

# THE FALL OF REPUBLIC IN AFGHANISTAN BRAIN DRAINS AND ITS CHALLENGES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

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## ABSTRACT

*The historical context of migration and the changing socio-political landscape provide the framework for a thorough investigation of the factors causing brain drain and its significant effects on the country's education system. This study explores the complex dynamics of brain drain in Afghanistan in the wake of recent political upheavals, notably the Taliban's return to power in 2021. Skilled professionals, such as university teachers, doctors, and engineers, have been forced to seek refuge in more stable surroundings abroad due to the erosion of democratic norms, the restriction of women's rights, and an overall climate of uncertainty and dread. There is an acute lack of educated workers in the education sector because of the departure of experienced experts, especially in academics. In public universities, there has been a noticeable drop in academic advancement and instructional standards because of this scarcity. The gap left by highly educated professionals leaving the country has far-reaching effects on the nation's overall human capital development. The study offers insightful information about the interrelated problems of political unrest, and repressive laws, and how they affect the country's educational system. The conclusions drawn from this research are intended to serve as a roadmap for foreign stakeholders, educators, and policymakers as they devise plans to stop the brain drain and promote long-term development in Afghanistan.*

**Keywords:** Brain drains, Education, Education sector, Challenges, Migration

## INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving world, education is the cornerstone of individual growth, social development, and economic prosperity, and it acts as a beacon of hope and opens doors to a bright future for countless people. However, the quality and access to education can vary significantly based on a myriad of factors, and one factor that has received increasing attention

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is parental literacy, particularly in areas with challenges. They are struggling socio-economically. Afghanistan, a country long marked by decades of conflict and instability, has faced numerous obstacles in providing equitable educational opportunities for its children. The well-being of its young learners is a matter of considerable concern, as the effects of social conflicts and challenges can reverberate across generations.

The issue of human migration dates to ancient times. Humans have always migrated since the beginning of their existence, and they move from one place to another in order to find a suitable place to live, food, and suitable weather. In short, it can be said that human history is the history of travel and migration. But the issue of "brain drain" throughout the history of human migration, new and different from normal migrations, is important and needs to be investigated, an event that the contemporary history of Afghanistan may also have such a situation. The disease of brain drain is one of the important issues of the developing country, especially the war-torn one.

The history of developments shows that human capital plays an important role in their progress and certainly the industrial society owes its economic, social, cultural and technological developments to the existence of human capital. Developing societies also in order to lag behind and reach the stages of development, indispensable and in the creation of human capital and the development of technical knowledge for the purpose of social, economic, political and technological development and cultural adaptation and the promotion of all levels of those costs. are accepted in this regard. Therefore, the development of a sustainable society depends on the resources and human capital needed by that society, and developed societies do not need to produce and create human capital in order to develop the key activities of society. The most important issue in creating positive changes in a society is the human capital reserves of that society.

Afghanistan has a long history of conflict and instability. This has had a destructive effect on the country's economy and education system. One of the most serious consequences of the conflict has been brain drain. Highly skilled and educated Afghans are leaving the country in large numbers, looking for better opportunities elsewhere. This has created a significant gap in the country's workforce and has hurt the education system. After the fall of the republic on August 15, 2021, the Taliban came to power for the second time, and with the coming to power of this group, the achievements of two decades in various sectors of freedom of speech, democracy, women's right to work and education, communication with the countries of the world, freedom of the press and other cases were lost.

When the Taliban came to power, a dark period began for Afghanistan's education, and it didn't take long for the anti-human policies of this group to be revealed. Girls' schools were closed and women and girls were officially forbidden to go to offices or work outside the home and were forced to stay at home. After the fall of the Republic and the rise of the

Taliban, hundreds of thousands of Afghans were forced to leave their country. The majority of these were professionals, scholars of contemporary sciences and technology, and elites who were working with various foreign institutions, educational institutions, and the republican government. And on the day of the fall of the republic, they were pulled out of Afghanistan by different countries of the world. The countries of Canada, the United States of America, and the member countries of the European Union have evacuated vulnerable and endangered people from the Taliban, including former Afghan forces, employees of foreign institutions, civil society activists, and their families from Afghanistan by military flights.

Emigration and brain drain from the country will lead to a series of political, social and economic consequences that are linked like a chain. The ineffectiveness of the government apparatus will bring a lot of financial and credit costs to the Taliban government and will cause a sense of hopelessness and mistrust to take root in the society. Distrust of the political system will provide grounds for joining extremist groups as well as illegal organizations. Also, the departure of educated young forces from Afghanistan turns the hope of any changes and reforms in this country into despair, because these forces are the main demanders of the society and their absence opens the way for rebellion.

The collapse of the republic has left an indelible impression on the nation's sociopolitical landscape in the aftermath of recent geopolitical upheavals in Afghanistan. Among the numerous issues confronting the Afghan people, the departure of intellectual capital, colloquially known as "brain drain," has emerged as a key worry. The education sector, which was once a beacon of promise for prosperity and stability, is dealing with the fallout from this huge emigration of qualified people. This article goes into the various difficulties behind Afghanistan's fall of the republic, with a special emphasis on the challenges provided to the education sector by the phenomena of brain drain.

This fall of the republic in Afghanistan has led to a brain drain in the country and many professionals have left the country in search of better opportunities and security. This has had a profound impact on the education sector, with many teachers, Lecturers and other skilled professionals leaving the country. The loss of these skilled professionals has led to a shortage of qualified teachers and Lecturers, which has led to a decline in the quality of education in the country. Moreover, brain drain has also led to the loss of organizational knowledge, which is essential for the development of any country. The Taliban government is currently facing major challenges that would test any government, and the loss of skilled workers has particularly affected the health, education, security and judicial sectors. It will take years to rebuild the education sector and other sectors of the economy.

The purpose of the research on "Fall of the Republic in Afghanistan: brain drain and its challenges in the education sector in Afghanistan" is to objectively examine the consequences of political

developments on the educational landscape. And it is important to understand the special challenges facing the education sector after the fall of the republic, including the decline in teaching quality, innovation and research productivity. And to examine all these cases, the following research questions have been raised. What are the main factors of brain drain in Afghanistan? What effect does brain drain from Afghanistan have on the quality of education and human capital development in the country? And what policies and strategies can be implemented to reduce brain drain from Afghanistan and its negative effects on the educational system? By shedding light on these challenges, this study provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and international stakeholders and facilitates informed strategies to address and mitigate the adverse effects on Afghanistan's education system.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Brain drain is a phenomenon where elites and intellectuals of a country leave their country for various reasons and become refugees in another corner. Brain migration is a topic that has attracted the attention of sociologists and economic policymakers in recent decades in relation to human capital. In general, brain migration is the international transfer of resources in the form of human capital. It means the migration of specialized and highly educated people from developing and underdeveloped countries to developed countries. The term brain drain was first coined by the British in the mid-1950s, when it was widely believed that the number of English universities graduates is not enough to meet the economic needs of the country and part of this insufficient number went to other countries in search of work (MacKay, 1969).

This concept has been interpreted and interpreted in different ways and in some cases, it has been looked at from certain angles. But all the definitions basically point to one point and that is the departure of elites and specialists of a country and Their migration is to other places that have better conditions for work and life.

The term "brain drain" refers to the movement of intellectual human capital from countries of origin to other regions that provide them with significant opportunities (Güngör, 2004). The term "brain drain" is commonly used to describe the migration of human capital (HC) in which the net flow of expertise is predominantly in one direction (Giannoccolo, 2009). Recent studies on international migration from poor countries to developed countries show several causal variables, including several factors that push talented people out of the home country and several that push skilled migration to other countries (Carrillo, 2006). The main motivations for academics and other scientists to flee include low wages, dire economic conditions, cultural traditions, and concerns about personal safety in conflict zones.

