson in school. He stated that the students were criticizing the concepts that were being taught in the Islamic textbooks as it emphasized *Sunni* Islam and did not offer any consideration to *Shi'ism* or *Shi'ite*[18] students. The teacher ignored the student's complaints and carried on with the lesson. It was evident then, that even in Islamic studies, the schooling "doesn't cover the whole of Islam" (Interview 1, May, 2020). This lack of knowledge of the 'other' cleavages could potentially create further conflict between them – this is already evidenced in the Taliban's (a mostly *Sunni* organization) violent persecution of *Shi'ites* (Hansen et al., 2009).

Politicized Religion

One interviewee discussed her relationship with Islam in detail. She described that she struggled with her Muslim identity when she was younger as her experiences in Soviet schooling had colored and influenced her understanding of the religion. She noted however, when she was able to study the *Qur'an* in more detail by herself, that Islam is a complex paradigm and that her previous assumptions of the religion (which she was intrinsically part of - culturally and traditionally) were heavily influenced by the hegemonic political force at the time. She states that:

> *"Islam is not the Mujahideen. Islam is not the Taliban. Islam is not the people"* in *power* (Interview 3, May, 2020)

This powerful statement allowed an understanding that when she separated the political issues from the religion, she was able to 'come closer to God' (ibid.). It was critical for her to study Islam through her own agency to understand this significant paradigm. As she had learned Islamic practices from her family and her cultural context, she had never looked further into it. Her culture had dictated her intimate understanding of the religion in her naturally constructed and familiar world (Morgan, 2002). The interviewee claims it is important to understand the *Qur'an* oneself, and not just from what others (parents, Shuras, Mullahs) tell you. This is rooted in the Gramscian idea of who produces culture (or in this case religion) and how it materializes in the real world (Morgan, 2002). In this case, the culture or 'religion' producers were the men in her family and hegemonic forces in politics and civil society (Morgan, 2002; Interview 3, May 2020). She establishes further that

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[18] A person who observes *Shia* Islam

modernization and reformation of Islamic schools should be implemented in Afghanistan. Students should learn Arabic in order to understand the *Qur'anic* scripture through its 'sacred language' as this would transcend any misunderstandings of the real meanings behind the *hadith* (Schiffman, 1996). This showcases the importance of learning the language in order to obtain "ritualistic validity" to understand divinity in its transcendental form (Schiffman, 1996). This would allow students to separate and differentiate from cultural and politicized interpretations of the scripture and the misinformation sometimes purposively spread. This is exemplified by the interviewee by concepts of gender in the *Qur'an*. She further states that "in the holy *Qur'an*, the female and the men was equally mentioned" and yet men have argued with her that "we don't listen to women, because Adam listen to Eve" - she states that they still use this argument to this day (Interview 3, May 2020).

Constructivist-based pedagogy

Correspondingly to Brooks & Brooks' (1994) constructivist method of education, one interviewee explains that teachers should identify "the needs of their children in the class and help them learn…" not just implement their plan for the classroom. Teachers that will go further than just a shallow explanation of subjects and allow the students to conceptualize and understand practical implementation, will add more meaning to their learning (Interview 2, May, 2020). Another interviewee believes a good educator should be someone with high skills in transferring and teaching knowledge and understanding behavior (Interview 3, May, 2020). Behaviorism, as mentioned in the Constructivist chapter of this thesis, is based on the idea that conditioning experiences create behaviors and realities (Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002). Similarly, another interviewee explains that a good teacher begins by showing up, being clear-cut in their teachings and having a close relationship with each student. One teacher that received training from NAC noted that she improved greatly in her teaching methodology as she understood how to practically implement all the methods she had learned in her classes (IDI9, ATR, 2019). She noted that "preparing the teaching plan made me able to understand the real meaning of managing and organizing the classroom" (ibid.).

Reorganization, Restructuring, Resources & Management

This section examines the different steps taken to improve school management and the community while explicating the importance of communication between the two entities. The human, material and financial resources that are needed to improve and reform education development in Afghanistan is spread throughout Part I. This section will address human resources and will highlight the importance of teacher education and teachers themselves.

Communication

Coordination between students, religious leaders, parents, teachers, school faculty, School *Shuras*, NGOs and communities are significant to promote better education development and reorganization (FGD4, ATR, 2019). There is an issue in some provinces where it is not traditionally accepted for the teachers to have direct relationships with the parents of the students, making it difficult for the teachers to report any activities (good or bad) that their children are doing (IDI5, ATR, 2019). Ameliorated communication has also led to more student-led organizations and leadership programs to be implemented in schools (FGD2 and 3, ATR, 2019). These are in the forms of 'student parliament', environmental and sports programs. This allows for better engagement in schooling systems and more possibilities to include communities (as exemplified by a competitive sporting game between villages) (FGD2, 3 and 4, ATR, 2019). Such engagement not only fosters improved learning environments, but allows the children to develop a feeling of school pride and excitement to go to school. This contributes to their overall psychosocial (PSS) welfare as they bond over important aspects of school life. Respecting their school grounds is a new structure in the schooling system as committees aimed at cleaning up their school environment and campus (helping the custodians) allows for a deeper respect for the school while establishing a place that is clean for them to study (FGD2, 3, 4, ATR, 2019). The data also showed that the only girl's school interviewed did not get asked questions about student parliament and they did not seem to have any committees that allowed for them to establish themselves in leadership roles in their school.

Teachers

The general schooling systems (centralized by the state) in Afghanistan face a plethora of challenges. From a severe lack of teaching materials (books, school supplies) (FGD1, FGD2, FGD3, ATR, 2019; Interview 1, 2, 3) to sometimes unsafe learning environments (FGD4, ATR, 2019; Interview 3, May, 2020). However, one of the biggest issues discovered in this thesis and a common theme throughout the interviews was a lack of teacher quality (human resource). Firstly, there is a distinct lack of teachers (low teacher to child ratio) that correlates with the underqualification of most teachers. Consequent of the "shortage" of teachers in the country, many teachers will educate students on subjects they have no expertise in and are "teaching things they don't really know" (Interview 2, May, 2020). This means that some teachers that are qualified in language studies will also be teaching scientific studies (Interview 1 and

Interview 3, May, 2020). There has also been a distinct mention of teachers' salaries and quality of life. As the salaries are low, the conditions of teaching deteriorate as less effort will be placed by the teacher to fulfil their duties (FGD1, FGD2, FGD4 ATR, 2019; Interview 3, May, 2020). In the experience of one interviewee, he did not meet his teacher until the end of year exam (Interview 1, May, 2020). This is linked to the low salary/wages that teachers are earning. Most teachers will end up teaching private courses in which they are paid extra for having that second job (FGD4, ATR, 2019; Interview 1, May, 2020). This is also mentioned by the School *Shura*, as teachers will find "work outside of schools to provide the necessities of their families" and will falter in the school they work in as "they leave the lessons" to go to their second jobs (FGD4, ATR, 2019).

Teacher Education

Teacher training or education is the responsibility of the MoE with support from NGOs and other development partners (WENR, 2016). There is a distinct need for teachers to become more educated as most current practicing teachers in rural districts have "no formal training and have only completed primary or secondary school" (WENR, 2016). This is slowly changing as NGOs like the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) are providing trainings for teachers in many different elements such as classroom management, inclusivity, special needs training, and innovative teaching methodologies. As teacher education (TE) is highly significant in the learning outcomes of children, one interviewee explicated that it will take some time to change the way educators are teaching, as some have taught the same way for over thirty years (Interview 2, May, 2020). With some patience, teacher trainings will change the way teachers educate and provide sustainable improvements (ibid.).

These trainings are facilitated by NGOs and through the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). The Head of the TTC in Faryab discusses some issues in TE as "teachers cannot teach and study simultaneously" (IDI12, ATR, 2019). He also discusses concerns with insecurity as NGOs are sometimes unable to provide funding for newer security measures to be established (ibid.). As Jelinek (2006) describes, Afghanistan is one of the most challenging countries for NGOs to work in. The operational space that these organizations need to work with is divided between foreign and national military forces and armed opposition forces which can sometimes undermine developmental efforts. As Jelinek (2006) states, sometimes such operations must be suspended as they must think of the safety of their employees as well.

Inclusivity, Education Barriers & Discrimination

Education is seen as a "vital source" that provides lifesaving knowledge and skills for survival (INEE, 2010, p 54). This section will describe the most predominant challenges in developing the education sector by illustrating the lack of inclusivity in the sector, education barriers and discrimination. This section will find that limited financial resources and economic disparities are one of the principal reasons that children do not go to school. It will also go further into other important education deterrents such as: school locations, traditional and cultural family values (specifically identified through cultural perspectives of gender) and inherent insecurity in the provinces studied (Badakhshan, Ghazni and Faryab). A lack of inclusivity is the overarching basis for all these inequalities as without them, a more inclusive education system would be possible.

Economic Vertical Inequalities

A common theme found in the interviews showcases the **main** barrier for education development is financial or economic instability (All FGDs, ATR, 2019). These obstacles have shown that some students preferred working to help their financially strained families (high levels of child labor) (ibid.). Sometimes, teachers are being paid directly by students and parents and are therefore straining the students and parent's economic resources even further. Some students prefer working in the fields, farming, agriculture or as mechanics in order to provide for their families. In the study's data, this economic inequality is mostly affecting boy's enrollment in school. It seems that girls do not have the same cultural responsibilities to provide for their families. Although girls do not have to go to work, they will miss school for different reasons (which will be discussed in a subsequent section).

Discrimination & Marginalization

The different Civil wars (from 1979-2020) established a foundation for discrimination of different ethnicities. When the *Mujahideen* came into power, discrimination was seen all over Afghanistan. This is something one interviewee claims she hadn't experienced before, as the Soviet communists did not allow such discriminations to occur in schools (Interview 3, May, 2020). She believes discrimination is one of the biggest struggles in the country as she states:

"Now discrimination everywhere. In office, in school, [it is like] a disease…
affecting people more than Coronavirus" (Interview 3, May, 2020)

According to the interviewee, there should be school material that covers discrimination more explicitly and condemns it. If such discriminations persist, she states *"we cannot develop"* (Interview 3, May, 2020). One important note in this research, there is a distinct discrepancy in the findings regarding discrimination. The experiences described in the ATR interviews did not correlate with the interviews conducted by the researcher. Discrimination was barely noted in the ATR interviews although questions about discrimination were directly asked. Most of the answers either brushed it off, or stated *"no, we do not have such issues here"* (FGD1, ATR, 2019). When the District department head of Education from Ghazni was asked about discrimination of nomadic groups and other marginalized groups, he claims with certainty that *"no such problems are existing in our society"* and that students are not marginalizing any nomadic groups, minority ethnic groups or disabled children (IDI9, May, 2020). Another group of schoolchildren also claimed that there is no discrimination of 'social class' either, *"our teachers are like our intellectual fathers and behave the same with poor and rich students"* (FGD2, ATR, 2019). The reason for this is not clearly demarcated, however, one thought could be that the ATR participants are perpetuating discriminatory practices themselves. Alternatively, they are not in a minority group and therefore do not notice such discrimination being perpetrated.

Gender Equity & Equality

As above-mentioned in the introductory section of this chapter, gender equity and equality needed its own section in this thesis as it was such a prominent concept that arose in both the primary and secondary data. This section will discuss how feminist ideals differ greatly between rural and urban districts in Afghanistan. As mentioned by Bahri (2014) in the Theoretical & Conceptual Frameworks chapter, feminism is sometimes seen as a western model and has therefore caused a hyper conservative reaction in the country. This is rooted in fears of westernization dressed as modernization (or modernist ideals of feminism). This is somewhat shown in the data as the ATR interviews were all conducted in rural areas. The other in-depth-interviews showcased Afghanistan in a more general light (thus enabling the research to understand the differences between the urbanite perspectives and people in rural areas).

This section will further discuss the segregation of the sexes and whether this is beneficial for education systems. The interviews showcased varying opinions on the subject but the overall conclusion revealed that it is necessary to keep children segregated in schools for now. As was established by Moghadam (2002) in the secondary data, Islamic countries advocate for segregation between the sexes, as the concept goes far beyond classroom dynamics. This section will also establish the agency of the female participants as they challenge traditional and cultural norms and inadvertently establish themselves as *Islamic feminists*.

According to a female teacher in Faryab, one of the predominant education barriers for girls is poverty. She also states, rather assertively, that "another barrier is intellectual poverty". She criticized the cultural inequalities and traditional gendered roles of women staying at home, working *"as a maid and serve her family…or wait for her wedding to serve her in-laws family"* (IDI5, ATR, 2019). Her criticism and frustration is notable as she believes that if families could understand that educating their *"daughters, sisters, wives* [could potentially bring a] *positive impact in our daily life* [and promote] *prosperity to all individuals of the family"* (ibid.). She states that this conservative way of treating girls and women in Afghanistan is seen as a major deterrent for girls schooling (ibid.). When asked why girls should go to school, another participant claimed that letting girls' study would be a source of sustainable development in the country and then proceeded to ask:

"Why shouldn't they have the same rights?" (Interview 1, May, 2020)

Additionally, one participant described what it would be like if women were to become more educated in the state. She illustrates that this would prevent men from doing *"anything that they want"*, connoting tones of male violence (Interview 3, May, 2020). Gender-based violence (GBV) would be lessened and no longer tolerated as women will have a fuller understanding of their rights and aim to make sustainable changes to their societies by disallowing such abuses to continue (ibid.). The participant further elucidated that the uneducated (and largely illiterate) population (especially in rural villages throughout Afghanistan) still do not understand the importance of education for women (ibid.).

Horizontal Inequalities

The issues in gendered exclusion of girls in education is further stipulated to be rooted in culture (or cultural horizontal inequalities). When interviewing the Education Specialist, she discusses gender norms and the Islamic side of Afghan culture. She stipulates that the rights of women are illustrated very differently in the *Qur'an* compared to the reality of the situation for many Muslim women. According to the participant, the *Qur'an*'s scripture conveys that women and men should be educated equally, but that in some Afghan villages this mandate in the scripture is largely ignored (Interview 2, May 2020). This inadvertently makes her an Islamic feminist, as she uses the theological argument stated previously by Moghadam (2002). The participant also indicated that Islam is not always part of the issue, it is also rooted in the Afghan (tribal) culture (although it must be noted that these two elements are somewhat intertwined). She states "*we have to change the culture* [through education] *so that more people can understand*" (ibid.). A change in the culture will alter the power dynamics between men and women, making it more equal for future generations.

Even in these times of modernization, a participant specifies that the resistance of giving women education (which would in turn give women an understanding of their rights) is rooted in the fear of change. In this aspect, the urban-rural divide is prevalent as one interviewee claims that "*girls are not going to school because of cultural things…their fathers, their grandfathers, members of the Shura*" disallow them from going to school. During the NAC trainings, they are claiming that women should go to school (agreeing with the NGO and the trainings they receive at the time), yet forbid them once the trainings are over (ibid.).

One male interviewee compared gender ideals in Afghanistan to foreign countries. He explained how these foreign countries prove that educating women will benefit state building and the economy rather than obstruct them (Interview 1, May, 2020). Despite the secondary data claiming otherwise, the small sample of participants for this study showed that men (and of course women) are fighting for the personal development, workforce expansion, education, participation and inclusivity in politics and society for all women in Afghanistan.

Challenges in gender paradigms are also inculcated in the **economic HIs** (lack of assets - financial or human - and lack of employment opportunities and income levels). Women and girls are part of this economic HI as Afghanistan's HDI showcases that the estimate gross national income (per capita) of females and males differ by nearly three times (UNDP, 2020). There is also a considerable difference between labor force participation of male and female civilians over the age of 15, as females are at 48.7% and males are at 82.1% (UNDP, 2020).

Political HIs are conveyed through the political struggle of women having a voice in state affairs. This is interlinked with Smith's (2017) feminist theoretical framework of gendered exclusion in state matters. This disallows women to establish themselves in these domains of power and therefore limit their experiences and contributions to the state (Smith, 2017). This is wherein the socially constructed notion of gender should be evaluated further and deconstructed to fragment the normative ideas of men and women's roles.

As aforementioned, vertical inequalities (VIs) are focused more on individuals within a household. For women in Afghanistan, it is noted that girls are still suffering from inequalities in the household. Many of the participants (both from the ATR Interviews and the other in-depth-interviews) specified that there is very little to no equal rights when it comes to female students, as they have much less opportunity to go to school due to familial reasons. Especially in rural areas, parents, mullahs and school *Shuras* alike are somewhat reluctant to let their girls go to school as they fear that they will learn *"bad things"* which will somehow work against them (Interview 2, May, 2020).

Classroom Integration between Sexes

The integration between the sexes in schooling was mostly noted through the interviews the researcher conducted herself. When asked about the segregation of the sexes (boys and girls), one participant believed they should be integrated, as his experience in Western schooling (in both Greece and Norway) allowed him to see first-hand that this type of school system works well for states in the West (Interview 1, May, 2020). However, the participant further explicated that in rural areas this would be a problem (ibid.). The segregation of the sexes, he states, is sometimes the only reason some girls are allowed to go to school. Therefore, the Western notions of "changing" these ideals quickly, would merely push religious leaders and parents to reject the idea instantaneously and possibly provoke a neoconservative reaction from the community. However, he believes this issue will change for the better in the next two decades. The Education Specialist further stipulates that the students should be separated for now, but should be attaining the exact same education. She agrees with the first participant, as she claims integration would be problematic if it happened suddenly, as this type of integration needs to be slow or it will *"cause another revolution"* (Interview 2, May, 2020). It is interesting to note again, the Doctor claiming that women and men should not really be separated as *"we work together, we live together"* (Interview 3, May, 2020).

Feminism

The study aimed to understand the interviews through feminist and gender theory in International Relations while considering the gender-based violence, exclusion of women in the state and the socially constructed norms of Afghan women. This further allowed an understanding of the socially and culturally constructed hierarchy of power in the country (Smith, 2017). These social constructs of inequality are established at a young age in the culture. According to the Education Specialist, issues in gender will not be fixed unless they are understood and explained at an early cognitive stage in childhood development (Interview 2, May, 2020). As she further described, *"the root of this idea is coming from education"* in this male dominated society. According to her, there is a belief by Afghan men that if gender issues are worked on and discussed, women will get to know their rights and they will separate from them, and they will lose all of their power (ibid.). The elucidation of such gendered exclusion is showcased here as this reluctance of including women in education further indoctrinates the "invisibility" of women in the state and makes their experiences and contributions irrelevant (Smith, 2017).

Security & Safer Learning Environments

Insecurity

In the secondary data, it was found that violence and conflict are most noticeable in states with high levels of horizontal inequalities (Langer et al., 2011). The interlinked issues between socioeconomic and political HIs provide more ground for interstate violence and conflicts to occur. Levels of insecurity in Afghanistan stem from insurgency, corruption, the narco-economy and weak governance systems (Ward et al., 2008). Internal and external actors are responsible for facilitating access to "relevant, quality education in secure learning environments" (INEE, 2010, p 54). These insecurities can discourage students from returning (or even enrolling) in schools. Holistic wellbeing is also something development agencies should be focused on, as psychosocial support will allow students and teachers to heal any psychological traumas, build resilience and rebuild social structures. Insecurity in the state is one of the main barriers for students enrolling in school. One member of a School *Shura* explicates how the barriers are usually based on war and insecurity:

The main challenges are insecurity and sustainable war that prohibit from education activities… There is at least two times conflicts between government forces and

opposition groups, which is the main challenges against development of education (FGD4, ATR, 2019).

According to the members of the School *Shura* (FGD4), societal concerns of insecurity are seen ten-fold as the main challenge in developing education is *"war and conflicting opposition groups with government forces"* fighting on the roads which have resulted in students getting either injured or killed (ibid.). Other times, the students sometimes hit land mines or *"unknown tools with stone and it causes injuries or losing some part of their body"* (ibid.). One member of the *Shura* in the focus group explained that some students will "*not come to school due to torturing, threatening and hitting by teachers*" (ibid.). The members of the *Shura* all explained that as their main role is to promote conflict resolution, they attempted to find solutions with other education stakeholders to keep the students safer. They attempt to keep a close collaboration with *"parents, students, schoolteachers, headmaster and religious leaders"* in order to *"reactivate the school"* and enroll more students (FGD4, ATR, 2019). The security situation is worsening in some of these villages and provinces, and as is the norm in states of fragility, internal displacement (or internally displaced people – IDPs) commonly affects enrollment in schooling.

School Construction & WASH Facilities

One of the biggest challenges in educational development strategies is the quality of school construction, lack of pure drinking water and basic sanitation facilities. Many of the interviews claim they wish to have safer buildings, more classrooms, better school grounds, electricity, shade (as sometimes they have to study outside) and basic school amenities. Lack of water and sanitation facilities can deter children from going to school as exemplified by the Doctor. She noted some girls go into shock because of the heat and become hypotensive from dehydration due to the lack of water and shelter facilities. She further reports that reconstruction of schools is needed as she states how different the situations are in Kabul versus the villages and districts. This delineates the urban-rural divide as the substantial difference between the areas influence the health sector as well (Interview 3, May, 2020).

