U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan: A case study

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U.S. NATION-STATE BUILDING OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN: A CASE STUDY

By

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The U.S. war in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is the longest military conflict in American history. Since the initial U.S. military intervention in 2001, over 1,000 U.S. soldiers have been killed, and over 6,000 have been injured. Over 700 coalition soldiers have been killed, and 4,000 have been injured. It is estimated that over 20,000 Afghan civilians have also been killed. U.S. defense operations in Afghanistan have also cost U.S. taxpayers over $200 billion dollars. Soon after the U.S. intervention in 2001, efforts to develop Afghanistan’s political, economic, social, and security related institutions and systems have been attempted by the U.S. in order to stabilize the state. This thesis was designed to test the efficacy of U.S. nation-state building operations in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. This study analyzes the following: (1) the causes for the nation-state building operations in Afghanistan; (2) the constraints on the U.S. to conduct nation-state building operations in Afghanistan; (3) and, the political, economic, social/cultural, and security/military related challenges the U.S. and its allies are faced with in stabilizing Afghanistan. This thesis found that the U.S. operations in Afghanistan have not been effective in helping to establish nation-state institutions and systems. However, this thesis does recognize several positive attributes to the U.S. operations since the initial intervention took place in 2001. The thesis concludes with recommendations for future research and use of the data collected.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the following individuals who have been in my thoughts and prayers since the start of the U.S. occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq: the thousands of brave and courageous U.S. and allied troops that have lost their lives; the thousands of brave and courageous U.S. and allied troops that have been injured; the family members of our U.S. troops that have been placed in harm’s way; and to the hundreds of thousands of native Afghan and Iraqi civilians/non-enemy combatants who have lost their lives since the initial U.S. and allied military intervention in the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan and Iraq, and to their family members.

I would like to thank the hard working faculty of the DePaul School of Public Service. Your pursuit of excellence from every student in the Master of Public Administration program has truly been an experience that I will always appreciate. I would like to thank the SPS family who worked so hard to help me ensure that I accomplish this task. My special appreciation goes to my thesis advisor Dr. Ogom. His patience, wisdom, and guidance in this project have truly been a blessing. I appreciate his efforts to ensure that I produce an intellectually powerful contribution to the field of public administration and political science.

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of my parents, Ret. U.S. Army Major Chester and Mrs. Toni Tindall. Thank you for the encouragement and opportunity to grow. Finally, I would like to thank each and every person that has participated in this thesis and or have assisted me in its completion. Your support has made this thesis project an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“But whether for reasons of human rights or of security, the United States has done a lot of intervening over the past fifteen years, and has taken on roughly one new nation-building commitment every other year since the end of the Cold War. We have been in denial about it, but we are in this business for the long haul. We’d better get used to it, and learn how to do it—because there will almost certainly be a next time.”

—Francis Fukuyama, 2004

The continued military presence of the U.S. in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is a highly debated and complex foreign policy issue in global politics and world affairs. For the last decade, political and social science research published about this issue has heavily analyzed the positive and negative consequences of historical U.S. foreign military and diplomatic intervention operations. A particular focus of foreign policy scholars, of late, has been on the U.S. military occupations in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Iraq. Since 2002, numerous books, articles, and research papers about U.S. nation-state building have described the success and challenges the U.S. confronted during the lead up to military conflicts, the justification used for military intervention, the initial planning of these interventions, the execution of military operations, and the rationale or “real” reason for a continued U.S. military presence in foreign nations. Since the Obama Administration took office in 2009 and the administration’s decision to send an additional 30,000 troops to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, there have been few comprehensive research studies that exam the efficacy and costs associated with this U.S. nation-state building operation. This thesis attempts to do just that.

The purpose of this study is to develop and provide U.S. foreign policy stakeholders (U.S. national security officials, members of Congress, academic/research
institutions, and civic/citizen groups) a variety of conclusions, findings, and recommendations in response to U.S. nation-state building operations in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. It provides extensive qualitative and quantitative data about the causes, constraints, and challenges of U.S. interventions in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

**THESIS STATEMENT**

The efficacy of U.S. nation-state building operations in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is questionable, at best, and the current counterinsurgency strategy has not been successful. Since the initial military intervention in 2001, the U.S. has failed to create legitimate and sustained progress in developing and creating the political, economic, social, and security related institutions and systems needed in order for Afghanistan to stabilize. U.S. actions in Afghanistan have also caused the U.S. to suffer human, economic, and political losses. It is imperative that the U.S. adopt a new nation-state building strategy towards Afghanistan.

**THE RESEARCH QUESTION**

The primary research question of this study is: has the U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan legitimately helped promote or develop the political, economic, social, and security related institutions and structures needed to stabilize and sustain a united state. Additionally, this research seeks to investigate the following: the causes for the nation-state-building operations in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan; the current constraints on the U.S. and its allies on creating an environment and culture for the peoples of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish the types of nation-state
building activities to stabilize their country; and, the current political, economic, social/cultural, and security/military related challenges the U.S. and its allies are faced with in seeking to create an environment and culture for the peoples of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish the types of nation-state building activities to stabilize their country.

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

In order to understand the complex issues of nation-state building in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, it is important to assess the U.S. foreign policy to the Middle-East for the last decade. The legacy of the Bush Administration’s approach to U.S. foreign policy largely includes the decision and execution of fighting the “War on Terror.” This phrase has become synonymous with the intelligence gathering and war strategies and operations conducted by the Bush Administration after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The war on terror was symbolically used constantly during the build up and execution of the U.S. invasion and occupation in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Iraq. These wars were a part of the larger objective of the Bush Administration’s foreign policy agenda which maintained that the U.S. had the right to defend itself from any country that shelters and or aids terrorist groups and preventively attack any country that is perceived a national-security threat to the U.S. (Weisman. 2002).

The Bush Doctrine was crafted and designed by many individuals who consider themselves, or are considered, neo-conservative. Neo-conservatives in the Bush Administration advanced their ideological beliefs by conducting many military operations, sanctions, and isolationist tactics with the objective of trying to create or
foster democracy throughout the world, specifically toward many Middle-Eastern countries and other failed states in Africa and South America (Owens, 2008). This neoconservative approach to U.S. foreign policy was known for many other foreign policy issues, which include: the frosty relationship between the U.S. and the United Nations, especially after the appointment of U.N. Ambassador John Bolton, considered by many in the international community as a right-wing extremist; the fraud, corruption, and no-bid U.S. governmental contracts to many defense military contractors, including the Halliburton Corporation of which Vice President Dick Cheney was previously CEO; the harsh interrogation and torture reports of many terrorist or enemy combatants; and, the legal justification and security problems associated with the Guantanamo Bay terrorism detention facility; and the warrantless wire tapings of U.S. citizens.

During the first term of the Bush Administration, many U.S. national-security decisions were highly concentrated and coordinated by the U.S. Defense Department along with the Office of the Vice President. Many of these Defense Department leaders involved in the decision making process had numerous ties to private military corporations, otherwise known as the Military Industrial Complex (MIC). At President Eisenhower’s 1961 farewell speech to the nation, he described what the MIC was, and the dangers that it posed. President Eisenhower described the MIC as the relationship and influence of the federal government, private military contractors, and the U.S. national-security apparatus. The MIC is the “informal and changing coalition of groups with vested physiological, moral, and material interests in the continuous development and maintenance of high levels of weaponry, in preservation of colonial markets and in military-strategic conceptions of internal affairs” (Pursell, 1972). As a result of the MIC
and the political climate after the attacks on September 11, 2001 forced the Bush Administration to focus a great deal of its foreign policy capital and attention on the Defense Department, at times overruling State Department recommendations, especially the design and execution of the operations in the wars in Islamic Republics of Afghanistan and Iraq (Herspring, 2008).

When the Obama Administration took office in January 2009, many in the international community were excited for a change in U.S. direction and approach to U.S. foreign policy (Amanpour, 2009). The Obama Administration tried to capitalize on this excitement by having Secretary of State Hillary Rodham-Clinton give a series of speeches highlighting the Obama administration’s approach to U.S. foreign policy and international relations in 2009. These speeches tried to differentiate the new approach from that of the Bush administrations. In a speech at the U.S. Agency for International Development, Secretary Clinton said the new U.S. foreign policy approach included three foundational pillars, namely defense, development, and diplomacy. Secretary Clinton reiterated the importance of development in U.S. foreign policy decision making at many subsequent speeches noting that "today, it is a strategic, economic and moral imperative - as central to advancing American interests and solving global problems as diplomacy and defense" (Clinton, 2010).

In spite of this optimism and stated policy differences to U.S. foreign, the Obama administration has essentially maintained many of the same foreign policies and operations as the Bush Administration. These operations include warrantless wiretappings of American citizens, the usage of military tribunals for suspected terrorists, and drone military attacks. It has also kept many former Bush Administration Defense
and national-security leaders in his administration, including Defense Secretary Robert Gates, General Stanley McCrystal, and National Security Counterterrorism Advisor John Brennon, and Director of National Intelligence Denis Blair, among many other (Grennwald, 2009). Many of these officials helped design and execute the initial military response to the September 11, 2001 attacks and the war on terror.

**FAILED, FAILING, AND WEAK NATION-STATES**

Both Bush and Obama Administrations have similar policy approaches when dealing with, or addressing, issues concerning failed, failing, and or weak nation-states. The political, economic, social, and security impacts caused, instigated, or exacerbated by failed states have resulted in the following foreign policy concerns: an increase in regional conflicts and instability; an expansion of states providing shelter to or harboring terrorists, terrorist groups, and or their supporters; an increase in the recruitment and training of indigenous populations; and an increase in local crime. Due to these concerns the Bush and Obama Administrations have reacted to certain failed states with tactics and strategies, including, isolation, non-engagement, and military engagement.

There is no single universal accepted definition or criteria of what constitutes a failed, failing, or weak nation-state. There have been hundreds of international debates, studies, and analysis of how to best define these types of states. For purposes of this paper, the Crises States Research Center’s (CSRC, 2006) definition will be adopted. The CSRC defines a failed state as “a state that can no longer perform its basic security and development functions and that has no effective control over its territory and borders. A failed state is one that can no longer reproduce the conditions for its own existence.” States that are deemed failed, failing, or weak align with this definition due to not having...
a central/federal government, or have one that is ineffective or incapable of securing the states interests and its people. States that align with this CSRC definition are also likely to house internal and external terrorist organizations, criminal warlords, and are also likely to be experiencing some form of religious or ethnic conflict. All of these factors contribute to an ineffective state central government.