Lack of human capital in developed countries, recruitment efforts from developing countries, new and more attractive living conditions for scientists and their families, family or social relationships in developed countries, political stability, good public services such as schools and health centers and Increased job satisfaction are all encouraging factors for academics and skilled workers to migrate. In fact, there is an inverse link between the relative levels of compensation, job opportunities, and working conditions offered in donor and recipient countries. Most contemporary research on brain drain focuses on traction.

Afghanistan is a country that has witnessed migration for several decades due to pressing issues such as war, poverty, disaster, security concerns, regime change, coup and financial problems. The first movement of Afghan immigrants started before 1979. It was at a time when a natural disaster occurred in northern Afghanistan, causing 15,000 Afghans to flee to neighboring countries (Rahimi, 2017). When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan on December 24, 1979, the Mujahideen resisted, causing conflict between the two sides. This played an important role in the influx of 5.1 million Afghan refugees to Pakistan and Iran. Likewise, when the Taliban took control of Afghanistan in 1992, a third mass migration wave occurred, driving the middle class and the educated to flee to neighboring countries (Miszak & Motwani, 2021). The third movement of brain drain from the country is on August 15, 2021 after the fall of the Republic and the re-establishment of the Taliban in the country. At this time, hundreds of elite people, university Lecturers, doctors, engineers, and employees of foreign institutions have left Afghanistan with their families to save their lives. The departure of all these cadres will have negative consequences in different sectors in Afghanistan (Barlas, 2022).

### **THE IMPACT OF BRAIN DRAINS IN AFGHANISTAN'S EDUCATION SECTOR**

The brain drain in Afghanistan's education sector after the fall of the republic has severely affected the institutional capacity and knowledge transfer. The loss of skilled teachers has reduced the quality of teaching and hindered the academic progress of students. With the fall of the republican system and the effectiveness of the Taliban regime, hundreds of professional and experienced university Lecturers left Afghanistan. In addition to this, the suspension of women's work by the Taliban has caused hundreds of female staff to be banned from teaching in universities. These two cases have now caused the problem of shortage of Lecturers in public universities. Most of the faculties of Kabul University and government institutions of higher education in the center and province are facing a shortage of lecturer (Sandvik, Bjørhaug & Garnier, 2023).

The Taliban government is currently facing major challenges that would test any government, and the loss of skilled workers has particularly affected the health, education, security and judicial sectors. It will take years to rebuild the education sector and other sectors of the economy. According

to the findings of the BBC, since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, 229 Lecturers from the three major universities of Kabul, Herat and Balkh have left the country, and most of the Lecturers who went abroad from these three universities had postgraduate or doctoral degrees. This figure is from the year (February 2, 2022), and may have increased (BBC, 2022)

A quote from a Kabul University student: "We are facing a shortage of Lecturers, not only our faculty, but all faculties have a shortage of Lecturers. A large number of our Lecturers have gone abroad. We need experienced Lecturers." To cope with this situation, public universities put pressure on male teachers to cover more teaching hours. However, university Lecturers describe this management method incorrectly and point out that teaching too much makes them tired and has a negative impact on the quality of teaching. In addition to the above challenges, the misbehavior of many employees of educational institutions and universities with Lecturers has caused the Lecturers who have remained in Afghanistan to leave their duties.

A quote from one of Kabul University's lecturer: "The Taliban's treatment of teachers and students was inhumane." According to him, university lecturers were insulted and psychologically tortured in some cases. He also added: "The Taliban's unscientific and professional treatment of students, lecturers, the educational system, imposing new restrictions, can all take away the motivation to work, continue studying, and commit to the country."

The quote of another student from Balkh University has expressed his attitude towards the education situation under Taliban rule: "Unfortunately, studying under Taliban rule and law causes extremism in the academic environment in Afghanistan. And I prefer to remain illiterate rather than prefer education according to the Taliban's law.