One opportunity and strength found in education development was the help of external aid in the construction of schools and playgrounds. One focus group discussion exemplifies another NGO, DACCAR[19], building a well for clean drinking water, rebuilding toilets for better

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[19] Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees

access to sanitation facilities, and finally, constructing a playground with volleyball and football fields. The INGO also offered rehabilitation of the school building, adding more desks & chairs and building a 500-liter reservoir for the school (FGD4, ATR, 2019). Another "natural disaster organization" built a library, a stockroom and one extra room (in case there was a need for more classrooms). These are all necessary amenities, as was noted in the secondary research when considering the INEE (2010) guidelines for facilitating safer learning environments. The lack of satisfactory school buildings and WASH facilities are a consequence of fragility. These basic civil services should be available to the population, however, as was noted in the OECDs framework of fragility, the worse the civil services, the worse the fragmentation and fragility of the state becomes - and the cycle will not break until sustainable changes are made.

Governance

This last section of Part I emphasizes issues in **Governance** and civil society as seen throughout the research. This section will speak to the overall fragility and weaknesses of the governing systems in Afghanistan. The responsibilities and importance of the School *Shura* will be discussed. The interest of the state will emphasize how "structures of society determine social behavior" (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007). Education is one of the structural pillars of society and this thesis found that more capitalist approaches to education are being implemented in Afghanistan in order to further become a capitalist state itself. Emphasizing Gramsci's neo-Marxist approach to this human capital approach, the idea that social changes can occur through education is highlighted as NAC employees, education directors, local governance, school children and school faculty discuss how education can and will foster social cohesion and change.

The findings showcase that the objectives of the state's education systems are not only fixed in concepts of globalization and modernization of macroeconomic structures, they are also laying a foundation to establish sustainable peace. Further in this section, an example of how the Soviet Union used pedagogy to instate 'ideological subversion' in Afghanistan will be discussed. This was specifically noted as the communist regime used this tool of psychological warfare to construct the realities of the Afghan population through methodical use of propaganda.

The implementation capacity, or as Abel et al. explicates, the "coping capacities" of the state (MoE) is not adequate and according to the interviews, does not have enough funding to aid education systems in the provinces. The consensus in the findings showcase that the state

does not have enough to facilitate the populations' needs and desires. This is most likely due to the limited scope of this thesis as the population examined is relatively small (and only covers 3 provinces out of 34) – it therefore cannot speak to the generalizability of the state.

Finally, the idea of 'sustainability' of the opportunities the education sector is experiencing needs to be transferred from western interventionists, foreign powers or even NGOs to Afghan nationals and to the state. This means however, that improvements in how the monitoring and evaluating of sectoral processes must be reported for accountability to be established for the Afghan population. According to the findings in the primary sources, the MoE does not have the resource capacity to follow through on their National Education Strategic Plan (Langer et al., 2011; Interview 2, May 2020).

Local Governance & Civil Society

School Shura

As aforementioned, the members of a *Shura* are the main 'traditional' decision-makers and conflict resolution mediators in villages around Afghanistan. Most of the interviewees in the ATR documents have very positive views about the members of the school *Shuras*. School *Shuras* are responsible for the attendance of both teachers and children of the school, sometimes determine salaries for the teachers, and are present for conflict resolution that may be needed (CS13; FGD1; FGD2; FGD3, ATR, 2019).

The community ownership of education is split between the *Shura* and the Community Development Council (CDC). Some interviews however, claimed the *Shuras* can sometimes be deterrents of girls going to school. Interview 1 showcased how *Shuras "won't let the…female students, to complete education. Because they feel ashamed* [for] *letting girls go to school because they think that school is not a good place"* (Interview 1, May, 2020). One member of the *Shura* explained why there *is* a need for a school *Shura* in the first place:

> … we established this *Shura* because 3 decades of war have weakened the education and *Shura* is working for improving of education and it is including of Religious leaders, common people, school teachers and head masters, and some of the students. We have meeting in every month for solving the problems and attracting of students for enrolling in school.

Fragility of the State

The lack of inclusivity in Afghan civil society permeates the idea that Afghanistan is a conflict and fragile state (Matsumoto, 2008). As aforementioned, this is linked to the lack of civil service activities such as the insufficient quality in education, WASH facilities, security and healthcare. These elements can sometimes be reason enough to question the legitimacy of the government. The 'capacity' of the government is calculated through their abilities and competencies in poverty reduction, territorial control, economic development, and implementation of policies (Davies, 2009). The 'willingness' as Davies specifies is further rooted in the support of safety, prosperity and inclusivity of the population.

As mentioned in the secondary research, "the structures of society determine social behavior" (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007). Education is sometimes seen as a tool that is used in order to serve the 'interest of the state'. This capitalist education system can be seen in most western states and is evidently being implemented in the Afghan schooling systems.

Politicized Education

As revealed by one interviewee and her experience in differing education systems through Soviet occupation, Mujahideen power struggles, Taliban rule and U.S invasion. She noted that education was always used as political tool (Interview 3, May 2020). As she was completing her medical degree, she noted the *Mujahideen* education was "very strict" and based solely on Islam as they attempted to rid any remanences of Soviet ideology left in the schooling systems (ibid.). By the time she was specializing in her medical degree the U.S had invaded the country, to which she commented "*different curriculum, different political ambition*" (Interview 3, May, 2020). Education was yet again used as a political tool. She noted that there are positive aspects to all of the education systems she experienced (even those from the *Mujahideen* and Taliban). If all of them could be blended into one perfect system that inculcated inclusivity, taught theology in conjunction with science, accepted women's rights and taught morality and ethics (as is done in religious studies), the education system would be much better (Interview 3, May, 2020).

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has "*at least been taking the education system more serious than before*" (Interview 1, May 2020). They are trying to update books, providing more materials for schools and "*teaching the teachers some of the inclusive education concepts*"

(ibid.). There were mixed feelings about the Ministry of Education throughout the interviews. Most of the interviewees acknowledged their shortcomings but claimed that they are at least "trying". One teacher was verbal about her critique of the MoE by claiming that *"the Ministry of Educations support is very pathetic…"*. They do not distribute enough books, work enough with capacity building, or construct facilities the way they are *"supposed to"*. NGOs are doing far more to support the schools and their needs (IDI5, ATR, 2019).

The government does not have enough equipment to fulfil the requirements and needs for schools, and therefore depend on the guidance of School *Shuras* and civil society to further improve education development (IDI9, ATR, 2020). The *Shuras* would be able to collect money for hiring teachers, they are responsible for monitoring and evaluating processes in the school spending and motivate children and teachers to cooperate with different committees (ibid.). One interviewee stipulates that the government does not understand how to implement new policies and decisions. This is correlates with the idea of the NESP, as the document is there, but the implementation is not (Interview 2, May, 200). The interviewee claims that the MoE being able to articulate well in English and understand the "language of the donors" is what guides them to write these national documents, but they are *"not at all helpful for education"* (ibid.).

Part II: NAC & Education Development

The second section (Part II) will be aimed at responding the sub-question: **Considering the opportunities and challenges in recent education policies, how does the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee operationalize these issues on the ground? How does NAC contribute to inclusive education?** This section discusses how the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) works towards achieving the UNSDG4[20]. The section will note some of the challenges they have faced, describe how they operationalize on the ground and work towards building a more inclusive education system – and further, a more inclusive society. The NACs operations will be conveyed through: different training modules; coordination with governing bodies (both national and civil) and other NGOs; the support in schools in different villages, districts and provinces; how they improve teacher quality; amelioration of infrastructure projects (construction of schools, wells, agriculture); and finally, how they explicitly support

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[20] The UNSDG4: This sustainable development goal aims to ensure "inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". More information on the SDG4: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4

inclusivity as a mandate in educational strategies. The findings for this particular question were answered through the interviews conducted by ATR. It allowed an in-depth understanding of how the NAC is operationalized in the field and how the "beneficiaries" (students, teachers and the communities) feel about it. The additional interviews conducted with the NAC employees allows a transparency and fuller understanding of the organizations culture and structure, as well as the respondents personal narratives and experiences in the education sector.

The findings convey how internal (government ministries and local communities) and external (INGOs and other international actors) involvement must be used in conjunction with eachother to foster better educational development. Working more closely with local communities and government ministries allows the INGO to immerse itself to "influence the key agents of change" (Jelinek, 2006, p 5; NESP, 2016; IDI9, ATR, 2019).

How NAC Operates

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee's education programs aim to support children in government schools, restructure and improve education quality, train members of the sector with different innovative methods of management and finally, strengthen local governance and civil society. As was observed in this study, school enrollment has been strongly affected by matters of security (armed conflicts), lack of funding, bad quality of education and most recently, a health crisis such as the Coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic. The interviews conducted by ATR allowed this study to have a clear understanding of how the NAC operationalizes on the ground. Indicated in the secondary research, general development programs in Afghanistan are designed to reconstruct the country's security and key institutions while further promoting state building and peacebuilding ideals (HRW, 2002). The reestablishment and reformation of Afghanistan's social services – predominantly health & education services – have become the focus of both internal and external organizations/institutions. As identified in Part I of this chapter, insecurity in the country is one of the main barriers for education development procedures. NGO's have struggled in Afghanistan in the past as the operational space is set in a poor security environment (Jelinek, 2006). This however, does not deter NGOs from aiding the country. As Jelinek (2006) explicated, NGOs must continuously "redefine" their roles by adapting to each environment they may be working in. From the information gathered, NAC is constantly adapting to new situations and navigating through it successfully. This is through their work with the government and specifically, their work with the Ministry of Education (MoE). The coordination of these forces will allow for better implementation systems to be established,

while keeping transparency in monitoring, evaluating and reporting on developments as they are being executed. Education development and strengthening these systems need such reports as the information they collect allows for an improvement in policy decisions while cataloging developments sequentially (Roger & Demas, 2013).

Reiterating the secondary data, this section will use SABER's (Systems Approach for Better Education Results)[21] ideas, a World Bank initiative, to understand how the NAC is operationalizing on the ground. This section will use the first three elements of SABER's education system structure: *levels of education, resources and governance*. The order of this chapter will be organized by these subchapters: resources & levels of education, governance and inclusivity & sustainability.