We will also adopt the U.S. Fund for Peaces overarching criteria that are used to define a failed state. These criteria include “the loss of physical control of its territory, or of the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force therein; an erosion of legitimate authority to make collective decisions; an inability to provide reasonable public services, and; an inability to interact with other states as a full member of the international community.” Also adopted is the U.S. Fund for Peaces assessment that a failing or weak state is “often in conflict, at risk of conflict and instability, or newly emerging from conflict; hampered by poor governance, corruption, and inadequate provisions of fundamental public services to its citizens; weak and failing states may lack effective control of their territory, military, or law enforcement; and one of the poorest countries in the world” (U.S. Fund for Peace, 2007).

These criteria were adopted because they strongly align with current research conducted about the challenges confronting the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. There are also many comprehensive studies about various attempts from external and internal actors attempting to address the specific challenges of a failed state, as outlined in the U.S. Fund for Peaces criteria. Adopting these criteria would benefit this study by allowing an effortless utilization of the extensive research already conducted on failed states, such as Afghanistan, to strengthen the arguments raised in this paper.
Table 1.1: The Fund for Peaces “Failed States Index 2009.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Cote d’Ivoire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of the Congo</td>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>17.</td>
<td>North Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Timor-Leste</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The international community has had a long history of trying to improve the circumstances of these nation-states by providing development assistance and governance support. Thousands of indigenous and international NGO’s have also worked in many of these nations over long periods of time. Although the world community has long worked to improve many of these countries, the U.S. has only recently attempted to pursue a comprehensive strategy to address failed, failing and or weak nations. Many current initiatives, such as the U.S. Fund for Peace: Indicators and their Measures, being used
today by the U.S. were developed several decades ago. These initiatives include “development assistance, cooperation and diplomacy, post-conflict stability operations; interagency cooperation; and conflict and early warning systems.” (U.S. Fund for Peace. 2007) These initiatives have largely been under-funded, understaffed, and underutilized in U.S. military, diplomatic, and development operations. This is reflected in organizations like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) which have historically been hampered in its core mission and services.

**U.S. MILITARY & NATION-STATE BUILDING INTERVENTIONS**

U.S. foreign military intervention operations have consistently been a part of American history. Since 1960, there have been over seventy-five different types of U.S. foreign military interventions. Many of these military interventions were justified as humanitarian relief and defense and security related operations. After the launch of many foreign military interventions the U.S. and its international allies often conduct nation-state building operations in order to help rebuild or establish democratic institutions, systems, and structures. The following chart lists some of the U.S. military interventions throughout the world.

**Table 1.2: Global Policy Forum, “U.S. Interventions” December 2005**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>CIA-backed Bay of Pigs invasion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>CIA-backed military coup overthrows the government of Joao Goulart and Gen. Castello Branco takes power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-1975</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Large commitment of military forces, including air, naval and ground units numbering up to 500,000+ troops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>CIA-backed army coup overthrows President Sukarno and brings Gen. Suharto to power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>CIA-backed military coup ousts President Kwame Nkrumah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-1975</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>CIA supports military coup against Prince Sihanouk, bringing Lon Nol to power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>CIA-backed military coup ousts government of President Salvador Allende. Gen. Augusto Pinochet comes to power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1991</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Major military operation, including naval blockade, air strikes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993-1995</td>
<td>Bosnia</td>
<td>Active military involvement with air and ground forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Air attacks and ground operations oust Taliban government and install a new regime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Invasion with large ground, air and naval forces ousts government of Saddam Hussein and establishes new government.</td>
</tr>
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**NATION-STATE BUILDING**

Nation-State building is a recent term that combines the theories of nation-building and state-building, due to the interconnected relationship between the two different theories (Winderl, 1998). State-building is the process of creating or developing governmental institutions needed in order to stabilize and develop a nation-state. These institutions include political, economic, security, and democratic governmental agencies/institutions. Nation-building is the process of creating or developing a national-identity, national values, and national-traditions. These are established by the creation of a national anthem, flag, language, religion, recognized ethnic and religious groups, and standardized public services designed to help address social and cultural issues in a nation-state (Shamoo, 2009).

For purposes of this research study, the term nation-state building will use the combined definitions stated above and will be defined as the process of creating or
developing governmental institutions, a national-identity, national values, and national-traditions needed in order to stabilize and develop a nation-state. The argument to use this new term includes the theory that in order to have legitimate and effective state-building projects, nation-building operations must also be developed in order to unify internal divisions and fractions which might threaten the sustainability and success of new governmental institutions.

There are a number of studies that have analyzed the U.S. nation-state building approach to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. These studies illuminate the international damage done to the U.S. by the military intervention, the counterinsurgency operations, and the nation-state building activities in Afghanistan (Rubin, 2006). These interventions have increased the cynicism of the efficacy and efficiency in which the U.S. conducts its military and nation-state building interventions (Jones, 2008). Now that the U.S. is projected to have a military presence in Afghanistan for the next decade, it is important to understand the costs and benefits associated with U.S. nation-state building operations.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The remainder of this paper seeks to analyze and explore the causes, constraints, challenges for the U.S. nation-state building interventions in Afghanistan. Chapter 2 of this thesis will present a review of literature that will address important information about this topic and the research questions posed. Chapter 3 will describe the research methods used to test the thesis research questions. Chapter 4 will analyze the results of the research methods that will be used. Chapter 5 will conclude the paper with several recommendations and further areas of potential investigation.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an intellectual and theoretical analysis of the U.S. nation-state building operations in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Specifically it provides greater clarity of the concept of nation-state-building and counterinsurgency operations, including an outline of the historical successful and unsuccessful attempts at 20th century U.S. foreign intervention operations. It also includes an analysis of the political, economic, social/cultural, and security/military related constraints and challenges in which the U.S. and its allies are attempting to address or are significantly impacting current counterinsurgency and nation-state building operations in Afghanistan.

The quantitative and qualitative data collected in this chapter will be the basis in which this research study will use to construct a nation-state building evaluation rubric, which will be used in the methodology chapter. The evaluation rubric will contain criteria in which this research study uses to measure current U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. The criteria established in this evaluation rubric and based on what current research on nation-state building has determined should be the goal and or outcome for any foreign nation-state building project. From this assessment, this research study is able to assess the validity of the primary and secondary research questions. All of the above mentioned components of this chapter help provide a stronger justification for why this research study is advantageous to the field of public administration and to current and future U.S. nation-state building operations.
BACKGROUND ON THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

In order to understand the efficacy of U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan, it is important to reflect the many challenges this country has had in the recent past which continue to impact the country today. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has had a long history of internal conflict and external interventions. Before Afghanistan was a unified country, it consisted of a dozen or so different tribes. Many of these tribes often had battles or conflicts between and among themselves. The largest of these tribes consisted of the Pashtun people. These tribes were officially unified in 1747 by Ahmad Shah Durrani. However, within a short period of time, ethnic, religious, and territorial conflict caused the newly formed state to be unstable.

This instability was not helped by the British occupation of Afghanistan during the height of British colonialism. After Afghanistan achieved its independence in the early 20th century, it slowly was making progress to stabilize and democratize (CIA, 2010). However, the little progress that was made was quickly stopped by a several coups on the federal government. Soon after, the Soviet Union invaded and occupied Afghanistan during the height of the Cold War. In response, the U.S. helped arm local Islamic fundamentalist of various tribal backgrounds, known as the mujahideen, to fight the Soviets. The mujahideen were eventually successful in forcing the Soviet Union to end their occupation. It is important to note that the occupation resulted in the death of over one million Afghans, and the displacement of over five million to neighboring countries.

Soon after the Soviet occupation, Afghanistan was plagued by different civil wars, which led to the federal government in Kabul to eventually be overthrown by the
Taliban in 1996. The Taliban ended the various civil wars in Afghanistan, however instituted their fundamentalist Islamic ideology in the laws, politics, cultural, and economy throughout the nation-state. The Taliban were eventually overthrown by the U.S. in Kabul for providing sanctuary to Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden (Kahler, 2008). It is important to note that one of the reasons why September 11, 2001 happened was due to the international community failing to implement the 2000 U.N. Brahimi report recommendations, which was designed to address the incoherence, tribalism, and divisions in the failed states recognized by the U.N. The attacks on 9/11 quickened developed nation-states to work harder and invest more in addressing the growing dangers that failed states can have on international stability and national security (Rubin, 2006). After the U.S. invasion, many remaining members of Al Qaeda and the Taliban hid in the Afghanistan and Pakistan borders. Soon after the invasion, Afghanistan elected a democratic government headed by President Hamid Karzai. Since the initial military intervention in 2001, U.S. armed forces have remained in Afghanistan conducting counterinsurgency operations against the Taliban who have re-emerged and are one of the leading insurgents against U.S. nation-state building operations.

**U.S. NATION-STATE BUILDING OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN**

The Obama Administration’s “A New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan” largely resembles the Bush Administration’s policy towards Afghanistan. The similar administration policies include the objectives of defeating terrorists, establishing an effective Afghanistan government, develop an Afghan security force, and establishing an Afghan economy. The Obama administration, however, has spent ample resources and an
increase in U.S. troops on the Afghanistan/Pakistan border where they have worked to capture or kill members of Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and Osama Bin Laden.

The Obama administration, like the Bush administration, has also continued the practice of utilizing military contractors in the training and counterinsurgency efforts in the state. One difference in the new administration is that it has worked to provide nation-state building operations outside of the Kabul region. Through these additional military contractors and the support of foreign allies it has sought to address issues previously not resourced such as governance building through the provincial governments, increase NGO efforts, and the further elimination of narcotics.

Defeating Al Qaeda and the Taliban are currently the leading justifications used by the U.S. in response to the almost decades long occupation of Afghanistan and for maintaining a military presence in the country for years to come. In order to defeat Al Qaeda and the Taliban, the U.S. and its allies have been working to build and or rebuild Afghan institutions and structures in support of U.S. efforts and in support of the needs of the local Afghan people. This building effort is a typical response used by foreign interventionist in order to help eliminate instability and to provide better opportunities for a sustained decreases in violence (Tilly, 1975). For the last decade, the U.S. and allied nations have been working to develop Afghanistan’s state structures in order to stabilize the state from internal and external threats and security concerns, and to help provide basic human services to the Afghan people (CHR, 2006).

