

**WOMEN EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN: A HISTORICAL
PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

Women's education in Afghanistan has always faced socio-cultural and political barriers. Especially in the 20th century, there have been several attempts to expand educational opportunities for women but failed. This paper tries to understand the ups and downs of women's education in the 20th century in Afghanistan and to explore why the attempts to expand Afghan women's access to education failed. Findings suggest that the opening of Masturat as the first girls' school in 1921 marks the start of modern and formal education for women in Afghanistan. King Amanullah has devoted his efforts to expanding the educational access of Afghan women. Despite some notable achievements, the whole modernizing agenda of the King faced social resistance that led to the rule out of some programs, including women's education, and finally, his removal from the power. From 1930 to 1960, women's education experienced steady progress. Notable progress was made in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s but experienced a radical setback in the 1990s. According to findings, socio-cultural and patriarchal conservative norms, weak central states, and conflict were the main obstacles to women's access to education in the 20th century in Afghanistan.

KEYWORDS: *History, Twentieth Century, Afghanistan, Women's Education, Modern Education.*

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