Resources & Levels of Education

Under 'levels of education', SABER emphasizes **how and what** children are learning throughout their scholastic careers. The structure begins with Early Childhood Development (ECD), primary, secondary & tertiary schooling and lastly, the workforce development (WFD). This last component is significant as it exhibits how effective the training and education systems are in producing the adequate skills needed for employment in the future. SABER structures work on WFD by assessing "the policies and practices of government and non-governmental entities", and how these entities affect the supply and demand for these skills (WB, 2020). This section also focuses more on the capacity of the education system to include policies and accountability mechanisms as well as different resources and financing to sustain the education sector. The resources are rooted in capacity building and transforming said resources into 'learning outcomes' (World Bank, 2020). This will be achieved through the improvement of financial and human resources, management, policies, quality assurance, and healthy "intergovernmental and external partnerships" (ibid.). NAC works towards these goals through their trainings, coordination between local governance, civil society and the state, rebuilding learning environments (schools, constructing WASH facilities, donating teaching and learning materials) and the reorganization and reformation of their standards and policies.

Training

The NAC's policies and practices to produce more adequate workforce development is showcased by their deep focus on capacity building. The educational trainings for students,

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[21] See Appendix 9 for details on SABER

teachers, heads of departments and community leaders facilitates preparation for the workforce and improving the socioeconomic future of the country. Education opportunities and professional developments for different actors in the education sector (teachers, school management and *Shuras*) facilitate better quality education and more accountability and transparency in their ventures to educate young people.

One of the main aims of these NAC trainings found in the primary data was a focus on increasing the skillset of teachers and allowing the educators to become further qualified. As mentioned by Kaplan & Watterdal (2018), the NAC's education trainings help "engage participants with key education theories and concepts" that are relevant to their specific contexts (p 21).

Table 7 demonstrates some of the activities the NAC provides for capacity building opportunities (found in the primary data): innovative teaching methodologies, classroom management, inclusivity, conflict resolution, human rights, good governance, monitoring public services and how to plan and implement development projects.

Table 7: NAC Trainings

Actors	Type of Training
Community Development Council (CDC)	Planning and implementation of development projects; Monitoring public Services, Conflict Resolution, Human Rights; Democracy & good governance
Students	Basic literacy and numeracy; vocational training for youths; Activity Learning Centers (ALCs); Inclusive Education; *Kankur* preparation courses.
Teachers	Inclusive Education; New & innovative education approaches; improved education for students with special needs; Classroom Management and Supervision

According to the University Student (Interview 1, May, 2020), the NAC facilitated vocational training and management education for youths and have established Activity Learning Centers (ALCs) or "think labs". Vocational training is focused on improving the employability of young

people by using the National Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Strategy document. As mentioned in the secondary data, the MoE and three other department ministries, with UNESCO, launched an education strategy that allows TVET programs to align international aid to the national agenda (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012). This allows training 'human resources' that follows the international and national standards in order to develop skills through theory and practice to achieve national development (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2012). The ALCs are centers where students are taught skills in English, finance, Human Resources (HR) and information technology (IT), which are prerequisites for the job market in Afghanistan (as well as the international job market) (Interview 1, May, 2020). According to the interviewee, there is a high success rate after students have been enrolled in these 'think labs' and graduate from the ALC to find employment (ibid.). Additionally, the NAC provides *Kankur* preparatory courses which allows students guidance in completing the university entry exam in order to complete tertiary education.

Early Childhood Development

NAC also facilitates early childhood development (ECD) programs for students aged four to seven. Children are given nurturing learning environments as the NAC has constructed playgrounds that allow them to play and learn at the same time (Interview 1, May, 2020). This allows them to have "fun with each other" as well as foster better cognitive development. They are also taught elements of inclusive education which allows them to "accept each other better" (ibid.).

NAC works towards human rights and establishes itself strongly as a promoter of including the rights of people with disabilities. This was especially noted by Interview 2 as she explicates the NACs work towards equal opportunities for deaf children and promoting the inclusion in education and more disability rights. She explicates that she has been working with the Afghan National Association of the Deaf (ANAD) and is part of establishing a new version of the Afghan Sign Language Dictionary. She is working towards adding thousands of new words to the dictionary to foster better communication between the deaf community and the non-deaf community. It is difficult for disabled children in Afghanistan, as this is sometimes a misunderstood paradigm that the ministries, teachers and even parents are not able to cope with. NAC trains teachers and school administrators to improve inclusion of these marginalized children. As is seen in the Theoretical Framework, language is a critical tool in construction of identity and communicating with the outside world. This work towards improving the Afghan

sign language will allow an ameliorated relationship to flourish between some of the marginalized 'disabled' community and the rest of the population (Interview 2, ATR, 2019).

NAC & Health

As the Health sector struggles with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic sweeping the country and halting development projects, NGOs are attempting to spread awareness of the disease. They have been providing food (as food security has become an even greater issue since the start of the pandemic), and providing agricultural aid for farmers in rural provinces. NAC also prepared different trainings for staff and other stakeholders that work with them in provinces such as Badakhshan. The NAC staff further went around the country to extend awareness and educate the population about the virus. The NGO worked quickly as the head office and student hostels (housing for students in NAC programs) were quarantined and were told to work from home a week before the official lockdown in the state. When they contact students throughout the villages they *"encourage them to give awareness to the people about the Coronavirus. Coronavirus is the responsibility of all health staff, students, trainers, doctors…"* (Interview 3, May 2020).

Governance

According to SABER's education systems, governance has to do with holding the actors involved in the sector accountable while reforming and restructuring the system. These actors include governments, students, faculties, *Shuras* and district heads. The accountability is necessary to invoke clear, supported and well-monitored relationships between the different actors. The importance of accountability is highlighted since failures in providing an acceptable 'feedback cycle' mostly impacts disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Education development projects will find that accountability is a significant factor in educational equity and efficiency (World Bank, 2020). NAC monitors and hold themselves accountable through their in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, case studies and reports. Through these detailed accounts and reports, they are able to monitor and evaluate their own work. Or, as they have done in this instance, using an external monitoring and consulting firm (ATR) to understand how they can improve and discern what different communities need.

One participant explicates that NAC's mandate differs from other NGOs as it works according to the needs of the area (Interview 2, May 2020). They do not just enter into a district or village and implement their plans, rather, they will ask what the district needs and will work together with the communities to establish new developments. Inclusivity is promoted as

working with communities and proposing further participation of women and youths in local governance will allow more innovative ideas to be established. It may also change the dichotomous relationship between tradition and innovation.

Supporting Inclusivity & Sustainability

As the NAC *"work for all people* [in] *equality, transparency and respect"*, their support for inclusive education and social inclusivity is clearly demarcated through their actions in rural Afghanistan (Interview 3, May, 2020). Their mandate is to promote quality and inclusive education. They establish 'the right to education' through their trainings of thousands of teachers, communities, women and girls and people with disabilities (Interviews 1, 2, 3, May, 2020). They specifically work to develop rural areas in order to aid in the urban-rural divide. In the limited scope of this thesis, it is noted that rural areas suffer greatly from inequalities and more financial disparity than their urbanite counterparts. This long-standing divide seems to be slowly shifting to a more equitable and inclusive environment.

The proposed structure discerned from the central themes found in the interviews is illustrated in Figure 3 and showcases the process of how developing education can lead to less socio-economic fragility. This can be achieved through improved communication between internal and external actors, better security measures in all aspects (during conflict and peace), quality education and workforce development, which will lead to inclusivity in education (and further inclusivity into the society), and thus, in theory, guide the society into an enhanced socioeconomic and political position. This model will change in the subsequent chapter "Discussion", as the research leads it to become a cycle rather than a sequential process.

Collaboration between NGO & Governance	→	Security & Safety	→	Quality Education	→	Inclusivity	→	Less Socio-Economic & Political Fragility

Figure 3: Process of Education Development

Hard work is needed in order to implement modernized and sustainable education systems: *"without innovation, we cannot work, we cannot have good education"* (Interview 2, May, 2020). The interviewee states the way in which to improve the education sector is through *"practical work, capacity (building), human resources and also… Critical thinking"*. The complexity and further necessity to think critically will allow for more effective communication between actors and demonstrates philosophical insight by 'Socratic questioning' of higher

authorities. It is also important to further use communication as a tool to garner more culturally sensitive policies that allow the populations in each district to feel included and heard (Interview 2, May, 2020). Furthermore, communication will not only support inclusivity in the state, it will also allow for social, economic and to an extent, environmental sustainability in the long run. If external forces, such as this INGO enters a state and dictates all the changes that need to be made, there is a high chance that they will be met with resistance from the population (Interview 2, May, 2020). However, if the population is given the chance to think about the suggestions, and are supported in a way that allows them to participate in the construction and implementation process, there will be less resistance to the change (ibid.).

Chapter 6: Discussion

Through the research and findings, the study has developed a model for understanding the cycle of fragility, inclusivity and possible improvement of socioeconomic instability. The implications and patterns of the data found in the study were condensed into five dimensions and placed in a Causal Loop Diagram[22] (CLD). These dimensions were taken from the central themes found in the research: improving educational development, social fragmentation and horizontal inequalities and fragility of the state. The study demonstrates a correlation between socioeconomic fragility, collaboration between external and internal entities, security and safety, quality/relevant education and inclusivity. This model (Figure 4) showcases how fragility of a country can be enforced through different levels in society and how each intrinsically affect one another. Specifically, how the opportunities and challenges of the education sector found in the data allows such ideas to be further incorporated into the society itself. The five-dimensional model illustrated in Figure 4, depicts a cycle of how developing education can possibly lead to a less socially, politically and economically fragile country.
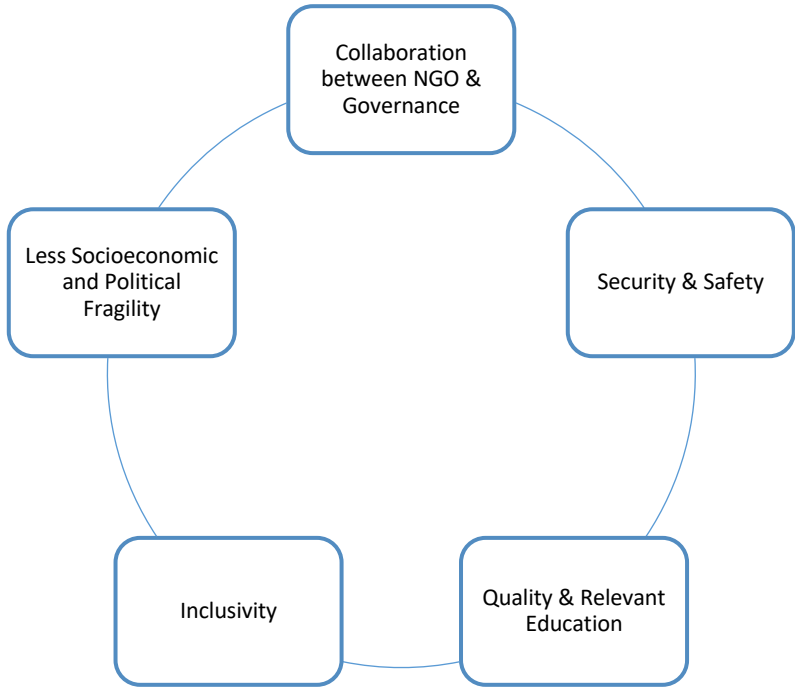

Figure 4: CLD for Improving Education Development

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[22] Causal Loop Diagrams (CLDs) allow for an understanding of a certain problem to be mapped out visually for transparency and clarity. This also presents different changes happening spatially and temporally (Haraldsson, 2004).