The efficacy of U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan has always been in question since the initial military intervention took place. Many have called on the U.S. to re-design their current military and developmental strategy by placing more
emphasis on helping to create legitimate and accountable institutions than deal with the
countries economic, poverty, and unemployment related issues rather than only
security/military related institutions and services (OECD, 2008). Many have also
argued for more formal governmental structures to be established that deliver goods and
services in support of the indigenous population (Fritz, 2007). Ensuring this type of
nation-state building operations would likely be a long-term, violent, and costly process.
However, if implemented, it would provide a failed state like Afghanistan more sustained
security and stability. Another growing concern of the U.S. occupation in Afghanistan
that has arisen over the last several years is the lack of an accountable, federal and
provincial government that is capable of providing leadership to the many needs of the
Afghan people. Without this vital component of nation-state building, efforts to increase
the likelihood of a sustained government capable of defeating internal and external
threats will be nearly impossible to achieve (Winderl, 1998).

One of the fundamental issues many have with the U.S. operations in Afghanistan
is the notion that nation-state building should only be a process that should be started by
local actors and not external actors (Whaite, 2008). This argument is often contradicted
by the view that nation-state building operations, in most recent history, should be
conducted by external actors due to the inability and possible conflict in allowing internal
actors to establish or re-establish governmental systems. However, more recent research
on nation-state building operations advocate for domestic indigenous peoples to take
greater leadership within nation-state building operations, while external actors should
provide a more supporting role by allocating resources and security to the domestic
populous (Chandler, 2004).
There are many that have criticized U.S. nation-state building operations because it is largely focused on providing security while neglecting to effectively engaging the indigenous Afghan people into the nation-state building operations process (Shamoo, 2009). There are also complaints that U.S. efforts have not been effective in ceasing hostilities among and between the various tribes in Afghanistan (Gardizi, 2006). One of the reasons why incorporating the local indigenous population into the decision making process and working to unify tribal and ethnic differences is important, is based on the long-lasting research that has proven that this approach leads to state stability and a more unified populous (Lun, 2009). By focusing only on stabilizing a nation-state through a military intervention, due to perceived national or international security threats, external actors will most likely leave this nation-state in an even more unstable condition (Fukuyama, 2004).

**THE AFGHANISTAN CHALLENGE**

There are many challenges confronting the U.S. and coalition forces in their attempt to conduct nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. This chapter will provide a brief analysis of the political, economic, social/cultural, and security/military related challenges confronted U.S. and coalition operations. These challenges are complex, interconnected, and are vitally important components that the nation-state building operations in Afghanistan should seek to address.

**POLITICAL CHALLENGES**

One of the most pressing issues in recent world events is the challenging U.S. relationship with Afghan President Hamid Karzai and the Afghan government. Research maintains that a central impediment to any U.S. or international effort in Afghanistan is the structure of the Afghan government (Sinha, 2009). The Afghan government is
structured to have a strong executive presidency and a very weak legislative branch. In order for the U.S. to conduct legitimate nation-state building operations, it is important to not to give the appearance of undermining a democratically elected head of state. However, by propping up the Karzi administration, which many Afghans and foreign U.S. allies consider corrupt, undermines and challenges the types of initiatives the U.S. is attempting to conduct in Afghanistan.

Finding a political balance between these challenges is vital in order for U.S. objectives to be achieved. Another significant challenge to U.S. and Afghan nation-state building efforts is the current imbalance shown by external and internal institutions that focus a significant proportion of their resources and activities on Kabul while neglecting the other provinces. Although coalition forces are scattered throughout Afghanistan, their troop and developmental forces are limited to the tasks and challenges assigned to them. This current process is effectively leaving the regional provinces to the hands of local war lords and tribal religious leaders.

In the last five years, numerous research studies have been investigating the structural issues within the U.S. federal government which have greatly impacted the way in which nation-state building services are delivered in Afghanistan (Dobbins, 2008). Recent research on U.S. operations in Afghanistan have advocated that the current practice of allowing the Department of Defense to lead and be responsible for key diplomatic and development related activities in Afghanistan be curtailed and that the State Department resume authority and provide direction for Afghanistan nation-state building operations. A re-evaluation and re-design of the role of senior executive officers within the Department of Defense and the role of Foreign Service Officers within the
U.S. State Department should also take place. This is due to the viewpoint that military officers in the Defense Department have expanded their roles to such an extent that career service experts in diplomatic and developmental operations for the State Department have been relegated to mere minor positions in relation to the decision making process for U.S. national security interests. The role and funding of the USAID be enhanced and that the Departments of State and Defense work more collaboratively with USAID in attempts at nation-state building in Afghanistan.

**ECONOMIC CHALLENGES**

When analyzing the U.S. nation-state building operations and the current state of progress in Afghanistan, it is apparent that the U.S. and its allies have failed to really tackle Afghanistan’s historical economic and funding challenges. Throughout the academic literature, arguments have been made that one of the most challenging aspects in Afghanistan is the ability and capacity to improve Afghanistan’s economic situation, including its illegal economy, governmental institutions, and foreign aid expectations (Rubin, 2006). Most of Afghanistan’s economy is based on the narcotics trade. Research indicates that the narcotics industry has influence in every branch of the Afghanistan government, including the armed forces which are being trained by the U.S. to help eliminate Afghanistan’s opium fields, and are working ferociously to maintain this industries relevance, power, and growing capabilities.

Another vital issue confronting Afghanistan is that it currently relies too heavily on international aid to help maintain the states security and human services. This dependence makes Afghanistan a puppet state for the developed nations and international bodies that have always subjugated Afghanistan to unfair and unreasonable expectations
(Gardizi, 2006). According to the World Bank (2004), other important economic challenges confronting Afghanistan include the weak rule of law, the drug trade, political insecurity, and derailed reconstruction efforts. Thus, the Bank notes Afghanistan’s poverty and unemployment rates will continue to increase if nation-state building efforts do not address these issues; and that the long-term projected cost of having to sustain a $1 billion security force is unsustainable and will force Afghanistan to rely heavily on external actors, which will hamper progress made in providing services to the Afghan people other than security or protection (Rubin, 2006).

**SOCIAL/CULTURAL CHALLENGES**

Since the U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan few foreign aid and NGO programs have worked to improve the social and cultural related challenges which are affecting the unity and cohesion among many Afghans in the nation-state building operation process (Schutte, 2004). Research indicates that provides social and cultural related services, particularly to war torn nations like Afghanistan, provided coping capabilities for the native populous to be able to manage or reduce the level of psychological and physical trauma they may have experiences. Basic social and cultural services, typically found in most developed countries and even some developing countries, are lacking. The social and cultural services provided by the Afghan government are largely found in Kabul and not in many of the other cities and provinces in the state. Services lacking include, among other, hospitals, public schools for all, clothing stores, public service training facilities, youth activity facilities, and sports and recreational facilities.
There are a variety of reasons why many of these services are not provided, including security concerns, but it is important to understand how the lack of political, economic, and security related progress in the state impact the state’s social issues and vice versa. It is also important to note that role and influence of war lords, the Taliban, and ethnic and religious groups that influence the types of activities the native populous may or may not enjoy (Gardizi, 2006).

SECURITY/MILITARY CHALLENGES

Providing security and military support to the Afghan people has been one of the most challenging U.S. nation-state building operations since the initial U.S. military intervention in 2001. The U.S. was ill-prepared to go into Iraq and Afghanistan for a number of reasons. Regardless of the reasons, it has placed a great constrain to the effectiveness on the mission in which the military was given (Laughrey, 2008). Due to the military having poor language capabilities and knowledge of the cultures of Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. counterinsurgency and nation-state building operations were not effective in communicating and forming relationships with the native indigenous peoples throughout the course of the intervention.

Due to the U.S. failure in the early years of its intervention to build a “competent” Afghan security apparatus, the Taliban and other insurgent groups have taken advantage and gained control of rural and urban provinces outside of the Kabul. This is happening while the U.S. forces have to recruit and train a highly illiterate and easily corrupted Afghan armed force. There is also rampant corruption among U.S. military contractors who have not fulfilled contractual agreements. The long-term security sustainability in Afghanistan relies heavily in the countries police and armed forces (Jones, 2008).
Without an effective Afghan security presence established it will be hard for U.S. and allied troops to leave the nation due to concerns over the Taliban and regional stability.

SUCCESSFUL NATION-STATE BUILDING CRITERIA

The criteria established in this section, is derived from governmental and academic research institutions. It was collected to help establish the criteria in which this research study will use to assess current U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. Criteria collected have been compartmentalized in four major categories. These categories include: political development, economic development, security/military development, and social/cultural development.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

There are many who argue that successful nation-state building efforts should work to involve a “political transition from authoritarianism (or totalitarianism) to a more participatory form of government” (Thapa, 2008). Essentially, nation-state building operations should work to formalize the “pillars” of a democracy. In order to achieve this type of political aspiration, nation-state building operations should work to ensure that regional, ethnic, and religious institutions are created and that the populations reflecting these segments are incorporated in all aspect of the federal executive, legislative, and judicial branches. This aspiration will be especially hard to accomplish for countries that have a long histories of internal conflict and external intervention, such as Afghanistan. However, in order for nation-state building operations to leave positive and sustainable impacts after external actors have left the state, political development within the state must be accomplished.
Others argue that in order to have a strong democracy, nation-state building efforts must work to bring reconciliation and a strong, credible, and enforceable judicial system. The UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights has designed a process in which legal credibility within any new judicial system can be established through the creation of truth and justice commissions. The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development’s (OECD) State Building in Situations of Fragility maintains that a belief in the political and legal sectors of newly formed nation-state institutions increase the engagement between the population and the state. OECD argues that nation-state building operations should work to provide a “virtuous cycle of legitimacy” and that legitimacy can be produced by having “effective and equitable” services, a participatory form of government, constitutional rule of law, accountability mechanisms, and through international support. It is important to note that creating legitimate legal and political sectors may be extremely hard to accomplish in a state such as Afghanistan due to the widespread systematic corruption within the Afghan government, and the lack of trust within the Afghan people due to security concerns, and the effects of having a large populous that is unemployed and illiterate.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA**

There is substantial literature available that has argued that one of the effects of maintaining a long protracted armed conflict, such as the war in Afghanistan, is that it can produce a “retarded” economic impact that significantly weakens the long-term growth of that country (Thapa, 2008). The effects of a “retarded” economic impact can result in the displacement or people, property, investments, opportunities, and markets.
Research indicates that one of the important components of nation-state building operations should always be to help build or rebuild economic and monetary institutions. By creating these institutions, a state that has historically had challenges confronting long-term unemployment and high poverty, will have a greater chance in stabilizing a failed nation-state. This will be a significant challenge in Afghanistan due to the prospects of having a recently failed state adopting economic systems that have been developed over centuries, used by highly developed nations.

