

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-54439

Title: Through Their Own Words: An Interview Analysis of Women's Legal Status in Taloqan, Afghanistan

Recommendation:

Accept after major revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality			✓	
Clarity			✓	
Significance	✓			

Reviewer Name: Dr. Zainuddin,

Date: 21/10/2025

Reviewer's Comment for Publication

The manuscript provides a rich, qualitative exploration of women's legal and social conditions under the Taliban regime in Takhar, Afghanistan. The paper uses primary data from written and audio testimonies of 10 Afghan women, representing different ages, professions, and social backgrounds.

This is a timely and powerful contribution that humanizes statistical and policy-based analyses of gender inequality in conflict zones. Its strength lies in its authentic voices and grounded ethical approach to data collection under severe socio-political constraints.

Detailed Reviewer's Report

1. Title and Abstract

Comments:

The title is relevant, engaging, and accurately reflects the core of the research. However, the abstract remains overly descriptive and does not sufficiently highlight the novelty or research gap.

Suggestions:

- Clearly state within the abstract:
 - The *scientific objective* of the study,
 - The *qualitative method* applied (e.g., "using thematic analysis of 10 in-depth interviews"), and
 - The *main academic contribution* to legal and gender studies.
- Add 4–6 relevant *keywords*, such as: Afghanistan, Gender Inequality, Legal Justice, Women's Rights, Taliban Regime, Feminist Legal Studies.

2. Introduction

Suggestions:

- Introduce a clearer research gap, emphasizing that few studies have used *voice-centered interviews* to explore Afghan women's legal experiences under the Taliban.
- Connect the study to key theoretical perspectives, such as:
 - Feminist Legal Theory (MacKinnon, 1989)
 - Intersectionality Theory (Crenshaw, 1991)
 - Post-Conflict Gender Governance (True, 2012)
- Explicitly present the main research question, e.g.:
"How do Afghan women's legal experiences reflect the breakdown of formal justice structures under the Taliban regime?"

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3. Methodology

Comments:

The data collection process (written and audio interviews) is well explained, but the data analysis procedures and validation processes are not sufficiently elaborated.

Suggestions:

- Add a sub-section describing the analytical approach, for instance, *Thematic Analysis* (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
- Clarify the process of:
 1. *Coding* (how data were thematically categorized),
 2. *Theme development*, and
 3. *Validation* or *triangulation* to ensure credibility.
- Explain the rationale for choosing 10 participants—was it *purposive sampling* or *snowball sampling*?
- Mention any limitations, such as restricted geographic access, security risks, or online communication challenges.

4. Findings and Discussion

Comments:

The findings are compelling and emotionally powerful, but the discussion is still primarily descriptive and not sufficiently connected to theoretical or comparative literature.

Suggestions:

- Relate each major theme (e.g., “Legal Violence,” “Forced Marriage,” “Education Barriers”) to established theories or academic references:
 - Structural Violence → Galtung (1990)
 - Women's Right to Education → Nussbaum (2011), *Women and Human Development*
 - Islamic Law and Gender → Mir-Hosseini (2019), *Islam and Gender: The Religious Debate in Contemporary Iran*
- Include a brief comparative reflection, contrasting women's conditions in Takhar with other regions (e.g., Kabul, Herat).
- Add a critical paragraph highlighting how these women's narratives act as a counter-narrative to patriarchal or state-controlled discourses.

5. Conclusion

Comments:

The conclusion effectively summarizes the issues, but it does not fully articulate the scientific contribution or the novelty of the study.

6. References and Citations

Comments:

The reference list is limited and inconsistent with standard academic citation styles. Some in-text citations lack full references.

Suggestions:

- Use APA 7th edition consistently.
- Include at least 20–25 references.
- Recommended scholarly sources to strengthen the paper: