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## **A study of the poverty reasons in Afghanistan from the perspective of Kabul university students**

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### **Abstract**

In order to talk about poverty and examine its situation in our country Afghanistan, it is necessary to know how many people the World Bank knows about the number of people living in absolute poverty in the world and what number they indicate about the poverty line. According to the World Bank, there are approximately 736 million people living in absolute poverty worldwide, with India ranking first with 24%, and Europe and Central Asia and North America with 1.1%. 6% of the world's poor belong to South Asian countries, including Afghanistan. In the country where we live, one out of every two people lives in poverty. According to the estimates of the Central Statistics Office (CSO), the population of Afghanistan reaches 28.6 million people, on this account, 14.3 million people in our country live in poverty, which is really a catastrophe and we can even call it a deep catastrophe.

This study was conducted to identify the reasons of poverty from the perspective of students at Kabul University. Kabul University has 25,000 students, 378 of students were selected as a sample. The results of this research showed that from the perspective of students, (war, unemployment, corruption and drought) are the most important and major reasons of poverty in Afghanistan.

**Keywords:** Poverty, reasons, afghanistan, food security

### **Introduction**

Access to proper quality and balanced food from birth to death is one of the most vital needs of every human being. There are also growth and development periods, behaviors, abilities and strengths, production and everything in a way that depends on proper nutrition.

Therefore, Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes and guarantees access to nutritious, healthy and safe food as a human right. In order for food quality, quantity to be responsive to human needs and to be physically, economically and socially accessible. But unfortunately, Afghanistan is one of the countries that are below the standard. We just look at the food and nutrition situation in Afghanistan, as well as the facts and figures it will definitely describe, what are the problems facing them and what is the solution to these problems? These are the topics we have discussed here.

In this article mainly discusses the major topics of poverty relates, such as definition, consequences, views on poverty existence in the country. Although a lot of research has been done on poverty in Afghanistan, the shadow of poverty in our country is so heavy that there is room for more research. As a professor and given our responsibility to our country, we wanted to be a caravan leader who has worked hard to alleviate poverty in our country. If we have done anything in this direction, it is from God Almighty, and that is enough. Poverty along with other negative phenomena such as war, corruption, illiteracy, ethnicity, anarchy, coercion, lack of good governance, preference of personal interests over national interests, etc. overshadow the life of the people of Afghanistan and every day in different forms and types of people Our country is making sacrifices.

On the other hand, fortunately, Afghanistan is a country that has had untapped opportunities in the fields of agriculture, mining, services, etc. If those advantageous opportunities are used in the future, a good future awaits Afghanistan. Another advantage that our country has can be that the majority of its population is young; having a young population is a blessing for Afghanistan. If there is an opportunity to use the energy of these young people in the country, it can undoubtedly lead to a positive revolution in all areas of our country. That poverty alleviation is one of the basic duties of Islam and humanity, and poverty leads to

Many political, social, economic, cultural, moral, etc. problems, which unfortunately we, the people of Afghanistan, already have in the form of severe forms of poverty. We feel behind us. Economic thinkers have offered several definitions of poverty, all of which are based on the lack of income in relation to the basic necessities of life. And here we consider the following definition of poverty to be appropriate: Poverty is the condition or circumstances in which people do not have the basic necessities of life due to lack of income to buy them or fulfill these needs.

#### **Poverty is usually considered in two way:**

1. **Absolute Poverty:** A condition in which people struggle to survive.
2. **Relative poverty:** is the situation that a person is poor in compare to the standard of living of society. For example, a person may have the necessities of life, but his standard of living is lower than the standard of living in society.

The poverty line can be easily divided into nominal (numerical) poverty line and real poverty line. The nominal poverty line is the same as the numbers as the poverty line. According to the World Bank, those earning less than \$ 1.90 a day are considered poor. However, the real poverty line is defined in terms of basic needs, in this sense, those of us who are below the poverty line, which do not have the income to meet their basic needs (eating, drinking, wearing, shelter and treatment).