It is important to understand that this model does not represent the reality of the situation in Afghanistan, it is merely a theory contrived from the research attained in this study. I will now demonstrate how each of these elements are understood. The improved communication and collaboration between external and internal entities should be the first step in building up and developing the education sector (and looking beyond the scope of this thesis, peacebuilding and state building). Second, through this collaboration, a pronounced attention to security and insecurity paradigms should be established in order for education to thrive and for students to feel safe in their learning environments. Third, the two first dimensions will facilitate improved quality and relevant education for the students. The first, collaboration between entities, will facilitate better capacity building programs for their teachers and communities (trainings in health, better teaching methodology, structural management) and more amenities (textbooks, blackboards, funding). The latter will provide the facilities for safer learning environments (desks, chairs, improved WASH facilities, shelter) and a further scope of safety from physical harm (from insurgency, work-related injuries, kidnapping, beatings and even death). This will also lead do a productive workforce development, which will in turn affect the country economically and the students industriously. Fourth, is the topic of inclusivity. This paradigm is the main focus of this thesis but as the study was carried out, it become one mechanism of a much larger and intricate design. However, this paradigm is vital for the reshaping of the vertical societal fragilities found in the study: women's exclusion in society & education; and the overall poverty levels in Afghanistan. This will speak to the urban-rural divide as such fragmentation in the societal aspect further establishes fragility as a whole in the state. The four preceding dimensions collectively establish a foundation for less socioeconomic and political fragility as they work towards cohesion, "sustainable development, economic growth, stability and security" in Afghanistan (Ministry of Education, 2020). It must be noted that the researcher illustrated these dimensions in a cycle as the improvement of one will have a domino effect and improve the other. These elements are all interconnected and it will be a complex, demanding and somewhat arduous process, but when completed, a more prosperous society should (in theory) be established.

Collaboration between NGOS & Governments

As aforementioned, the cycle should begin with this dimension. An ameliorated collaboration between external and internal actors, such as INGOs and state governance respectively, is significant if any meaningful changes are to occur in education development.

These two authoritative figures need to establish themselves and their roles in tandem with the population's requirements and desires. However, the study understood that there are many factors that play into the roles of communication between these two entities. One such factor is the globalization in Islam and education as mentioned by Daun, Arjmand & Walford (2004) in the literature review. The concerns of globalization into the Islamic world are presented as western NGOs implementing their ideas based on sometimes Christian or secular values. Such interventions are normally defined as "modernization" or even an amplification of Globalization. Historically, if one looked at westward expansion of imperialist states, the term "modernization" was used, but the reality of the situation was "colonization" (ibid.). This understanding of the meaning of "modernization" and the historical discourse surrounding it, describes the tribulations that Islamic countries like Afghanistan will have with Western interventionism. The historical hegemonism and somewhat dominant culture of the West can consequently mean that modernization is regarded as a threat to religious freedom, culture and traditional ways of life. As Daun et al. stated, to some, modernism and globalism have become synonymous with Westernization. The dichotomous or binary opposition of the West and Islam must be changed in order to foster a more collaborative effort in this globalized world (Hansen, 2017; McMorrow, 2017). Further, considering the relationship between Islam and the State, it can be seen by the modernist ideals of the different sectors and ministries in the primary data that the traditional perspectives are slowly changing. Education is becoming the gateway for modernism and globalism to establish itself in the minds of younger (and sometimes older) Afghans and will hopefully allow for an ameliorated, relevant and contemporary view on social and political facets of the state.

When starting this thesis, I thought there would be more disparities between tribes, ethnicities and language. Although some of the data conveyed these thoughts, the disparity was mostly gender related. Furthermore, the secondary research was able to give me a wider scope on inequalities between other marginalized groups. This thesis had a narrow scope and the number of participants is not particularly generalizable for the society as a whole. It was clear however, that ideas of nationalism and national identity were present in the findings, as most of the interviewees spoke of Afghanistan as one (Hansen et al., 2009 and James 1996). To reiterate, the idea of nationalism and national identity is based on unification that transcends other nations in solidarity of your own.

Security & Safety

As mentioned in both the literature review and the findings chapters of this thesis, insecurity is geographically widespread in Afghanistan. This eschews stabilizing efforts and aid opportunities as protection from these threats (e.g insurgency, corruption, narco-economy, weak policing, etc…) is severely lacking. Insecurity in the state has been shown to discourage students from seeking education opportunities and further promote violence and fragility in the country. This is not only due to of the previously exemplified insecurities in the state, lack of health institutions and badly constructed learning environments also contribute to issues of insecurity. Ward et al. (2008) explicates that insecurity could reduce if there was less presence of "aggressive" foreign military in the field and a reduction of their inputs on policy-making. They describe the importance of Afghans implementing their own policies in their own terms, as this may inspire less 'pushback' from the civilian population. Ward et al. claims that the unstable environment showcases a need for foreign aid to support the Afghan army and their police force (i.e. improving the peoples' defense force) while leaving development projects to civilian agencies. This thesis somewhat disagrees with Ward et al.'s last statement. Globalization, interconnectivity and the interdependency between states should be seen as a positive aspect of the modern world. Reducing national barriers while attaining an influx of foreign capital may, in theory, help Afghanistan economically develop. There just has to be considerations and precautions taken so as not to impose colonialist designs or social injustices, but rather, foster inclusivity and prosperity. Many development projects in Afghanistan are predominantly supported by international agencies by multilateral donors (with humanitarian aid, education, health and food programs, etc…). Without them, as noted in the secondary data, it would be more difficult to strengthen development projects (funds, institutional infrastructures, wells for clean water, physical safety for children). One interviewee stated that if the NAC were to cut their support, the community members would not have enough resources (financial, material or human) to support the needs of the community. This is mainly due to the government's inability to "support us financially" (IDI11, ATR, 2020).

Relevant & Quality Education

This next dimension calls for improved quality and relevant education for the Afghan population. As previously mentioned, 'glocalized' cultural literacy is the expansion of global perspectives, while simultaneously narrowing cultural paradigms (Brooks & Normore, 2010). It is also utilized to understand the individual experiences and behaviors of students.

Correspondingly, Brooks & Brooks discussions on constructivist-based pedagogy portray the same idea. This was highlighted by the interviews (1, 2 and 3, May, 2020) and some of the ATR Interviews. There is a distinct understanding of 'glocal' culture being established in the schooling systems analyzed in this thesis. Brooks & Normore's "propioaspect" comes into play as the "acquisition of culture" is being perpetuated by teachers with each of their students. The teachers are understanding that students enter the classroom with their own pre-established values, beliefs and histories. The teachers realize that utilizing a constructivist pedagogy will allow them to further seek out and value their students point of view. As strategies for better learning environments are being implemented, it can be seen that the NAC and the MoE are working towards such "constructivist classrooms".

As mentioned in the former chapter of this study, education can sometimes be used as a political tool to garner insecurity in the state. This was showcased in both the primary and secondary research data. In the primary data, one interviewee explicated her experience with politicized education, for all major conflicts she commented, *"different curriculum, different political ambition"* (Interview 3, May, 2020).

Work-Force Development

Figure 5: Education Process   **Source:** Adapted from SABER (2020)

The data suggested that the overall goal for better education systems and further economic development was rooted in creating an improved work force. The process of this notion is illustrated in Figure 5. The education process showcases the learning sequence that fosters a productive workforce. This is the goals of most states when considering how important the education system is in their societies. As has been stated by the MoE and different NGOs, this is the end-goal for children and youths as this will also promote improvements in education development policies and systems. This connects to the Marxist ideology of using the human capital approach in the Western-type education that some of these NGOs are implementing in state schools. It is notable that most of the interviewees viewed education on a macro-level - in

which they see the system as an "investment in the nations human capital" that will incite further economic growth (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007). Even at the micro-level, the aim is to achieve a "competitive edge in the labor market" as well "high paying jobs".

Nevertheless, education is also understood through a Gramscian perspective of culture production. Culture is changed through new contexts and incidences and is constantly being reshaped and reproduced. This is demonstrated in the findings through the somewhat marginalized subaltern class, as they experience new contexts and occurrences that allow them to reshape and reproduce their culture by allowing new education methods to uproot familiar and internalized understandings of educational reality. This is noted as the NAC trainings in the provinces (Badakhshan, Ghazni & Faryab) on: good governance and democracy, human rights, conflict resolution and monitoring of public services allow for different innovative knowledge production which causes new production of culture that diverges from the previous "traditions".

Inclusive Education

The data suggests that issues in gender and feminist discourse are still predominant in Afghanistan. There is a distinct need to change the mindset of parents, mullahs, *Shuras*, leaders and anyone still believing that the female population should stay illiterate and subjugated. This notion of women owning their agency and creating opportunities for themselves is noted from the strong and resilient females that were represented in this thesis. These results build on existing feminist literature that claim that Afghan women are "trapped between conceptions of modernity, nationalism, and cultural conceptions of their bodies" (Ahmad and Avoine, 2016). Although women have made some advancements, the findings still strongly correlate with previous literature found in the subject of traditional gender norms in Afghanistan. Policies derived from international aid have still not been successful in eradicating misogyny, vertical inequalities and violence in women's lives and experiences in Afghanistan. One participant in particular echoed that women and men should see one another as part of a peaceful and cohesive community, be respectful of one another and only then can a change in attitude about women's equality occur. As the students of today are tomorrows leaders, it is important to foster better communication and further respect between the sexes as it will lead to a more inclusive future in the country (Interview 3, may 2020).

Feminism

There was a distinct focus on engendered disparities in the private and economic sphere, especially in gender-based segregation and income (Abel et al., 2016). As was stated in the secondary research, the dichotomous relationship between modernist and traditional ideals divided the urban-youths and the older more traditional generations over a century ago (Matsumoto, 2008). This caused an urban-rural division that is still prominent today. The fast-pace of the globalized world can sometimes shock a society that is not prepared for it. If these feminist ideals are implemented too fast by an external source – specifically a Non-Muslim source – it "will cause another revolution" (Interview 2, May, 2020). This is why she suggests that the ideas be inculcated into Afghan boys in school in early childhood development, as this will allow for them to grow up and bring these changes into the society themselves.