The Ministry of Higher Education of the Taliban has sent the plan to the government university, and according to it, Lecturers are not free in their teaching methods and must teach the subjects given to them by the university. In addition, according to this plan, Lecturers and students should dress according to the wishes of the authorities, and according to this plan, men are required to wear national clothes (Afghani traditional clothes) and do not have the right to shave their hair and beard. In a part of this plan, the prohibition of using smartphones and recording video and audio from the university space has been discussed. All these cases have deprived individual freedom and put pressure on Lecturers and students, and in such conditions, it is difficult for Lecturers and students to attend classes.

A quote from one of the Lecturers who has become a refugee in Canada, regarding the destructive effects of brain drain in the future, says: "Huge human capacity was created in Afghanistan and it grew rapidly, but unfortunately it was all wasted and it is not easy to revive it again." It is not, it is not within the power of the regime that ruled in Afghanistan, or will

rule or will rule, and neither the countries of the world are interested in rebuilding Afghanistan again. The depletion of society from enlightened, creative people with leadership and entrepreneurship qualities in the short term causes economic stagnation and anarchism or administrative and social chaos, in the medium term it turns into backwardness, increasing social tensions and devastating discrimination. Finally, in the long term, it will lead to the emergence of a society lacking in knowledge and worldview, which will lead to the creation and growth of extremism and terrorism.

As a result, it can be summarized that the rule of the Taliban and the departure of many university Lecturers from Afghanistan have created many challenges for students and higher education. Currently, many public universities lack Lecturers and this has affected the morale of students, and several students have either dropped out or migrated abroad.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This is a qualitative research project (case study) as this research focuses on the examination and challenges of brain drain after the fall of the republic and the re-establishment of the Taliban.

My desired data sources will be as follows:

- Semi-structured online interviews (through WhatsApp) with university Lecturers who have left the country, students of public universities in the center and provinces.
- Analyzing and studying digital documents (videos and news from reputable international websites).
- To build my arguments, I need to find information about how brain drain and its challenges in the education sector in Afghanistan. Therefore, by using these methods, it is possible to better examine the challenges of brain drain after the fall of the Republic and the re-rule of the Taliban.

### **FINDINGS**

The study indicates that the primary causes of Afghanistan's brain drain are intricately woven into the country's historical history. Long-term motivators have included the protracted battle, political unpredictability, and economic difficulties. But with the Taliban's harsh tactics and subsequent comeback to power, the exodus of qualified professionals has quickened. Professionals, especially those in academia, are being forced to look for better prospects overseas due to the climate of fear and uncertainty produced by the closing of girls' schools, limitations on women's employment, and the degradation of democratic ideals.

The historical background of the nation is one of the many complex elements causing brain drain in Afghanistan. The prolonged conflict, unstable political environments, difficult economic times, and the Taliban's recent comeback to power have all contributed to a marked increase in the brain drain phenomena. Profoundly suppressive policies of

the Taliban, especially with regard to women's work and education, have served as triggers, driving out highly qualified professionals such as university professors, physicians, and engineers. People who are essential to the development of the country are leaving because of the climate of fear and uncertainty that has been generated by the degradation of democratic norms, restrictions on free expression, and limitations on women's rights.

The quality of education and the development of human capital has been severely and negatively impacted by the brain drain from Afghanistan. The education industry is severely lacking in competent workers as a result of the loss of skilled workers, particularly university professors and educators. Academic advancement in public universities has been hampered by this deficit, which has resulted in a drop in the quality of instruction. The loss of human capital hinders the growth of an educated and talented workforce that is vital to the nation's advancement, especially in the areas of science, technology, and academia. These people's departure has left a gap in Afghanistan's human capital reserves, which will hinder innovation, research, and the sector's general progress in education.