Recent research maintains that nation-state building operations should work to improve the economic conditions in the state through poverty prevention and reduction strategies (Walle, 2009). This would entail nation-state building activities that would work to hire police officers, teachers, and other public service related professionals after receiving educational and training preparation. This would help increase the likelihood for the native population to have a stronger loyalty to the state. Throughout the history of nation-state building operations, this critical aspect has typically not been a priority within development initiatives due to security issues, governance and political conflicts, and the lack of a sustained support system in place to manage these types of employment opportunities.

OECD argues that another aspect to economic development through nation-state building would be the formulation of administrative capacity. This capacity is through the creation of public financial management systems which has the ability to raise funds, collect taxes, and monitor the state’s economic growth. OECD argues that in order to strengthen regional and central government institutions for the long-term development of the state, this administrative capacity will need to be created to assist in the reducing
external dependency on donor support. OECD maintains that establishing taxes from the population will increase their participation in government and engage the population in working to hold the government accountable. Other activities would also need to be made such as property rights and trade issues.

**SOCIAL/CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA**

The engagement of civil societies and the native populous in the decision making process and in the operations of nation-state building has been a constant throughout many academic research studies (Uvin, 2006). This engagement would occur through the promotion of NGO organizations and local grassroots organizations in the coordination, advocacy, and implementation of state-building activities. These activities would include having the federal and regional governments engaging NGO’s and grassroots organizations to do the following: issue-specific conversations between community meetings; assisting in the delivery of social services; provide opportunities to hold conflict mediated dispute resolutions between conflicting local parties; and work to engage community residents in local political activities. Uvin and Cohen argue that these sorts of activities increase the likelihood for long-term state-building success. It is important to note that in many failed states, NGO’s had either left or are prevented from entering the state due to security issues. Until safety and security is provided to local communities where NGO’s would work, NGO’s and grassroots organizations will not be able to do the vital work in which they excel in providing.

Others argue that nation-state building operations should be standardized in order to contribute to the “creation of a common culture through the presence of similar and readily identifiable public services” (Walle 2009). This standardization would include the
recognition and classification of citizens and groups; an integrated curriculum for public schools; freedom of the press; freedom of religion; the creation of post offices; the uniforms for governmental employees; the recognition of a national flag and anthem; and a national television and radio programs. Having these culturally symbolic types of standardized services provided to both regional and centralized locations throughout the state would help create a sustain nation-state objectives.

SECURITY/MILITARY DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

One of the most important aspects of nation-state building and counterinsurgency operations should be the building and development of a states security and military related institutions and systems (Dobbins, 2008). Research indicates that nation-state building should engage the native population in the beginning stages of an intervention. One of the troubles many military interventions typically have is the failure to secure the entire state and its borders, not just the nation’s capitol within a short period of time. Research maintains that when a foreign intervention occurs it is important that these troops be dispersed throughout the state, including local tribal communities, and not just to the central government (Bullimore, 2006).

It is vital for these troops to be immersed in local communities to ensure that warlords, foreign agents, or other security threats will not have the chance to grow or cause conflict in these regions at the rate in which would occur should these troops not be there. During these initial military interventions it is important for foreign troops to engage these local communities through the building on infrastructure projects and the hiring of police agents. This engagement will be difficult, however it will provide the military an opportunity to learn more about the native culture, to find best ways to improve these
communities, and ensure that these communities, in-time, develop the capacity to govern themselves.

In all these operations, time to implement these objectives would need to be balanced and conditions based due to the human, insurgent, cultural, and financial challenges. However, these basic tenants should be an important foundational objective for any nation-state building operations. These tenants should help effectively address some other important issues impacting the state such as governance building, poverty reduction, and elimination of terrorist organizations or criminal warlords.

COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS

A vitally important aspect to the development of security and military related institutions and structures, especially after a foreign military intervention, is counterinsurgency operations. Counterinsurgency operations and nation-state building operations go hand in hand with one another. Recent counterinsurgency operations have been used to help create, sustain, and develop the nation-state building projects initiated since the U.S. military intervention took place in Afghanistan. Counterinsurgency theory argues that armed forces are needed and should be used to fight off indigenous or foreign groups seeking to prevent nation-state building projects from taking place. These groups are the insurgency. In order to defeat these insurgents the U.S. and its foreign allies have created counterinsurgency operations aimed at defeating these counterproductive movements.

The U.S. Department of Defense’s Counterinsurgency Operations manual defines counterinsurgency as “those military, paramilitary, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency.” One of the overarching goals of the
U.S. Department of Defense in maintaining a large number of U.S. troops in these foreign lands, for extended periods of time, is to “neutralize the insurgent and, together with population and resources control measures, establish an environment within which political, social, and economic progress is possible.”

Recent research on future counterinsurgency efforts argue for the U.S. to work and engage local communities to not only support their efforts and their intelligence operations, but to also work with the state by being ground combatants, border security agents, intelligence agents, and information operatives. This engagement will need to be done after U.S. and allied troops train, mentor, and sufficient support to these indigenous agents of the state. This comprehensive approach will enable foreign troops and development agents to spend more time addressing other important nation-building operations, such as political and economic development sustainability and development.

There are many of who have argued that there is no single “template solution to civil wars and insurrections” however there are lessons that can be learned by past counterinsurgency experiences (Sepp, 2005). After examining previous U.S. counterinsurgency operations, some argue that future foreign civil and military interventions conducted in response to or as an aftermath of a military intervention should be focused on the countries people and the people’s belief and support in their newly formed or changed government. The list below reflects current research findings on what constitutes successful and unsuccessful counterinsurgency operations.

**Table 2.1: Counterinsurgency Measurements for Success (Galula, 1964)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Successful</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on intelligence.</td>
<td>Primacy of military direction of counterinsurgency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on population, their needs, and security.</td>
<td>Priority to “kill-capture” enemy, not on engaging population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure areas established, expanded.</td>
<td>Battalion-size operations as the norm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurgents isolated from population (population control).</td>
<td>Military units concentrated on large bases for protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amnesty and rehabilitation for insurgents.</td>
<td>Special forces focused on raiding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police in lead; military supporting.</td>
<td>Adviser effort a low priority in personnel assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police force expanded, diversified.</td>
<td>Building, training indigenous army in image of U.S. Army.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special forces, advisers embedded with indigenous forces.</td>
<td>Peacetime government processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurgent sanctuaries denied.</td>
<td>Open borders, airspace, coastlines.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that it is not entirely valid or even possible to adopt the same method a foreign external actor may have used in the conduction of a purported successful nation-state building operation and try to replicate that same method to that of another country. For example, the German and Japanese nation-state building operations are thought of as successful due to their sustained economic and political reform capabilities after World War II (Dobbins, 2008). One of the many reasons why Germany’s and Japan’s nation-state building operations were successful was due to the both nations having, essentially, a homogenous society with few ethnic minorities or religious differences. Germany was surrounded by other democratic and western nations. Also, both Germany and Japan had previously established local and national systems of government including established economic and legal institutions. So to compare the nation-state building constraints and challenges of countries like Somalia, Yemen, and Rwanda to countries like Germany and Japan would not be appropriate due to the ethnic,
socioeconomic, and tribal differences that have challenged many of these nations for centuries.

**SUMMARY**

There are a plethora of research studies that have examined U.S. nation-state building and counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan. This review of literature provides a critical overview of the main themes/arguments and a number important policy platforms about nation-state building operations, and methods on how to measure its effectiveness. This information is vital to the understanding of the issues confronting the U.S. relationship with the Afghanistan. It also provides a brief synopsis of the known causes, constraints, challenges, and opportunities for advancement in U.S. nation-state building operations, including the criteria and measurements of successful nation-state building operations. The review assists us in the design of recommendations to address the research questions and the main arguments of this paper.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The U.S. has been conducting nation-state building operations in Afghanistan for over nine years, and is projected to be in Afghanistan for the next decade. The hypothesis of this thesis is that U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan have not likely made legitimate progress in helping to promote or develop the types of institutions and structures needed to stabilize the state or reduce the influence of the Taliban and Al Qaeda. In order to analyze the efficacy of U.S. efforts in the last eight years and to suggest policy recommendations for the U.S. to adopt in order to move forward in its nation-state building activities, this chapter details the research design and methodology adopted in this study, including an elaboration of the research question, hypothesis and variables measured in this study.

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Has U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan legitimately helped to promote or develop the political, economic, social, and security related institutions and structures needed to stabilize and sustain a united state and eliminate the influence of Al Qaeda and the Taliban?

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis will test the efficacy of U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. The following figure will provide the method in which this thesis paper will attempt to test the hypothesis. By answering the research question and the subsequent secondary research questions we will be able to determine if the hypothesis is valid or invalid.
Table 3.1: The Research Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE RESEARCH QUESTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Has the U.S. nation-state building operation's in Afghanistan helped create or develop the institutions and systems needed for that country to stabilize and eliminate the influence of the Taliban &amp; Al Qaeda?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. No

3. Hypothesis Confirmed

4. Yes

5. Ways/Evidence of successful nation-state building available?

6. No

7. Hypothesis Confirmed

8. Yes

9. Hypothesis Falsified

The above figure highlights the questions that will be answered during the progress of this thesis. Box 1 highlights the primary research question of this thesis. Box 2 and 3 indicates that the thesis has been confirmed and that U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan have not been effective in building institutions and systems needed to stabilize the state and eliminate the influence of the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Box 4 and 5 indicates that further analysis needs to be conducted in order to determine if the hypothesis is confirmed or falsified. Box 6 and 7 indicate that there is no credible
evidence of successful U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. This will indicate that the thesis hypothesis is confirmed. Box 8 and 9 will indicate that the hypothesis is falsified.

**THE SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following secondary research questions were created in order to assess if U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan have promoted, and or developed, the types of political, economic, social, and security related institutions and services it sought to create or re-build since the initial military interventions were launched. In answering the following secondary questions we will be able to prove that there is, or is not, efficacy in the U.S. operations in Afghanistan it is important to make this paper as scientific and objective as possible:

*What were/are the causes for the nation-state building interventions in Afghanistan?* From researching the causes or “root causes” of the U.S. interventions in Afghanistan we will be able to gather specific data about the perception and or the rational used to defend the decision to interven in Afghanistan. This data is useful in the research and assessment of the U.S. response to these causes. From this research and assessment we will be able to identify the U.S. successes or failures in its responses to these causes.

*What are the current constraints on the U.S. and its allies on creating an environment and culture for the peoples of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish the types of nation-state building activities to stabilize their country?* From researching the constraints, or obstacles placed on, or effecting U.S. and allied nation attempts to conduct nation-state building operations in Afghanistan we will be able to
research historical alternatives used in previous cases with similar situations/backgrounds. This research could be used in the formulation of possible recommendations to address these constraints.