Additionally, the research Bahri (2014) conducted on understanding the male perspective in feminist efforts in Afghanistan showcased that the international community's efforts in fostering gender equity and equality have provoked conservative and defensive reactions from Afghan men (Bahri, 2014). This is rooted in the fear that globalization/modernization and the apparent Eurocentric notion of "women's rights" will be forcibly implemented in the society and inherently clash against their religion and cultural traditions. This assumption however, is disproved in this study as the women and men in this report (especially the female participants) showcase a resilience and agency that contest these patriarchal beliefs as they interlink feminist discourse with Islamic paradigms – and seek to accomplish some form of Islamic feminism instead. This is a notion that western interventionists should take into consideration as the theories in intersectionality and transnationality of feminist discourse acknowledges the realities of women in different races and religio-cultural paradigms. It is also important to note that the microcosmic realities of women in Afghanistan are not the archetypes of women who are oppressed. As discussed in previous chapters, the struggle for equity and equality in women's rights in Afghanistan should not be boiled down to the notion of "forced veiling" by the Taliban. Instead, the realities of the strong and resilient Afghan women who should not be seen as victims, but as having agency in their own right and in their own way. Educating "our daughters, sisters, wives" can only bring a positive impact on the daily life of women and cause "prosperity to all individuals of the family" (IDI5, ATR, 2019).

Less Socioeconomic & Political Fragility

By removing long standing militant centered ideology in Afghan education systems and establishing all of the abovementioned concepts (collaboration between powerful actors, improved security, quality education and inclusivity), Afghanistan could possibly experience less socioeconomic and political fragility. The amelioration of the four concepts depicted in the cycle (figure 4), will not only enhance material, financial and human resources (theoretically improving political and socioeconomic fragility), but provide a platform in which educational development can thrive. For many decades, Afghanistan has been inherently dependent on external donors, actors and western interventionism in their state-building processes. The internal corrosive power struggles have rendered the state to be in constant fragility and Afghanistan to be branded as a "rentier state".

Coronavirus Epidemic (COVID-19)

It would be remiss if the epidemic that has taken over the world as this thesis is being written, was not discussed in some form. Specifically, how the virus is hindering social and economic development in Afghanistan. I asked the question about COVID-19 only to understand what such a global catastrophic event means for development in developing states. As was noted in Interview 3, the consequences of the virus have been detrimental for education, economic development and state building. It is noted that the poststructural epidemic discourse in Afghanistan differs greatly to the epidemic discourse in the "west". While most of the schooling systems in the 'West' are able to transfer education online, this is not generally the case in rural areas in Afghanistan. Afghanistan has been significantly affected, not only due to their proximity to Iran (where the virus has affected the country greatly) but due to their structural vulnerabilities in their "health system", "inadequate water and sanitation infrastructure", "displaced people", "fragile economy and reliance on seasonal agriculture" and disruption of education (ICCT, 2020, p 9, 10). COVID-19 will also affect the education gap as it is more prominent than ever (where already 3.7 million children are out of school) and will increase the probability of "permanent drop-outs" while "affecting children's general well-being" (ibid.). Similarly, NAC and other NGOs are working towards spreading awareness of the disease and preventative measures communities can establish as the pandemic persists. The pandemic is rapidly changing children's living conditions. Routines, quarantine measures, restrictions or institution closure are affecting social structures that work towards supporting children (physically and psycho-socially) (ibid.). Further risks that children face: "physical and

emotional maltreatment"; "gender-based violence (GBV)"; "mental health and psychosocial distress"; and finally, "specific child protection-related risks such as – child labour, separation, social exclusion" (ICCT, 2020, p 10). The ICCT also explicates the economic stressor this pandemic has become as parents are unable to go to work or must find a way to pay for childcare. The thesis will limit the discussion about the pandemic to education, as the scope must stay focused. However, this is a highly significant topic for further research in the near future.

Limitations

Initially, some practical limitations must be noted. There was a slight issue with some of the translations of the ATR Interviews. Translated from Dari & Pashto, the scripts were somewhat difficult to comprehend as they were not as clear to the researcher as they could have been had she spoken the original language. Second, understanding children is always problematic as what they say is subject to their environments. Although most of the questioning was done without the presence of their parents, *Shuras* and teachers, it is difficult to discern whether the answers were genuine and honest or whether the polite Afghan culture limited the way these children wished to respond and therefore unconsciously provided some information bias. As aforementioned in the Methodology chapter, the researcher did not meet any of the participants in the ATR Interviews or her own interviewees in person. This is a limitation as it disallowed the researcher to observe more personal cues (tone, body language, sighs). However, a strength concerning this is it allowed more objectivity when analyzing the data.

Suggestions for further Research

Further studies on Islamic feminism in Afghanistan in regards to gaining equity and equality while staying true to their culture and religion. It would be interesting to study this in tandem with masculinity in an Islamic state. These studies would be completed in order to motivate Muslim men to become feminists and active in women's rights. These studies would be used to make them understand the economic and societal benefits of both sexes working, as 'allowing' half the population to work would sanction a flourishing economy. This would also be used to challenge the notion that feminism equates to Westernization.

Academic research into the Coronavirus epidemic (COVID-19) and its effect on development projects in humanitarian aid will surely be further researched. Studies on epidemiological response models and public health interventions in emergencies have already

been done with Ebola, malaria and dysentery. The issue of the novel COVID-19 would be interesting to study everywhere in the world as its effects have been intense and detrimental to most corners of the globe. The study of COVID-19 directly relating to education development in conflict states would be a significant concept to understand as most students had to abandon their studies in the middle of the school year.

Chapter 7: Conclusion & Reflection

Reflections

If the study had to be re-done, I would have focused it more on 'Gender' issues in education, to make a focused thesis on one component and educational barrier. The thesis has many elements that could be written about alone, however, conjoining these more general issues gave an understanding on Afghan education development as a whole and therefore answered the RQs the way the research intended. There is a general lack of scholarship on Afghanistan's education development, and this thesis can only hope that more research will be done into the subject in the near future. My findings present the fact that there is still a lot of work to do to develop education, especially in a fragile setting. However, the thesis must express the significant and impressive work done by NAC and other NGOs to facilitate inclusivity and sustainability in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

The findings in this thesis have aimed to answer the two main research questions proposed in this thesis. Answering the first research question provides a partial overview of the Afghan education sector's opportunities and challenges. Moreover, through these findings, it was also able to disseminate some of the general challenges in daily life of the Afghan population in the provinces studied. As aforementioned, the first question found more challenges than opportunities in education development. These challenges consist of: quality education; reconstruction, training in management and the preparation of innovative teaching methodologies; education barriers, gender inequity and inclusivity; insecurity, unsafe learning environments and fragility; and finally, weak national governance. Further, it explored how an NGO, the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee, operates on the ground and is contributing to inclusive education. The thesis concludes that the NAC is adequately contributing to inclusive education through their teacher trainings; infrastructural projects; collaboration and

coordination with governing entities (both national and civil) and other NGOs; and further, their explicit strategies in operationalizing inclusivity in all aspects of their educational strategies. It has been noted that economic & social sustainability and 'education for all' are the main objectives for all internal and external actors involved.

From the theories derived in the literature, this thesis examined how culture is reshaped, reproduced and expanded through education as it allows for understanding new cultural paradigms to be propagated into the society at an earlier cognitive stage. The force of Globalization influences how each state will view religion, culture and traditions through newfangled education practices. Slowly, these elements will change and the populations will adapt to the 'new' culture (in a Gramscian method) through the innovative methods of teaching in a constructivist classroom. The individually constructed reality of people's experiences and cultures affect how students are educated and is therefore the reason 'glocalization' is significant to understand. Although globalization (and further modernization) perpetuates a wider 'global' perspective it also advocates for cultural differences to be narrowed and understood in a scope of "propriospect"[23]. By respecting these individual cultures, inclusivity will (in theory) be successfully implemented. A cross sectional analysis of educational development through theoretical frameworks such as constructivism, poststructuralism, feminism and globalism, allowed for these cultural paradigms to be understood.

Education is an increasingly important societal pillar and contours how the population views significant aspects of politics, values, culture, tradition, religion, individualism and nationalism. As NGOs continue to elevate education quality in fragile states, the outcome works to ameliorate further issues the states face, such as: insecurity, economic disparities and societal fragmentation. This brings the thesis back to the three major themes found: improving educational development; social fragmentation & horizontal inequalities; and the fragility of the state.

The thesis concludes with three questions: Can political and social power dynamics be changed so that Afghanistan is no longer dependent on international aid? How can the corrosive internal struggle of power be restructured and less fragmentation achieved? Finally, can education be the pillar that cultivates these changes?

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[23] Proprioaspect: every person has their own individual culture

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Additional Ethnic Groups

Table 8: Additional Ethnic Groups

Additional Ethnic Groups	Summary
Pashtuns	The nomadic Pashtuns have had many advantageous agricultural benefits over which terrains they occupy. Geographically, they are placed within a "belt of mountains that extend for much of the border with Pakistan… into the Registan desert to the southwest of Kandahar" (Marsden, 2001, p 9). Such geographical placement allows them a "lucrative smuggling trade" with Pakistan and allow them to prosper in the fertile land that is found in the Helmand River Valley - "the oasis of Kandahar" (Marsden, 2001). As they are relatively dispersed, they also occupy fertile land in the North (in Kunduz). The accessibility of such fertile lands and how they survive on "irrigated wheat" allows the Pashtun a slight advantage over other ethnic groups. Most of the nomadic population is mostly made up of Pashtuns. Historically, there has been competition over pastureland between Pashtuns and Hazaras in districts in the center of Afghanistan. During the Soviet occupation, Hazaras where given "greater autonomy" and were able to recover these lands. Reports in 2001 showcased that the nomad's interests dominated over the interests of the Hazaras. The organizational structure of the Pashtun nomads is rooted in tribal and clan-based assemblies through a "code of conduct known as *Pashtunwali*" (p 9). *Pashtunwali* highlighted the idea of revenge and tribal honor. The *Pashtunwali* is differing from Islam as it places "greater restrictions on female mobility" (Marsden, 2001, p 9).
Tajiks	Tajiks, occupy the land in the eastern half of the Hindu Kush. Contrastingly to the Hazara population, "prior to the 1978 coup" Tajiks were "disproportionately represented within the government bureaucracy" (Marsden, 2001, p 9). Unlike the Hazaras, Tajiks are not of Turkic origin, they are Persian-speaking *Sunnis*. Their disproportional representation however, diminished once the Taliban took over. The Taliban forces replaced many officials with Pashtuns instead (Marsden, 2001).
Hazaras	Hazaras are traditionally found occupying the western half of the Hindu Kush. Historically, the Hazaras are thought to be of Turkic origin (descendants of Mongol or Turkic hordes). The Persian Safavids conquered the territory these hordes occupied and the population was forced to adopt *Twelver Shi'ism* (a doctrine within *Shia* Islam) (Marsden, 2001). Traditionally, the Hazaras have been marginalized economically and politically throughout Afghanistan. It has caused some resentment throughout the Hazara population (Marsden, 2001).
Uzbeks	The ethnic Uzbek population can be found in the desert of Faryab, east of Badghis. The economy of the area was critically affected by the Taliban subjugation and the "consequent closure of the border with Uzbekistan". Before the Taliban conquest, the flat plains of Faryab that extend northwards into central Asia were an important agricultural and trading route (Marsden, 2001).
Sayed (Sadat)	The word "Sayed" literally means the master, elder, gentleman and the obedient. One who is a descendant of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (through Hazrat Fatima). Sayeds (also called "Sadat" or "Arab Afghans") are a well-respected and authoritative group among Shia Muslims. They usually wore garments in green as green is the color of the Prophet. They are found among Hazaras, Tajiks, Pashtuns and Uzbeks.
Turkmen	Found in the northwest of the Hindu Kush. This ethnic group is also of Turkic origin (as the Uzbek and Hazara) and arrived to Afghanistan as refugees (with many Uzbeks) in the