Academic advancement in public colleges has been impeded and teaching quality have declined because of the scarcity of skilled instructors and lecturers. A gap has been left in the educational environment by the departure of talented professionals, especially those with doctorate and postgraduate degrees. A general decline in the quality of education is being caused by the severe lack of teachers at public universities like Kabul University. Afghanistan's development is long-term challenged by the loss of human capital, particularly in critical areas like health, security, and the judiciary.

Essentially, the results highlight the complex interplay between Afghanistan's socio-political context and the brain drain phenomena. Skilled individuals leaving the workforce, especially in the education sector, can have a significant influence on education quality immediately and provide long-term difficulties for the nation's human capital development. To tackle these problems, all-encompassing approaches are needed, ones that deal with the underlying reasons and establish a setting that helps Afghanistan retain and produce talented workers.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

A number of suggestions are made to solve the problems caused by brain drain in Afghanistan's educational system. The promotion of foreign assistance and cooperation in reconstructing the nation's educational system comes first and foremost. This entails looking for funding, experience, and collaborations with international universities to promote knowledge sharing. It is imperative that the rights of educators be safeguarded under the new system, which calls for international pressure to guarantee that an atmosphere that is favorable to teaching and learning is devoid of unnecessary constraints and threats. It is essential to develop laws

and other incentives to entice qualified professionals who have fled the nation to come back. This could entail creating conducive work environments, offering chances for research, and encouraging entrepreneurship. Gender equality and the reopening of girls' schools are priorities in order to empower women in education.

Brain drain can be lessened by making infrastructure and technological investments that enable remote learning and research partnerships. Furthermore, encouraging diversity and tolerance in educational settings encourages creativity and innovation, drawing and keeping talented people. It's also critical to identify and treat the mental health issues that hostile environments cause for teachers and pupils. By putting in place support networks and counseling services, restrictive rules might lessen their psychological effects and aid in the reconstruction of Afghanistan's educational system.

### **CONCLUSION**

The phenomenon of brain drain has had a significant negative impact on the education system in Afghanistan following the collapse of the Republic and the Taliban's subsequent rise to power. The historical background of migration, which is firmly anchored in the war, poverty, and political upheavals that Afghanistan has experienced, has coincided with the most recent geopolitical changes to result in a significant exodus of highly qualified individuals. The early fallout from Taliban rule, which included closing girls' schools and restricting women's employment, led to a huge exodus that made the dearth of skilled people worse, especially in the field of education.

This has a noticeable effect on Afghanistan's educational system. The quality of education in public universities has decreased because of a lack of skilled instructors and lecturers. The departure of seasoned instructors from academic institutions has created a deficit that makes it difficult to uphold teaching standards and slows down academic advancement. Public universities, most notably Kabul University, are facing a serious teacher shortage. In addition, the harsh conditions imposed by the Taliban government have further hampered education, leading many students to abandon their studies or look for work overseas.

Recommendations have been made to remedy these issues. Promoting international cooperation and assistance is essential since it can help reconstruct Afghanistan's educational system by obtaining funding, knowledge, and alliances with outside colleges. Educators' rights must be upheld, which calls for worldwide pressure to establish an atmosphere that is favorable to learning. Mitigating the effects of brain drain also requires investing in infrastructure and technology, empowering women in the classroom, and developing rules and incentives to entice skilled individuals to return. Rebuilding also includes addressing the mental health issues that

teachers and students confront as well as promoting diversity and tolerance in educational settings.

In conclusion, even though brain drain in Afghanistan's educational system presents significant obstacles, the suggestions made provide a path forward for recovery and rejuvenation. Collaboration among educators, politicians, and the international community is necessary to establish an atmosphere that promotes inclusivity, creativity, and education. Rebuilding the education system is not only a matter of strategic need for Afghanistan's future, but it also demonstrates the tenacity and resolve of a people striving to reverse the negative consequences of brain drain and resurrect the hope for a better tomorrow.

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