What are the current political, economic, social/cultural, and security/military related challenges the U.S. and its allies are faced with in seeking to create an environment and culture for the peoples of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish the types of nation-state building activities to stabilize their country? These research questions will indicate if there are any U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan that matter or not. From this analysis we will be able to research, evaluate, and then propose responses to and or recommendations to the successes or failures of the U.S. responses to these challenges.

HAS THERE BEEN AN IMPACT/EVALUATION RUBRIC

From gathering qualitative and quantitative data about U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan we will be able to verify the thesis research question and secondary research questions. If this thesis hypothesis is confirmed, it is important to ensure that U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan have met the objectives it espoused to achieve during the initial intervention. It is also vital to ensure that any U.S. created/developed political, economic, social/cultural, and or security related institutions and or systems have a constructive purpose. Having purposefully and important institutions and systems will ensure that the nation-state building operations in the country are successful. In order to qualify what purposeful and or important nation-state building operations entails, we will adopt the following rubric or criteria to judge from:
### Table 3.2: Nation-State Building Evaluation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Development Criteria:</th>
<th>Economic Development Criteria:</th>
<th>Social/Cultural Development Criteria:</th>
<th>Security/Military Development Criteria:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong decentralized government institutions in various regions throughout state.</td>
<td>Structured programs to gradually reduce dependence on foreign aid.</td>
<td>Helps reduce and eliminate domestic violence.</td>
<td>Eliminates corruption in the security forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free and fair elections.</td>
<td>Improves trade &amp; embargo powers.</td>
<td>Works to protect children.</td>
<td>Increases local and national security forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent judicial system with strong rule of law.</td>
<td>Eliminates the drug trade.</td>
<td>Helps eliminate illiteracy.</td>
<td>Training and Mentorship of national security forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checks and Balances on executive, legislative, and judicial government institutions.</td>
<td>Government programs aimed at the elimination of poverty.</td>
<td>Helps increase gender equality.</td>
<td>Trained foreign troop presence with ability to speak native language and understand native culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide policy focus on population and their needs.</td>
<td>Demilitarize Development Assistance.</td>
<td>Government services are focused on population in both rural and urban communities.</td>
<td>Security forces strong on intelligence gather.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conditioned aid on meaningful corruption and</td>
<td></td>
<td>Police lead with military in a supporting role.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This evaluation rubric is composed of several criteria established in the findings of several scholarly studies on nation-state building operations and counterinsurgency theory. In order to ensure that the most appropriate criteria were adopted for this study, it was vital that the selected criteria reflected and aligned to the specific scope of this paper. This scope included finding criteria that shows how nation-state building operations might assist in the development of a nation's political, economic, social, and security related infrastructure and systems. The evaluation rubric found above also reflects other findings mentioned in the review of literature chapter.

**DATA COLLECTION**

An extensive survey was provided to foreign policy experts from numerous academic institutions and research think tank organizations. These experts were sent a link to the survey and a survey participant informational letter through email. As soon as the link button is selected, the participant is taken to Survey Monkey (an on-line survey tool used to gather data). Once at Survey Monkey, the survey begins with survey directions, and a selection of twenty different questions on U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan.

This survey was designed and separated into seven sections: The Causes, Constraints, the Challenges- Political, Economic, Social/Cultural, Security/Military, and the Opportunities Sections. The survey contained closed and open-ended questions. For
eight of the eleven ordinal variable questions, respondents were given an opportunity to provide qualitative feedback, if they selected the “other” category. For one of the nine nominal variable questions, respondents were given an opportunity to provide qualitative feedback, if they selected the “other” category. Finally, there were three open ended nominal questions.

The Causes Section attempts to do the following: engage the respondent’s beliefs on why the U.S. and allied forces intervened in Afghanistan; and, to assess why, if any, there may be a continued need for international actors in the state. Examples that can be selected in the Causes Section include: 9/11/2001, National Security Intelligence, Al Qaeda, Private Corporations/Contractors, The Status of Women, and The Drug Trade.

The Constraints Sections attempts to do the following: provide an analysis of the constraints and limitations placed on external actors seeking to intervene in Afghanistan: provide an analysis of the constraints and limitations placed on the native Afghan people in any attempt to stabilize their country; and, to provide respondents an opportunity to respond to their perception of U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. Examples that can be selected in the Constraints Section include: Private military contractors, Indigenous Afghanistan Support, Lack of Security Forces, Corruption Within Security Forces, Political Corruption, Economic Instability, The Drug Trade, Illiteracy, Funding, Strategic Goals and Objectives, and Religious Conflict.

The Political, Economic, Social/Cultural, and Security/Military Challenges Sections were designed to do the following: explore the political challenges confronted on current and long-term nation-state building operations, strategies, and objectives; assess the economic challenges faced by Afghanistan; analyze the social and cultural
challenges in Afghanistan which will affect current and long-term nation-state building operations, strategies, and objectives; and assess the many security and military related challenges confronted by Afghanistan nation-state building operations, strategies, and objectives. Examples that can be selected in these four sections include: Influence of Pakistan, Lack of Funding/Resources to Implement Change, Corruption within the Executive Branch, The Influence of the Narcotics Industrial Complex, The Impact of Strong Poverty Levels, Few National Economic & Financial Institutions, Limited Funding Sources, Impact of International Trade Arrangements, High Illiteracy Rates, Language/Communication Barriers, Ethnic Conflict among Afghan People, Influence of Religious Leaders, Corruption with Foreign Private Military Contractors, Influence of the Taliban, Influence on other External Actors, Language/Cultural Barriers with Foreign Military & Contractors, Lack of Indigenous Afghanistan, and Civilian Casualty Incidents.

In the concluding Opportunities Section participants are asked several questions that are designed to explore ways in which the U.S. can improve or change its current and long-term nation-state building operations, objectives, and strategies in Afghanistan. This was done by soliciting open ended questions which will provide this thesis additional qualitative data. This data will be used in for the development of thesis recommendations.

**DISCUSSION**

A simple random sample was used to conducting this research. This method was selected for a variety of reasons, namely with the goal of recruiting a large random expert population into participating in this survey. Many of the participants that would participate in a research study, such as this, are extremely busy. This method was one of the most efficient procedures that could have been used with the limitations posed on the
study. This method also provides for greater opportunities to ensure participant safety as compared to other statistical sampling techniques that would require more rigorous and complicated procedures that could make ensuring safety more taxing. Out of the one hundred and fifty known survey requests for participation and reminders that were sent, only thirty survey subjects completed the survey.

While several attempts have been made to significantly reduce the impact of biases that might result in this study, it is inevitable that some bias would occur in the study. The author of this research admits to his own bias against a continued military presence in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, especially without proper, legitimate, benchmarks for success and sustainability. This bias could possibly impact how the survey was designed and analyzed. In order reduce the level of bias from data results, additional quantitative and qualitative data was used from the collection of annual reports, media reports, and publicly available sources such as departmental websites. This data has been summed, analyzed, and reported in aggregate form and will be the foundational basis, which will be displayed, in the Nation-State Building Rebruiic Evaluation Criteria.

**LIMITATIONS & ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Researching U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan is a complex and daunting challenge. Some of the challenges in the process include: ensuring a sizeable barometer of policy, academic, military, and developmental expert participation in the research study; and, the assumptions that U.S. nation-state building can lead to a stable state and eliminate or reduce the influence of Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. In order to effectively answer the research questions, these obstacles have to
be addressed in a way that either greatly reduces or eliminates the impact of these challenges.

Gathering quantitative data from a large and varied population of U.S. foreign policy experts, middle-eastern/Afghanistan experts, military experts, and developmental experts would be ideal for any research study such as this. In order to help recruit participants in this study, Survey Monkey was used to gather data in a relatively easy electronic method. Survey Monkey’s research tool provides additional confidentiality to survey participants through its encryption software. However, due to time limitations additional obstacles were incurred in the pursuit of attempting to recruit a considerable sample. In order to ensure validity in the research data results, this thesis secured a restricted number of survey participants from each of the above mentioned backgrounds and expertise.

It is important to note that all data collected from this research is safely secured. All electronic data that has been collected has been protected via pass codes and passwords that only the author of this research has access to. Once this research is complete and my subscription to survey monkey has expired, all electronic data will be stored in a firewall proof hard drive and will be in my private research collection that will not be accessible to anyone.

Another limitation to this study is the idea that U.S. nation-state building is the only way in which Afghanistan can have a sustainable impact in stabilizing the state and eliminating the influence of the Al Qaeda and the Taliban. This thesis acknowledges the research indicating how important that nation-state building operations be developed without influence, coordination, or intervention by external actors. However, it also
recognizes the vast amount of academic literature indicating how external nation-state building can partner with and or foster relationships with the native populous to engage in nation-state building operations jointly. It analyzed the effectiveness of U.S. operations and its relationship and participation of the native Afghan populous in the nation-state building operations currently being deployed in Afghanistan.
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS

This thesis addresses the following primary questions: (RQ1) Has U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan legitimately helped promote or developed the political, economic, social, and security related institutions and structures needed to stabilize and sustain a united state and eliminate the influence of Al Qaeda and the Taliban? Subsequent secondary questions, derives from this include: (RQ2) What are the causes for the nation-state building interventions in Afghanistan? (RQ3) What are the current constraints on the U.S. and its allies on creating an environment and culture for the peoples of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish the types of nation-state building activities to stabilize their country? What are the current political (RQ4), economic (RQ5), social/cultural (RQ6), and security/military (RQ7) related challenges the U.S. and its allies are faced with in seeking to create an environment and culture for the peoples of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish the types of nation-state building activities to stabilize their country? This work also attempts to get a barometer of the possible opportunities to improve or address certain U.S. nation-state building operations (OP1).

Additionally, it attempts to determine, from data collected in this research study, if the research hypothesis is confirmed. By separating the survey questions into seven sections, this thesis aimed to provide data results in a more focused manner. Data collected from six of the seven sections will then be assessed using the Nation-State Building Evaluation Rubric. The below responses represent the findings of this thesis:
ANALYSIS

PRIMARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to answer the primary research question, (RQ1), a series of questions were designed to help provide respondents the opportunity to help identify, assess, and evaluate the perception of the efficacy of U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. The first of these questions included asking respondents the following question: identify if they had a favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of the nation-state building activities in Afghanistan? The results include: 37.5% held an unfavorable opinion; 31.3% held a somewhat unfavorable opinion; 18.8% of respondents held a somewhat favorable opinion; 6.3% held a very favorable opinion; and, 6.3% indicated that they did not know.