	twenties and thirties. These groups brough with them "qarakul sheep and the Turkoman rug industry".
Ismailis	Predominantly Shia group. Mostly found in the north and northwest of the Salang Pass. This group is also intermixed with the Hazaras and Tajiks in the Northeast of the country.
Baluchis	Found in the extreme southeast of the country in the "inhospitable no-man's land of high sand dunes" and "black stony desert" bordering Pakistan and Iran. This has enabled them to have a large role in the smuggling of narcotics (opium) into Iran. Semi-nomadic group.
Brahui	Often referred to as a Baluchi subgroup, they also live south of Afghanistan. Their main sources are "agriculture and animal husbandry".
Nuristanis	Found in "isolated valleys to the south of Badakshan in eastern Afghanistan". Their source of survival is mainly "goat herding". This ethnic group traces their lineage to Alexander the Great, and have their own language and culture. They were forced to convert to Islam during the nineteenth century. The area they inhabit was then named Kafiristan and now named Nuristan.
Farsiwan	Imami Shia group. This group is predominantly found along the border of Iran, but can also be found in "Ghazni, Herat, Kandahar" and other smaller towns in the south and west of the country. Chiefly agriculturalists.
Qizilbash	Also Imami Shia, this group is a small minority scattered throughout Afghanistan. They used to live in predominantly urban areas in "senior bureaucratic and professional posts". The departure of many educated people since 1978 and the various states of conflict Afghanistan has seen itself in since however, resulted in the decline of this group.
Aimaqs	This group has Turkic origins (from Manchuria to southern Mongolia) and can be found to the west of the Hazarajat (specifically the westernmost part of the Hindu Kush).

Source: Adapted from Marsden (2001) and Javadi (2016).

Appendix 2: Afghanistan's Key Neighbors & Influences Summary

Table 9: Afghanistan's Key Neighbors & Influences - Summary

Key Neighbors	Influences
TURKMENISTAN	▪ Provided support in the ousting of Taliban forces. ▪ Major infrastructure donor. ▪ Partner concerned with narcotics and cross-border insurgency. ▪ Important regional activities include TAPI (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India) pipeline (signed in 2010).
SAUDI ARABIA	▪ At first more concerned with USSR and anti-religious and communist agenda. ▪ Supported the Taliban in the 90s, but was strongly anti-Al Qaeda. ▪ Formally financially supportive to Afghanistan after 2001.
IRAN	▪ Moderate involvement. ▪ Strong economic investment in the country. Divisive relations with Saudi Arabia.

	▪ Some support given to Taliban (weaponry). Promoted anti-American rhetoric. ▪ However, good dialogue with President Karzai.
INDIA	▪ Shared current political outlook. ▪ Symbolic and visible investments. ▪ In the past, India sides with Soviet Union after invasion and the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). ▪ Strongly supported the Northern Alliance with: military advisers; high altitude warfare; as Taliban rose to become a major security threat, developed base camps in Tajikistan (running supply lines and training). ▪ Taliban had a pro-Pakistan foreign policy agenda filled with anti-Indian statements. ▪ Helping with capacity building effors, 600 university scholarships given. ▪ Bilateral relations are close and cooperative. Strategic Partnership agreement in 2011 confirms that India will stand with Afghanistan whenever foreign troops withdraw. ▪ 2 billion in support of Afghanistan in the last decade.
PAKISTAN	▪ Some colonial history and regional conflicts (competition) ▪ Disputes over geographic borders and water ▪ Aided in the creation of the Taliban forces in the 90s ▪ Superpower games and shifting balances ▪ Control and benefits from legal and illegal trading ▪ Pakistan uninterested in statebuilding in Afghanistan ▪ 2012- some Pakistani support of coalition government ▪ More conflict in Afghanistan however means more refugees, more pressure on infrastructure budgets, more disease and crime, more terrorism – Pakistan would benefit from a stable Afghanistan
CHINA	▪ Mediation regarding insurgency (mediating between taliban and afghan government as U.S slowly withdraws more troops) ▪ Security Sector support (plays a constructive role) ▪ Geographically close to both Afghanistan and pakistan ▪ Mercantile power ▪ Shifted to security and political negotiations ▪ Relation to Pakistan in terms of technical, financial and military terms ▪ President Ghani wants china to have a larger role as Afghanistan becomes peaceful, stable and developed. ▪ Bonn Agreement; give 3.6 million USD to Afghanistan ▪ Economic contributions and exchanges ▪ Given $180 million since 2001; has pledged to give 2 billion Yuan ($327 million) in assistance

TURKEY		▪ High influence as a model for state-building ▪ Relationship politically dormant until post-Taliban era ▪ Turkey reinvented itself in 2001 as a "moderate Muslim state" ▪ Value to international community as they sought legitimacy in the critical judgement of Islamic republics/states such as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan ▪ Strengthening and building relation with oil producing nation			

Appendix 3: ATR Interviews

Table 10: Visual Presentation - ATR Interviews

	Participant	Gender	Location	Type	Units
1	School Children (grade 3-6)	F	Ghazni (Jaghori)	FGD	8
2	School Children (grade 3-6)	M	Faryab (Khowja Sabz Posh)	FGD	6-8
3	School Children (grade 3-6)	M	Ghazni (Jaghori)	FGD	8
4	Teacher	F	Ghazni (Jaghori)	Interview	1
5	Teacher	M	Ghazni (Jaghori; Sang-I Masher village))	Interview	1
6	Headmaster	M	Ghazni (Jaghori)	IDI	1
7	Members of a School Shura	M	Faryab (Khowja. Sabz Posh)	FGD	6
8	CDC Member	M	Ghazni (Jaghori)	Interview	1
9	KI: District Director of Education Department	M	Ghazni (Jaghori)	Interview	1
10	KI: Provincial Director of Education Management	M	Ghazni (Ghazni City)	Interview	1
11	KI: Provincial Director of Education Management	M	Faryab (Maimana)	Interview	1
12	KI: Head of TTC	M	Faryab (Maimana)	Interview	1
13	Case Study	M	Badakhshan (Pasha Dara)	Case Study	5
					41-43

Appendix 4: Researchers Interview Participants

Table 11: Researchers Interview Participants

Interview	Participant	Gender	Ethnicity	Summary
1	University Student	Male	*Sayed "Afghan Arabs"*	21-year-old male university student, studying Civil Engineering in Kabul. He has studied in four different countries: Iran, Afghanistan, Greece & Norway. He works for the NAC in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E).
2	Education Specialist	Female	Tajik	This participant has two master degrees: one in Teaching Methodology and another in Inclusive Education. She has worked for inclusive education for many years, and has worked with the National Association of the Deaf in Afghanistan for almost 20 years. During the Muhahideen and Talian years she worked for UNDP in Pakistan. The participants now work with special needs education and training, and gender.
3	The Doctor	Female	Pashtun	Was previously chief of the Obstetrics and Gynaecology (OBGYN) ward in a hospital in Kabul. When she began her career with NAC she was the project manager of the community midwifery education but since moved to the Kabul office where she now works as a s senior Health Officer.

Appendix 5: Interview Guide Explanation

The interview guide was organized into categories; however, it was not too specific so as not to constrict the responses and data possibilities. Instead it aimed to guide the researcher through the interview process as well as for later thematic analysis and coding. These 'categories' in the interview guide were organized in no particular order by: 'Personal', to gain

contextual insight on the perspective and behaviors of the interviewee; 'Knowledge & Education', to explicate how education and knowledge production has developed over the years - despite inequalities amongst the population; 'NGOs', questioning how the NAC has supported educational development in a turbulent state; 'State', this category aims to understand the interviewees opinion on governmental education, development and sustainability programs; 'Objectives' asking why schooling is important, aiming to comprehend further what the different education systems have to offer and which one yields subjectively 'better' results; 'Teaching', this section is fundamental to asking questions about those who facilitate education to young minds; 'Learning', similarly to knowledge production, the researcher attempted to understand what type of learning was central for children to facilitate success; 'Gender', as two of the interviewees were female (and one male), questions about gender inequality in Islamic and Western types of schooling was deemed appropriate; 'Differences over the years', aimed to find significant data from the past to compare it to the present. This would propose a spatial and temporal element to the research that would be significant to explore. As the interviewees were located in Afghanistan, the researcher conducted the interview via Zoom and WhatsApp calls. Two interviews ('University Student' and 'Education Specialist) were by voice call only, while the third was a video conference.

Appendix 6: Data Coding Schema

This Appendix showcases how the data was coded and brief explanations on what themes are, and how they were identified. It also showcases the interview coding schema used to analyze the data.

What are themes?

These elements are extremely important to identify and recognize in the researchers endeavor to analyze data aptly. Themes are categories that have been distinguished through the data procured, that relates specifically to the focus of the study and the research questions posed at the start of the thesis. In this research, these themes have been built from the codes established through annotation of the 'transcribed documents', this allowed for theoretical understanding of the data to be established for the study and consequently allowed for theories to be contributed to literature that related to the research focus (Bryman, 2012).

How were themes identified?