Basic needs also vary from person to person, for example, a disabled person needs more income than a healthy person to meet their basic needs. Or a patient who needs long-term treatment needs more money to meet his or her basic needs than those who are healthy<sup>[5]</sup>.

#### **Poverty can have serious consequences for the individual and society, and here are some important ones to consider**

1. Poverty can in many cases have a negative effect on the religious beliefs of people suffering from poverty, for example, a poor person with little information, sleeps hungry at night with his/her family, the next day, smells the cooked dish of his rich neighbor in the air. It turns out that he/she or one of their family members may have disbelieved in the justice of God Almighty and questioned the regulation of divine wisdom. Although God Almighty has commanded everyone in intellectual and practical endeavors, and if someone does not do anything to improve his situation - both in the intellectual field and in the practical field - it is his responsibility, no God is just and merciful.
2. Poverty first targets one's morals and behavior and then seeks to corrupt social morality. One of the main factors that has led our society today to immoral phenomena such as lies, deception, injustice, corruption, bribery, embezzlement, lack of trust, betrayal, lack of help to others, crime etc., is the problem of poverty. If we want to give an example of the impact of poverty on individual and social morality and behavior, our society can be a living and objective example. It may be asked that in our society, at the top of the crime pyramid is the rich and the powerful, not the poor. This is true, but the same rich people in many cases carry out their criminal activities - using the poverty of the poor people of the

society - so it can be argued that if the level of poverty in our country is so high. The limit was not high; the area was not open to criminal gangs to recruit from the poor.

3. The danger of poverty on the human mind can be significant because in many cases, poor people, due to the dispersion of the air, cannot think accurately in their religious and worldly affairs, and as a result, hunt for excess and debauchery. Or they become deviant thoughts. In the house of a person who has no bread, and no money to make bread, how can he think calmly about other matters? The natural consequence of this could be that it reduces the "process of constructive thinking" at the level of individuals and society.
4. Due to lack of good nutrition, mental and physical stress due to poverty, lack of access to medicine, lack of attention to cleanliness, etc., the poor are more at risk of mental, emotional and physical illnesses.
5. That many children, adolescents, and young people from poor families work hard day and night to earn a living, and that on the other hand, education costs them money, and that the elders of their homes In most cases, they are illiterate or illiterate who do not pay much attention to education, they cannot go to education. If there are exceptions to this, in most cases, the issue of education is implicit and secondary to them, not a great goal.
6. Many family disputes are rooted in poverty, wars and disputes among family members, opening unnecessary family disputes in courts, family breakdowns, etc. are living and objective examples in our country, which most likely everyone witnesses. Such events have been around.
7. Poverty is directly related to actions that harm the security and peace of society in the form of forms, such as theft, kidnapping, extortion, joining armed gangs, murder, etc., which are more common among poor communities. That these kinds of negative and hated phenomena harm the security and peace of society, both objectively and psychologically<sup>[4]</sup>.

#### **Background of the study**

So far, we have known what the consequences of poverty are for individual and collective people. Will not be:

1. According to the number of monks, poverty is not a disease that should be treated, but it is a medicine that can be used to stay away from the world and close to the Hereafter and God. This belief in poverty is questioned not only by the empirical economy but also by Islam, which 99% of Afghans believe in. The fact that monasticism is not in Islam is very popular among Muslims<sup>[4]</sup>.
2. Others believe that poverty is a coercive evil. According to this number of people, poverty is from God and so is wealth. The solution they suggest is to wait for poverty and pray for it. This belief in poverty has also been rejected by the empirical economic system and the Islamic economic system. It is true that in Islam there is a recommendation to be patient and to engage in prayer, but, in order to eliminate the reprehensible phenomenon of poverty; work and activity have also been given repeated instructions
3. According to the capitalist economic system, poverty is one of the great evils of human society. And society's

responsibility to the individual is summed up in such a way as to provide him with the opportunity for freedom, work and investment, if, after the provision is made, the individual is unable to break out of poverty, or it is his responsibility to prevent himself from falling into this circle. The government, the rich, etc. are no longer obliged to help this poor man and save him from poverty. However, this view is the product of a liberal capitalist system that has been replaced for years by regulatory capitalism, in which regulatory capitalism is more or less convinced of government interference in economic activities and social guarantees.