These results closely align the second question (RQ2) in this series of questions where 46.7% of respondents indicated that they think the state-building and nation-building activities in Afghanistan have hurt the war on terrorism, while only 13.3% indicate that U.S. nation and state-building activities have helped the war on terror. It is
important to note that 26.7% of respondents believe that there has been no effect to U.S. nation and state-building activities, while 13.3% of the respondents selected the “do not know” response.

More importantly, the third question in this series of questions shows that 56.3% of respondents find that the U.S., and its allies, have done a poor job in the process of failing to take into account the needs and interests of the Afghan people in the rebuilding operations in Afghanistan. Only 37.5% of respondents said the U.S. and its allies were doing a fair job, while 6.3% did not know. None of the respondents indicated the U.S. and its allies were doing an excellent or good job.
One of the interesting results found in the fourth question in this series of questions show that 43.8% of respondents believe that the people of Afghanistan will be better off once the Taliban and Al Qaeda have largely been removed from power by the U.S. and its allies. Only 25% of respondents indicated that the native Afghan people will be worse off in the long run, and 31.3% did not know.
This closely aligns with the fifth question, where 68.8% of respondents believe the U.S. make the right decision to use military force against the Al Qaeda, while only 31.3% indicated that the U.S. made the wrong decision.

On the subject of Afghanistan, did the U.S. make the right decision or the wrong decision to use military force against the Al Qaeda?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right Decision</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong Decision</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note that respondents were divided when it came to the use of U.S. military force against the Taliban. Respondents indicated by 46.7% the U.S. made the right decision, 46.7% selected the wrong decision, while 6.7% did not know.

Did the U.S. make the right decision or the wrong decision to use military force against the Taliban?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right Decision</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't Know</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**THE CAUSES**

In order to answer the second research question (RQ2), survey participants were asked the following question: What were the leading factors for the nation-state building activities in Afghanistan? Respondents were asked to rank their responses from highest to lowest, 1 being the highest and 10 being the lowest. The vast majority, or 58.3% of respondents, indicated that the number 1 leading factor for the nation-state building activities in Afghanistan were the U.S. attacks on September 11, 2001. The following chart illustrates the results from the entire question.

![Chart showing leading factors for nation-state building activities in Afghanistan](chart.png)

It is important to note that 46.2% of respondents selected that their leading factor of U.S. nation-state building in Afghanistan was the threat of Al Qaeda. The second
leading factor for respondents, at 42.9%, selected the “other” category for their number 1 reason for U.S. nation-state building, and provided some of the following responses: U.S. domestic ideology; the need to attack a state…since it had some proven links with Al Qaeda; for national security reasons; and for U.S. nation-security strategic purposes. Respondents indicated that the third leading factor, by 33.4%, was U.S. national security intelligence. The fourth leading factor selected was military intervention at 27.3%. The fifth leading factor selected was the influence of private military corporations and contractors at 36.4%. The sixth leading factor selected was the impact of the drug trade at 36.4%. The seventh leading factor selected was the impact of poverty at 18.2%. The eighth and ninth leading factor selected was the status of women in Afghanistan at 27.3%. The tenth leading factor selected was other at 42.9%.

**THE CONSTRAINTS**

In order to answer the third research question (RQ2), survey participants were asked to answer a series of question. The first of which is, what constraints (limitations) are placed on the Afghan government and people in their objective to provide nation-state building services, systems, and institutions. This open ended question resulted in some of the following responses: corruption; capability and capacity issues; the drug trade; and, the absence of an educated population.

The second question in this series asked respondents what the international constraints (limitations) to nation-state building operations in Afghanistan included. This open ended question resulted in the some of the following responses: political will; funding constraints; lack of international coordination; lack of investment; cultural and
language barriers; unrealistic expectations; lack of support from Pakistan; lack of support from tribal leaders; and, lake of support and inclusion from and with the Taliban.

The third question was what challenges or constraints do the U.S. state-building intervention efforts in Afghanistan consist of currently. Respondents were asked to rank their responses from highest to lowest, 1 being the highest and 12 being the lowest. The fast majority or 53.3% of respondents indicated that political corruption as the leading challenge to state-building operations in Afghanistan. The second leading factor at 21.4% was indigenous Afghan support. The third leading factor at 21.4% was corruption within security force. The fourth leading factor at 21.4% following table represents the entire survey results, including the other results not mentioned above:
THE CHALLENGES

In order to answer the fourth research question (RQ4), survey participants were asked to answer the following question: what are the political challenges to U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. Respondents were asked to rank their responses from highest to lowest, 1 being the highest and 9 being the lowest. The leading selection from respondents, at 50%, was the “other” category where respondents provided the following qualitative feedback: the need to build, not simply rebuild basic institutions; acceptance by Afghans; war in Iraq dissuades war in Afghan; American officials do not have a clue on how to “build” a nation; the influence of tribal warlords; poor understanding of Afghanistan. It is interesting to note that there was a five way tie, or 15.4% of respondents indicated that the leading political challenges in Afghanistan were the following; the influence of Iran; corruption with the judicial and legislative branches; provincial/regional political corruption; and religious or ethnic conflict among political establishment. The following chart indicates the entire results provided:
In order to answer the fifth research question (RQ5), survey participants were asked to answer the following question: what are the economic challenges to U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. Respondents were asked to rank their responses from highest to lowest, 1 being the highest and 7 being the lowest. Data indicates that 37.5% of respondents selected “other” and provided some of the following qualitative feedback: insecurity; economic exploitation by other nations; Afghanistan’s marginal location in the international capitalist economy; the no alternatives narcotic industry; and U.S. economic domination of middle-east natural resources. It is important to note that 35.7% of respondents also selected limited funding sources as their number 1 selection. The second leading economic challenge, at 43.8%, respondents selected few national economic and financial institutions. The third leading economic challenge, at 31.3%, respondents indicated the impact of strong poverty levels, while 28.6% of respondents selected the impact of high unemployment as Afghanistan’s fourth leading economic challenge. The following chart represents the entire results from the stated question.
In order to answer the sixth research question (RQ6), survey participants were asked to answer the following question: what are the social/cultural challenges to U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. Respondents were asked to rank their responses from highest to lowest, 1 being the highest and 8 being the lowest. The majority of respondents, at 62.5%, selected “other” which provided some of the following qualitative responses: history of disunity; ideology of the Pashtun people; poor understanding of what is possible; limited capacity of the international community to understand the complexity of the problems faced; influence of tribal leaders; strong cultural traditions; blood feuds; ethnic and religious differences; and, land disputes. The second leading factor selected, at 26.7%, was the influence of external actors. The third leading factor selected, at 23.1%, was the influence of religious leaders. The following chart represents the entire results from the stated question.

![Bar chart showing the social/cultural challenges to U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. The chart shows the percentage of respondents ranking each challenge. The challenges are ranked as follows: Other (62.5%), Influence of External Actors (26.7%), Influence of Religious Leaders (23.1%), Ethnic and Religious Differences (23.1%), Land Disputes (20.8%), Blood Feuds (20.8%), Influence of Tribal Leaders (17.4%), Ideology of the Pashtun People (17.4%), History of Disunity (14.3%).]
In order to answer the seventh research question (RQ7), survey participants were asked to answer the following question: what are the security/military challenges to U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan? Respondents were asked to rank their responses from highest to lowest, 1 being the highest and 11 being the lowest. The majority of responses, at 37.5%, selected the influence of the Taliban. It is important to know that 26.7% of respondents also selected corruption within the Afghan security forces as the number 1 leading security/military challenge. Respondents were split between the influence of other external actors and lack of indigenous Afghan security forces both at 26.7%. The third leading security challenge selected, at 25%, were the civilian casualty incidents. The following chart represents the entire results from the stated question.
In order to provide a comprehensive assessment on the entire nation-state building operations in Afghanistan and to guide possible thesis recommendations, a series of questions were asked (OP1). The first of these questions included asking respondents the following question: In order to develop a failed or struggling state into a democracy what sort of state-building opportunities exist in Afghanistan that countries, like the U.S., should attempt to assist, develop, or restructure. Respondents were asked to rank their responses from highest to lowest, 1 being the highest and 10 being the lowest. The majority of respondents, at 40%, selected free and fair elections, while 33.3% selected public education, and 28.6% selected an independent judicial system. The second selection leading selection, at 35.7%, was the creation and development of a public health system. The third leading selection, at 20%, was freedom of the press, while 30.8% of respondents selected capital markets as the fourth leading selection. The following chart represents the entire results from the stated question.
The second question in this series asking respondents the following question: what are the most important nation-building opportunities that exist in Afghanistan? Respondents were asked to rank their responses from highest to lowest, 1 being the highest and 8 being the lowest. The majority of respondents, at 61.5%, selected literacy and education as their leading selection. At 27.3%, child protection was selected as the second leading choice, while 25% also selected “other” and provided the following qualitative feedback: justice and security are the largest challenges and opportunities; developing future leaders; instituting peace education; utilizing local community-school committees to support cooperation; and economic development. The third leading selection, at 40%, was addressing domestic violence related issues. The fourth leading selection, at 33.3% was addressing women’s right issues. The following chart represents the entire results from the stated question.
The third question in this series asked participants how important is it for the nation-state building activities in Afghanistan to be seen by the world as an effort of many countries working together, not just a US effort. Respondents were to select very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important. The vast majority or 66.7% of respondents indicated very important, while 20% indicated somewhat important. Only 6.7% of respondents indicated not too important, while 6.7% also did not know.

The fourth question in this series asked participants who they think could do the best job at helping the Afghanistan people form a stable government—the United States and its allies or the United Nations. From the data collected, 37.5% of respondents indicated that the U.N. would do the best job, while 37.5% also said both the U.S. and its
allies including the U.N. would be best to work together. It is important to note that 31.3% of respondents selected “other” where they provided some of the following qualitative feedback: Nation-state building from outside, always results into a fragile state and a civil society disconnected from that artificial state; externalized nation-state building gives birth to a "fictive state", or what we could call a "floating state" because it has no solid anchor inside the civil society, therefore no internal legitimacy; regional powers have to be involved, including the Taliban; and, the need for greater collaboration and involvement from other regional players including Iran, Pakistan, and India. The following chart represents the entire results from the stated question.