Using methods that Ryan & Bernard (2003; in Bryman, 2012) recommended to search for themes, the researcher was able to identify the suitable thematic schema that worked for her study. These guidelines firstly began with focusing on repetition of topics within the interviews. The more 'repetition', the more important that subject was to the participant. 'Metaphors and analogies' were another mechanism to look for, as the way in which participants represented their ideas and thoughts revealed something about them as individuals. The transitions through the interviews, specific change of subject and other deviations from the interview guide. Identifying the differences and similarities on how participants discuss certain topics. This could identify deeper feelings that the subject may have on certain issues and could help

establish an accurate thematic plan for analysis (Bryman, 2012). The Thematic Analysis of data for this research was thusly achieved through the use of the aforementioned matrix, by reading printed transcripts (line by line), annotating by hand any themes the researcher identified at the time and added them to a table of codes. The researcher kept in mind the guides for identifying themes and this helped greatly in simplifying the analysis process. These preliminary colorations (themes) are looked at again and incorporated into a wider set of classifications (core themes) which represented overarching ideas taken from the conversations realized. These patterns are then ready to be analyzed comprehensively further on how they are indicative of specific social stances and norms (Bryman, 2012). The Table below will showcase how the data was coded and understood:

Table 12: Data Coding Schema

Interview Coding Schema			
Meaning Unit	**Codes**	**Sub-Codes**	**Category/ Theme**
NGO Support Inclusivity Classroom Management Vocational Training Gender Equity Student Culture Teaching Education Community Training Quality Education Teacher Quality Innovative Edu. Approaches Modernization Student-based learning	Quality Education	Capacity Building	Improving Education Development / Quality Education
NGO Support School construction Gender Integration Teacher Trainings Teacher Methodology Classroom Management Monitoring & Evaluating Reconstruction Management Rehabilitation/ Repair school materials Rebuilding Student-based learning	**Reorganization**		**Improving Education Development / Quality Education**

Parent - Teacher associations Student - Teacher relations Local Governance - State Local Governance - School NGO – School NGO – Government NGO – Local Governance Student Punishment	**Communication**		**Improving Education Development** **AND** **Social Fragmnetation & Horizontal/Vertical Inequalities**
NGO Support Learning Student Participation (girls & boys) Learning Materials (pens, books) School Attendance Enrollment (how many kids) Motivation for students Student Engagement Leisure Activities Memorization vs. Understanding Leadership programs (student parliament)	**Learning**		**Improving Education Development**
Discrimination Economy Underage work Unemployment / Job Insecurity Teacher Salary Girls Education Disability/ Special Needs Location of School	**Barrier For Education Development**		**Social Fragmentation & Horizontal/ Vertical Inequalities**
Accessibility Security & Safety Hygienic Environment Health Education Stable School Construction WASH facilities Disaster Risk Reduction Insurgency Government Support NGO Support	**Security**		**Fragile State**

School Shura Development Shura Jirga Conflict Resolution Sustainability Environment (trees) CDC Youth Women Community NGO Support	**Local Governance**		**Social Fragmentation & Horizontal/ Vertical Inequalities**
Society Education for societal gain Poverty Reduction Peacebuilding Democracy & Good governance Planning & Implementing Human Rights Religion Security Teacher Salaries NGO support / Good relationship	**Government or State**		**Fragile State**
Teacher Education/Training Safe & Inclusive Education Teaching methodology More teachers Classroom Management Teacher Quality Teaching Materials (Labs, libraries) Learning Materials (books, pens) NGO Support	**Teaching**		**Improving Education Development**

Appendix 7: Interviews in Findings

These tables depict how the interviews appeared in the Analysis & Findings Chapter:

Table 13: ATR Interviews in Analysis & Findings

ATR Documents	
IDI or FGD	**Participant**

FGD1 (Focus Group Discussion)	Female School Children in Ghazni (8)
FGD2	Male School Children in Faryab (8)
FGD3	Male School Children in Ghazni (6-8)
FGD4	Shura (6)
IDI5 (In-depth-Interview)	Female Teacher (1)
IDI6	Male Teacher (1)
IDI7	Headmaster (1)
IDI8	CDC Member (1)
IDI9 (Key Informant)	District Director of Education Department, Ghazni(1)
IDI10 (Key Informant)	Provincial Director of Education Management, Ghazni City (1)
IDI11 (Key Informant)	Provincial Director of Education Management, Faryab (1)
IDI12 (Key Informant)	Head of Teacher Training Center, Faryab (1)
CS13 (Case Study)	Uzbek Family (5)

Table 14: Researcher Interviews in Analysis & Findings

Researcher Interviews	
Interview Number	**Participant**
Interview 1	University Student (male)
Interview 2	Education Specialist (female)
Interview 3	Doctor (female)

Appendix 8: Overview of significant themes in Interview Findings

Table 15: Significant Themes in the Findings

Theme	Description
Quality Education	Improving the overall quality of education: more children in schools, better learning materials
NGO Support	The interviewees discussed the role of the NAC and overall information on external aid (from divergent NGOs) (All interviews)
Gender Equity	In all the interviews, the issue of 'gender' was mentioned. This category mostly provided information on the exclusivity of girls in schooling and women's life in the private sphere
Security	The importance of security and issues of insecurity was especially noted in the Shura (FGD7) and Key informants (IDI 9, 10, 11, 12) data. This is concerned with the safety for students and educators in performing their duties. This is also an issue explored in the Literature Review.

Learning	The students learning has a direct correlation with how well NAC is operationalized on the ground. This was specific to modes of learning, participation in class as well as conceptualizing and understanding class projects (rather than memorization)
Inclusivity & Education Barriers	These issues ranged from exclusion of girls in education, socioeconomic issues and inability to physically go to schools (this category is also connected to 'Gender equity' 'Security' and 'School Attendance'). This is also to inform on how NAC contributes to inclusive education.
Reorganization	The reform in management and reorganization of the school structure (IDI9, 10, 11, 12)
Reconstruction	Development process to facilitate the rebuilding of society (state building) and further establish notions of peacebuilding (McLoughlin, 2012)
Teacher Education (TE)	The importance of TE and training programs have been established in the literature (Samady, 2001; NAC, 2020; NESP, 2016) and all of the interviews
School Attendance	This issue was a predominant theme in all of the ATR interviews
School Shuras	The actions of the informal governance & civil society structure (mentioned in all ATR Interviews and in Interview 1 and 2)
School Construction	Importance of safe learning spaces and facilities. This is connected to 'Security' (INEE, 2010).
Health & Safety	Improved health education and safety protocols in schooling systems and communities allow for more motivation for school enrollment and understanding of different health issues. This is connected to 'Security'
School Materials	Teaching and Learning materials
Government	This section tackles the Ministry of Education and their
Better communication	Relationships between communities, parents and children better Parent teacher ; student teacher ; community/ school / community and government
Capacity Building	Strengthening of knowledge, ability, skills and behavior (INEE, 2010) also described in interviews (IDI9, IDI10, IDI11, IDI12)
Sustainability	Whether the schools or TTCs can replicate and work without the support of the NAC
Accessibility	Fundamental to reconstruction and development practices to facilitate **access** to education in states of conflict and fragility (INEE, 2010)
Horizontal Inequalities	Inequalities amongst groups – usually: social, cultural, economic and political (Langer et al., 2011)

Fragility	Government's incapacity in performing and establishing competent economic developments, poverty reduction and implementation of policies. Also rooted in the governments 'unwillingness' to support safety, prosperity and inclusivity (Davies, 2009).
Quality and Relevance	This is how learners are procuring knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will lead to employable, responsible and productive members of society (prepared to contribute to their country) (NESP, 2016)
Islamic & Western-type Education	Noting the differences between these two types of education. Namely, that one focuses predominately on Islam, while the other will have additional subjects added (while still establishing Islamic teachings). This is connected with 'Learning' and teaching methodology (Interview 1, 2, 3, May, 2020). Also a direct consequence of globalization.
Interest of the State	This is the interest the state has in educating its population. "Western" education is entrenched in the 'human capital approach' and this is slowly being implemented in education development in countries such as Afghanistan (Karlsson & Mansory, 2007). This is connected with 'Quality and Relevance' (NESP, 2020).
Glocalised Cultural Literacy	In order for meaningful educational experiences to occur for students, learning should be based on whether educators are able to understand the behavioral norms if groups within a population. The multitude of cultures and experiences in a classroom significantly affect education (Brooks & Normore, 2010)
Ideological Pedagogy	Using education as a political tool to indoctrinate ideologies into students through their learning and pedagogical practices in early childhood development stages (Interview 3, 2020).
Workforce Development	This is connected to 'interest of the state' and is the goal of most Education Systems – producing citizens from educational cycles (early childhood development – primary & secondary – tertiary- workforce).

Appendix 9: SABER – World Bank Initiative

The Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) initiative is a way that the World Bank (WB) and other development entities are collecting and assessing data to strengthen education systems for all children and youth (Rogers & Demas, 2013). Their aim is to produce "a detailed catalog and benchmarking of policies and institutions in all the major

areas of education policy" and to be used as a "tool for improving education outcomes" (Rogers & Demas, 2013, p. 12). This initiative has established five overarching concepts that lead to "learning for all"[24]: levels of education; resources; governance; information; and finally, complementary inputs and cross-cutting themes (World Bank, 2020). Table 4 will clarify each of these points as some of these concepts will be used to organize the findings in the 'Analysis & Findings' chapter of this thesis.

Table 16: SABER Education Systems

Levels of Education	Early childhood development; Primary and Secondary; Tertiary; Workforce Development	This is built upon what people as a whole learn throughout their lives. These essential years from child to young adult establish the foundation for learning capabilities (which is based on the quality and accessibility of such opportunities).
Resources	School finance; Teachers; School Health & Feeding programs	Education systems must include "rules, policies and accountability mechanisms that bind an education system together, as well as the resources and financing mechanisms that sustain it". Transforming these resources into 'learning outcomes' are based on the capacity of the system to ameliorate their policies, standards, quality assurance, management of financial and human resources and engage in "intergovernmental and external partnerships".
	School Autonomy and	Reforming the accountability relationships between actors (i.e governments, students, faculties, district

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[24] For more information on SABER: http://saber.worldbank.org/index.cfm

Governance	Accountability; Engaging the Private Sector	heads, *Shuras* etc.) means the relationships become "clearer, consistent, measured, monitored and supported". A "feedback cycle" is also created as most failures in this regard strongly impact disadvantaged groups. This would promote more "educational equity" and "efficiency".
Information	Student Assessment (SA); Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)	This is wherein better monitoring and evaluating systems are put in place in order to understand whether policies and programs that are placed are delivering efficiently. This is done through the monitoring of student learning and performance in school. Improved information and communication also allow better management of the complexities of the education system.
Complementary Inputs & Cross Cutting Themes	Education Resilience Approaches (ERA); Equity and Inclusion (E&I); Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	These issues must be addressed concerning education development practices, as "fostering resilience under external stressors" and aiming for equitable and inclusive education should become policy in all education development schemas.

Source: Table adapted from SABER (2020)