4. The socialist economic system considered poverty to be one of the problems of human society, and even considered all its grief and sorrow to defend the workers, the majority of whom were poor. According to this system, the only cause of poverty in the world is the capitalist system, which allowed the individual to own the means of production. The remedy offered by this economic system is that in the first step, the individual ownership of the means of production is hardened and then all the means of production are confiscated from the people in favor of the government. The government, on behalf of the society, should provide equal opportunities among the people of the society by implementing centralized economic plans, in which case the problem of poverty will be solved by itself. The socialist economic system, with this belief, has been falling for years and no longer has many supporters in the world. According to Islamic economics experts, love of property was one of the natural desires of human beings, which was ignored by the socialist economic system<sup>[4]</sup>.
5. Islam not only dislikes poverty but also rejects it. And suggests different individual and collective solutions to poverty. For example, in individual solutions, Islam does not allow Muslims to be extravagant and waste their property in sinful and unnecessary places. Islam not only has a real and balanced view of the phenomenon of poverty, but also offers real solutions to eradicate it. In social solutions to meet the needs of life and poverty alleviation, it offers tools such as work, family and social care, and zakat<sup>[1]</sup>.

### Methodology

The present study is a descriptive survey type of research, which describes the views of Kabul University students about the causes and solutions of poverty. This study was conducted at Kabul University (Mother University) in Afghanistan and the statistical population of this study is all students of Kabul University, which has a total of 25,000 students. Using Sample Size Calculator software, 378 students have been selected as a sample. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire and described without any changes. The questionnaires were randomly distributed. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS21 and EXCEL software and the results were shown and described in graphs and tables.

### The poverty reasons

Poverty, as a negative-social disability, is inevitably born of causes. In order for us to talk about why poverty in Afghanistan, we have to look for the causes of poverty in Afghanistan and examine them in numerical form under the heading of the causes of poverty in Afghanistan:

### 1. War

Afghanistan has been burning in the fire of war for forty-one years, this war, in the last four decades, is almost over and it has destroyed the country. No area in Afghanistan can be found that has not been harmed in any way by the war. Whether it is economic or cultural, whether it is political or social, whether it is moral or militaristic and the war in Afghanistan has cost the US \$ 200 billion, according to Market Watch<sup>[2]</sup>.

In his book "Afghanistan on the Rise and Rise of the Economic Crisis", Professor Massoud claims that 574 small factories were destroyed during the wars in the country, which could be a disaster for a country like Afghanistan. Therefore, according to the above statements, it is concluded that war is one of the main causes of poverty in a country called Afghanistan.

### 2. Unplanned by governments

One of the main causes of poverty in Afghanistan can be traced to the unplanned governments in the country for nearly a century. In the sense that the ruling governments in our country for nearly a century have lacked a comprehensive, clear, rational and fair strategy (given national capacities and constraints).

According to the contemporary history of Afghanistan, any ruler who has relied on the power in the country for at least the last half century, after gaining political power, has no concern except to maintain power. The work of governments at this time has in most cases been reduced to empty slogans, and in the practical step small and small things have been done.

After 2001. With the international community in Afghanistan, a new government (compared to the past) was formed. Strategy for Afghanistan Development "Afghanistan National Strategy is a comprehensive plan based on Afghanistan's 15-year development goals and will be used as a strategic document to reduce poverty in Afghanistan"<sup>[4]</sup>.