![Chart showing responses to the question: Who do you think could do the best job at helping the Afghanistan people form a stable government—the United States and its allies or the United Nations?](chart)

The final question in this series asked participants to list and explain any changes they would make in the US-Afghanistan strategy that would ensure (more) success in its
nation-state building operations in Afghanistan. Respondents provided some of the following excerpted qualitative responses to this open ended question:

- Fight corruption inside the Afghan government, but the paradox today is that the US has to rely on the corrupted Karzai government.
- You can't do serious "nation/state building" by relying on a corrupted and decredibilized local government.
- Coordinate the donors and aid activities in the Afghan provinces.
- Energize a regional approach seeking to involve Pakistan, India, Iran, and even Russia and China in creating a stable Afghanistan Design a study abroad for 10,000 Afghan’s per year.
- Utilize a multi-nation approach, so it doesn't appear to be an "occupation".
- Find a plan to eradicate illegal opium production, by a top-down approach, beginning with the drug lords rather than by decimating crops on small farms.
- Build major infrastructure (roads & rail) across the country to mobilize citizens and to encourage more industrial sectors.
- Reduce open ended nature of U.S. commitment, which will give leverage over government.
- Empower, to the extent possible, local elites.
- Subscribe to Colin Powell's Pottery Barn rule: you break it, you own it.

HAS THERE BEEN AN IMPACT/RUBRIC RESULTS

From the general qualitative data collected during the literature review, we can determine that there has been nation-state building activities that have helped create institutions and systems to help stabilize Afghanistan and reduce, to some extent, the influence of external groups such as Al Qaeda. However, this does not mean that the hypothesis is confirmed. It only means that additional quantitative and qualitative analysis must be performed in order to assess if any of the nation-state building
operations have actually made an impact in the state, that U.S. efforts are sustainable, and that activities are in the best interest of the Afghan people. If the analysis determines that U.S. nation-state building operations are sustainable and in the best interest if the Afghan people we can conclude that the thesis hypothesis is falsified. If the analysis determines that U.S. nation-state building operations are not sustainable and not in the best interest of the Afghan people, we can conclude the thesis hypothesis valid.

The quantitative and qualitative data provided by the thesis survey responses and from other published studies, were measured by the evaluation rubric chart, which was established in the methodology chapter. Once an analysis of the survey responses were made and measured against the rubric criteria, this thesis was able to determine if U.S. nation-state building operations are sustainable and in the best interest of the Afghan people. The below chart reflects the findings of this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NATION-STATE BUILDING OPERATIONS EVALUATION RUBRIC RESULTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Development Criteria:</strong> Strong decentralized government institutions in various regions throughout state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic Development Criteria:</strong> Structured programs to gradually reduce dependence on foreign aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social/Cultural Development Criteria:</strong> Helps reduce and eliminate domestic violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security/Military Development Criteria:</strong> Eliminates corruption in the security forces.</td>
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</table>

**THESIS FINDINGS**

Since the intervention, little progress has been made. Both survey respondents and recent published studies on Afghanistan indicate that very little, if any, progress has been made in attempting to reduce the level of foreign aid in Afghanistan. There is little evidence showing any reduction of domestic violence in Afghanistan. However, there has been foreign aid that has been directed to NGO's. Both survey results and additional research data indicate that the U.S. has not been effective in reducing or eliminating the gross corruption within the Afghan security.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thesis Findings</th>
<th>Free and fair elections.</th>
<th>Improves trade &amp; embargo powers</th>
<th>Works to protect children.</th>
<th>Increases local and national security forces.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan's government is largely centralized and that it is not effective in delivering key services to the Afghan people outside of Kabul and other regions where U.S. or allied troops are occupying. (Jones, 2009)</td>
<td>Afghanistan. Survey results also indicate that this is a serious challenge towards improving Afghanistan’s economic future. (Fields, 2010)</td>
<td>to help educate the native population about the role of women and problems associated with domestic violence. (Goodhand, 2004)</td>
<td>forces. The corruption within the Afghan security forces has been documented for several years. However efforts to reduce the level of corruption within the security forces have been hampered for a variety of reasons, including a lack of mentorship, legitimacy, illiteracy and language barriers. (Jones, 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extensive research indicates that many Afghan’s do not believe that the election system in Afghanistan is credible or democratic. Survey responses also claim recent corruption with the last presidential election. (Sinha, 2009)</td>
<td>There is evidence that attempts have been made at establishing and develop Afghanistan’s trade and embargo institutions and systems. However, many are concerned of the drug trade being further entangled in these systems. (Cookman, 2010)</td>
<td>There is evidence that some progress has been made at attempting to educate Afghan children through the creation of schools for both boys and girls. However, there is also evidence that many of these projects have either been stopped by war lords or the Taliban. Survey responses also indicate that many children in Afghanistan are a part of an underground sex/slave trade. (Menon, 2008)</td>
<td>Recent research indicates that there has been an increase of local Afghans in the Afghan security forces for the last several years. Survey results indicate that there has been progress in recruiting efforts of local Afghan’s into the Afghan security force. (Johnson, 2010)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent judicial system with strong rule of law.</td>
<td>Eliminates the drug trade.</td>
<td>Helps eliminate illiteracy.</td>
<td>Training and Mentorship of national security forces.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensive research indicates that the Afghan judicial system and rule of law are highly compromised by pressure and influence of the</td>
<td>Recent evidence indicates that U.S. operations working to reduce the drug trade have been hampered by security issues, particularly in</td>
<td>Although evidence exists that international agencies, such as the USAID, have attempted to reduce the illiteracy among many communities</td>
<td>There is research that indicates that the U.S. has spent millions of dollars in training and mentoring the Afghan security forces. However, there is also evidence that the efficacy of this</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checks and Balances on executive, legislative, and judicial government institutions.</td>
<td>Government programs aimed at the elimination of poverty.</td>
<td>Helps increase gender equality.</td>
<td>Trained foreign troop presence with ability to speak native language and understand native culture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extensive evidence exists detailing the lack of checks in balance within the Afghanistan constitution and the day-to-day operations of the state government. Currently the executive branch has the power to appoint without the consent of the legislative branch thousands of senior and career level officials, in all three branches of government. The executive branch has also budgetary authority not typically given in areas with a weak international troop presence. Survey results also indicate that the drug trade continues to be a large source of the economic growth of the Afghanistan state and that the narcotics industry is being supported by many within the Karzai administration. (Johnson, 2010)</td>
<td>There is evidence that several attempts at eliminating poverty through the creation of jobs have been made. Thousands of Afghan’s have been hired for governmental jobs. However, the funds to pay for these jobs are based on foreign aid that might not be sustained within the coming years. Survey responses indicate that poverty is still one of the largest problems facing Afghanistan and that efforts to target communities</td>
<td>There is little evidence showing any improvements to gender equality in Afghanistan. However, there has been foreign aid that has been directed to NGO’s to help educate the native population about the role of women, men, and children in democratic societies. (Goodhand, 2004)</td>
<td>Evidence exists that there are foreign troops from certain countries that have been trained on the Afghan culture and language. Evidence also exists that other foreign troops did not have a rigorous training of the Afghan language and culture. Survey responses also indicate that training of foreign troops on the Afghan people and language should be further provided and supported for existing and new troops to the state. (Jones, 2008)</td>
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executive branch, corruption within the legal community, and external influence of the Taliban and tribal war lords. (Sinha, 2009)
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>THESIS FINDINGS</strong></td>
<td><strong>Freedom of religion and press.</strong></td>
<td><strong>National reconstruction projects.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Helps improve women rights.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A moderate number of respondents indicated slow and limited progress being made to create or develop Afghanistan’s infrastructure. Additional research indicates that current reconstruction efforts are highly targeted to specific communities and not the communities in most need. (Fields, 2010)</td>
<td></td>
<td>There is little evidence showing any improvements in women’s rights in Afghanistan. However, there has been foreign aid that has been directed to NGO’s to help educate the native population about the role of women. Survey responses also indicate that the role of women should be a stronger component to nation-state building operations. (Goodhand, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Afghanistan’s state religion is Islam. There are several different forms of Islam in Afghanistan. Many communities around Afghanistan are structured so that homogenous religious groups live among themselves. Afghanistan also does not have an effective and free press due to a lack of structure, corruption, and security concerns imposed on the media. (CIA, 2010)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Survey responses do indicate that U.S. and coalition troops are spread throughout the state. However, research indicates that the vast majority of the troops are around the Afghanistan/Pakistan borders. (Jones, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide policy focus on population and their needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Security forces strong on intelligence gather.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THESIS FINDINGS</strong></td>
<td>Demilitarize Development Assistance</td>
<td>Government services are focused on population in both rural and urban communities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent research has indicated that attempts at focusing governmental services to the general population and</td>
<td>There is ample evidence that the U.S. funds and supports several armed war lords and other actors outside of the government</td>
<td>Recent research indicates that there have been ample resources used to support the lives of Afghan’s in rural and urban communities.</td>
<td>Recent evidence does indicate that the U.S. has been successful in increasing the effectiveness of intelligence gathering with the support of the Afghan security forces.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
their needs have not been effective. Many different tribal communities have not been involved in the decision making process of governmental allocation of resources and services. Survey results also indicate that this is a concern to the sustained progress of nation-state building operations in the future. (Sinha, 2009)

However, due to tribal war lords and other security concerns these resources have not been effective, utilized, or provided to many in these communities. (Sinha, 2009)

Conditioned aid on meaningful corruption and governance reforms

Police lead with military in a supporting role.

Evidence exists that many in the international community including leading coalition partners, NGO’s, and other financial institutions are seeking to reform the foreign aid given to Afghanistan so that it is condition based with clear timeframes and objectives. (Cookman, 2010)

There is evidence that the Afghan security forces are still largely military related, and that the U.S. and coalition partners have not been successful in establishing a viable and effective police force throughout Afghanistan due to tribal war lords, and other internal and external actors that have more influence and legitimacy to the Afghan people than the U.S. trained Afghan police force. (Jones, 2008)
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall goal of this thesis was to explore and test the efficacy of U.S. nation-state building operations in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. This included an analysis of the political, economic, social/cultural, and security/military related institutions and systems created or developed by the U.S. and its coalition partners. My hypothesis is that U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan have not made legitimate progress in helping to promote or develop the types of institutions and structures needed to stabilize the state or reduce the influence of the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Responses from this study, along with recent qualitative and quantitative data on Afghanistan, indicate that U.S. nation-state building operations have not been that successful in helping to stabilize the state or reduce the influence of extremist or external actors such as the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Although responses highlight several positive initiatives and projects U.S. nation-state operations have made, these impacts are not that sustainable or legitimate to the Afghan people. Further research on this issue should be conducted in the future.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW & DATA ANALYSIS

The most vital lesson from the literature review is that nation-state building operations should be a comprehensive process. Nation-state building operations that are not balanced, or rely too heavily on one component of nation-state building while neglecting other components, damages the possible sustained success one might achieve in attempting to stabilize a state. The U.S. government has spent hundreds of millions of dollars trying to build the Afghan security forces. It has also spent ample resources
working to eliminate Al Qaeda and the Taliban. The U.S., however, has not spent adequate resources supporting the development/nation-state building operations needed in order to address systemic and structural issues that allow and support these type of extremist groups to have the type of influence they have in Afghanistan and in the region. The U.S. nation-state building political, economic, and social/cultural operations should have been a priority, along with security development, during the immediate aftermath of the 2001 military intervention in Afghanistan and the fall of the Taliban. Due to the U.S. largely focusing on security/military development, its efforts to stabilize a country with one of the highest poverty, illiteracy, and child mortality levels in the world, will greatly suffer.

The findings of this study suggest that the U.S. government should seek a new strategy in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The current strategy of focusing largely on security/military development is not working. Both the literature review and the survey results indicate the many issues in maintaining the status quo. Research has shown that Al Qaeda has relocated and is in many regions throughout Pakistan and the Middle-East, and the Taliban have re-emerged all throughout Afghanistan. The research findings also indicate that hundreds of current Afghan security forces were former members of the Taliban, are related to members of the Taliban, and or are greatly fearful of what the Taliban will do once external forces leave Afghanistan. Research also indicates that a large percentage of Afghan security forces are corrupt. This corruption within the Afghan security forces limits the legitimacy the U.S. is trying to create and sustain among the native Afghan people. It is also important to note from the research collected that the civilian casualty incident rates, caused by U.S. and allied troops, have greatly increased
the recruitment of Afghan people to subscribe to terrorism or joining the Taliban or some other extremist group. It is important to note that a majority of participants in the research survey indicated that the U.S. made the right decision in intervening in Afghanistan after the attacks on September 11, 2001.

The findings of this research study align with the findings in the literature review. Both indicate that any new strategy that the U.S. might adopt in Afghanistan should include an increased emphasis on the other components of nation-state building operations, namely, political, economic, and social/cultural development. Many throughout the body politic indicate that the U.S. and its allies have failed to take into account the needs of the Afghan people and have failed to successfully incorporate security and developmental services to many regions throughout Afghanistan, and not just in Kabul.

One of the most pressing nation-state building operations that should be conducted is political development. There are a variety of reasons why the nation’s political institutions and systems need further development. Concerns over the incompetence and corruption with the Karzai administration have frequented this research study. However, research shows that in order to leave sustained nation-state building successful projects, including security development, it is vital that a nation-states political institutions and systems be developed in a way that is transparent, has legitimacy with internal and external actors, and that these institutions work for the greater good of the people in which they are to serve. The findings of this research indicate that the political challenges to U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan are largely based on the power, structure, and selection of the various branches within Afghanistan’s
federal government and the influence of external forces that have great influence on the success and or failure of the state. The research shows the limited ability for the U.S. operations to succeed with the limited checks and balances within the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Currently the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan gives President Karzai the ability to appoint over 1,000 cabinet and senior leaders throughout the Afghan government and its different branches of government. Many of the individuals selected by President Karzai are known war lords, drug profiteers, and other corrupt Taliban associated leaders, such as his own brother.

Eliminating the political corruption in Afghanistan should be a priority of the U.S. government and the Afghan people. The findings from this study indicate that the constraints or limitations placed on the Afghan government attempting to provide public services to the Afghan people will be greatly impacted by the rapid corruption throughout all governmental entities including the executive, legislative, judicial branches and the military/security forces. Recent research findings have uncovered hundreds of corruption cases that are of concern to the international community (Greenwald, 2009). Many of which, the U.S. government has refused to acknowledge and address when speaking of the Karzai administration and the nation-state building or counterinsurgency operations currently being conducted with the collaboration and coordination of the Karzai administration. In order to provide greater legitimacy to U.S. efforts among the Afghan people, the U.S. and its allies should work to these issues.

Another important aspect that the U.S. and its allies should work to improve is the economic situation among the Afghan people and state. How can the U.S. government expect to stabilize a state when the majority of the people are unemployed,
underemployed, and do not have basic access to human services? The U.S. and its allies must become serious with working to reduce the ramped poverty in this state. If they do not become serious, attempts at securing Afghanistan from the influence of the Taliban will not be successful. It is important to note that the findings of this research study indicate that the economic challenge to U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan are largely impacted by non-sustainable development aid to Afghanistan and the lack of effective governmental institutions that manage and oversee the states economic objectives. The research indicates that the vast majority of all governmental spending for security and domestic programs is based on the aid from the developing world and other lending agencies such as the U.N. and the IMF. This funding is unsustainable, especially in a world economic recession.

The U.S. should work with other NGO’s and coalition partners to help establish credible economic institutions that can help develop the type of revenue generating capabilities and trade facilitation operations needed that all developed countries have. It is interesting to note that the research findings also highlight the great impact the narcotics industry has on the states economic objectives, including the millions of people who make their living off of the trade, and the lives it damaged in Afghanistan and throughout the world. The findings also explain the challenge the government has when trying to improve the nation’s historically high poverty and unemployment levels.

Finally, it seems that the nation-state building operations in Afghanistan have almost neglected working to develop the states social/cultural needs. Working to improve the social and cultural challenges in Afghanistan would support the U.S. political, economic, and security development nation-state building attempts. The findings of the
research study on the social/cultural challenges to U.S. nation-state building operations in Afghanistan illuminate a number of important issues. The findings highlight the faulty education system and skyrocketing illiteracy rates. High illiteracy rates have continued to impact the training of native troop forces, how external forces have communicated with the Afghan people, and the projects that are designed to incorporate and support the services provided to the Afghan people.

The research also indicates how the deleterious education system in Afghanistan has greatly impacted the workforce, the culture, and the religious intolerance in the state. The education system has also greatly perpetuated the inequality of the sexes, with females not being allowed to get a public education in the vast majority of provinces within Afghanistan. The U.S. should work with NGO’s to help address these type of issues, not only to advance its own nation-state building objectives, but to also help improve the lives of people who have experiences conflict for almost the entire time Afghanistan has been recognized as a state.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the quantitative and qualitative analysis established from this research study, a number of recommendations designed to stabilize the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and eliminate and or reduce the influence of Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan are possible. These recommendations would be beneficial to U.S. national-security and foreign policy apparatus and for academic researchers for continued investigation.
**Recommendation 1:**
*Establish A Afghanistan Nation-State Building Strategic Plan*

One of the weaknesses of both the Bush & Obama administration’s foreign policy approach to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is the lack of a comprehensive nation-state building strategic plan. This plan should include the vision of where the U.S., the international community, and the people of Afghanistan, would like to take their country and what they want to look like as a developing nation. This plan should include the mission of all stakeholder efforts in Afghanistan. This mission statement should help clarify the role of the U.S. is in Afghanistan, the role of the international community in Afghanistan, and the role of the Afghan people, all of which should be working to achieve the plans vision statement. The plan should include the goals of each of the three different groups (i.e. The U.S., International Community, the Afghan People), and the values of the three different groups. The plan would also incorporate a plan for implementation that will take into account the costs and human leadership required for such implementation. After the plan has been drafted, it should be used as a road guide to advance the desires and interests of the Afghan people, and as a way to communicate U.S. objectives in the region.

**Recommendation 2:**
*Establish Conditions Based Funding Measures*

The U.S. should work with international organizations and allied countries to develop a process in which all external funding that goes to the government in Kabul is conditions based. Once the nation-state building strategic plan has been formulated it should serve as the mechanism in which external actors can measure the progress of the
Afghan people and their representatives, to the criteria established in the plan that they, the Afghan people and their representatives, helped decide. The criteria established in the plan should be balanced due to feedback from all stakeholders. For example, the U.S. might want to provide funding to the government in Kabul for security or agriculture services, but only if the government in Kabul aligns with the criteria established in the strategic plan that says the government in Kabul must reform to ensure more checks and balances among the different branches of government. If the government in Kabul does not meet that criteria within a certain length of time, the international community can withhold their funding or reduce the amount requested until the criteria has been made. It is important to note that conditions based aid has limitations, but maintaining the status quo is not sustainable nor is it having the type of positive impact the Afghan people can witness.

**Recommendation 3: Reduce Dependency on Karzai Administration & Invest In Afghan People**

The U.S. government should reduce their dependence on the Karzai administration and invest more resources directly to the Afghan people. The vast majority of the Afghan people have conflicting view points about President Karzai. Since President Karzai came to power, with the support of the U.S. government, the world community has learned, repeatedly, of the invested corruption in his government. His government’s corruption and our lack of a clear strategy and plan further delegitimize U.S. nation-state building efforts. In order to address this issue, it is imperative for the U.S. to spend more time and resources working to improve basic human needs of the Afghan people. This can be incorporated into the national strategic plan addressed in
Recommendation 1, but additional efforts from external actors such as the U.S. and the U.N. should go into providing basic needs such as food, shelter, and health care to the Afghan people. By showing the Afghan people these positive traits, opportunities to delegitimize the Taliban can be strengthened.

**Recommendation 4:**

*Reduce Civilian Casualties by 100%*

The U.S. and its allies need to invest in a new counterinsurgency strategy. The leadership that designed and advocated the current strategy is found to be grossly incompetent. Since the initial military intervention in Afghanistan, over 1,000 U.S. troops and over 20,000 Afghan civilians have been killed. In the last four years, the insurgency has increased their violence, and war lords have taken over many provinces and tribal governments outside of Kabul. Although the planning for the war after the defeat of the Taliban was faulty and under-resourced, the U.S. has essentially maintained the same failed strategy it established during the second term of the Bush administration. One issue that continues to advance sympathy to the Taliban and extremist groups is the high civil casualty rates brought on by U.S. and coalition forces. The goal of the U.S. should be to reduce civilian casualty rates by 100% within a small set schedule, by redesigning its counterinsurgency plans and conducting the types of nation-state building operations that align with the strategic plan as mentioned in Recommendation 1 U.S. forces should be able to accomplish this goal within a set period of time.
THE CHARGE

In order to achieve the above stated goals, the U.S. must research the history of Afghanistan and its people, analyze the success and failures of U.S. actions since its military intervention in 2001, and thoroughly investigate and designate the costs associated with U.S. nation-state building operations it is willing and capable of providing. Otherwise, the U.S. will continue to spend billions of dollars in an effort that many consider to be futile. This thesis sought to investigate the efficacy of U.S. nation-state building operation's in Afghanistan in order to determine if it has helped create or developed the institutions and systems needed for that country to stabilize and eliminate the influence of the Taliban & Al Qaeda. Although the thesis hypothesis was confirmed, opportunities to improve the lives of the Afghan people still exist. The recommendations provided in this thesis are designed to provide another perspective the U.S. government and its coalition partners should consider when attempting to conduct its nation-state building operations in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
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