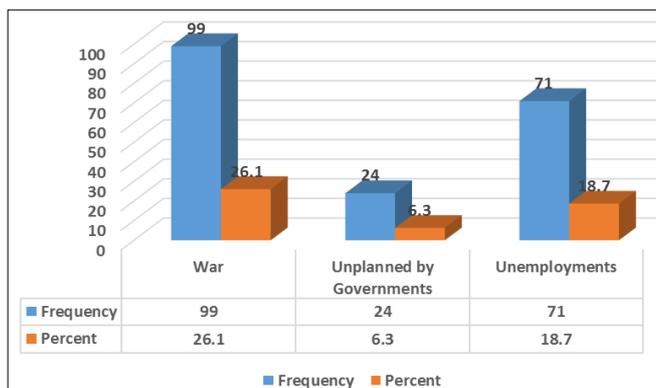
In this strategy, the reduction of poverty is one of the priorities. But, unfortunately, the indifference of the Afghan rulers and the reluctance of foreigners (former Afghan President Hamid Karzai, in the black and white program of Tolo TV claimed that foreigners - implicitly Americans - did not want to do positive work on infrastructure in Afghanistan) Not only has Afghanistan's national strategy failed to be fully implemented, but other small-scale plans that could help Afghanistan achieve economic prosperity and reduce poverty are also largely on the page. The paper remained.

### 3. Unemployment

Unemployed is someone who is in the age range (15-65) and is looking for work, but cannot find a source of income. Those who are not less than fifteen years old and not more than sixty-five years old are called economically active people.

This means that when we say unemployed, we mean the unemployed of the economically active force who have the ability to work and are looking for a job, but they cannot find a job. Children, adults, housewives and students who do not want to work, and even those who have a source of income and are not looking for work, are not considered unemployed. According to figures provided by the World Bank in Afghanistan, 1.9 million people are unemployed.

The Afghan Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs considers 22.4% of the eligible workforce unemployed in the country. But other statistics put these figures above 36 percent. Whatever the unemployment graph, the reality is that the unemployment rate in Afghanistan is on the rise. And the statistics of the International Labor Organization (2010-2018) show this situation. The direct impact of unemployment is the loss of income, which puts the unemployed in economic straits and increases crime rates, especially poverty. Extensive poverty, insufficient work and the inability of the government to create jobs, etc., are the main causes of unemployment in Afghanistan [3].



**Fig 1:** war, unplanned by Government and unemployment

Figure (1) shows that out of a total of 378 students, 99 students, (or 26.1 percent), found that war is a major reason of poverty in Afghanistan. 24 students, (or 6.3 percent), said the reason of poverty in Afghanistan is a lack of government planning and 71 students, (or 18.7 percent), said that unemployment is the reason of poverty in Afghanistan. In summary, the majority of students said that war is a major reason of poverty in Afghanistan.

**4. Social injustice**

One of the basic ways to ensure social justice is the fair distribution of wealth.

There are different views on the concept of social justice among economic thinkers. Given the statements of all economic theorists about social justice, it becomes clear that the provision of social justice is absolutely not possible. However, the purpose here is to provide social justice in a relative way, which is to provide a dignified life for all sections of society without discrimination and privilege. The question that arises here is what does a dignified life mean? A dignified life in the sense that every inhabitant of this vast land should have a home, equipment, bread, water, clothing, medicine, and a sum of money to save, according to our Afghan custom.

Unfortunately, the ruling system of wealth distribution in our country is not only not in a way that has helped our society to achieve a dignified life; Bell has caused a class upheaval in Afghanistan and has given most of the country's wealth to five or ten percent of our population. If anyone bothers to visit Wazir Akbar Khan and Shirpour, and the Ghambar crossroads (in Kabul), because the sun will know what the situation is like in the distribution of wealth in our country.

In the constitution of Afghanistan, the economic system of the country is called the free market or the capitalist system that prevails in most countries of the world. One of the

shortcomings of this economic system, according to a number of Western and non-Western economists, is that it creates an economic boom, and this is considered to be an inherent feature of this economic system.

In short, in our Afghanistan, wealth is not distributed fairly, nor are equal opportunities for work and education favorable for all citizens, and this is one of the causes of poverty in the country. Another point that should not be overlooked is that justice does not always mean equality, sometimes it can mean justice and sometimes it cannot. For example, having the equal right to do business in Afghanistan is a statutory right for every citizen of Afghanistan, it is justice. However, it is unfair to impose a fixed tax on two businessmen whose income varies from earth to sky [2].

**5. Drought and natural pests**

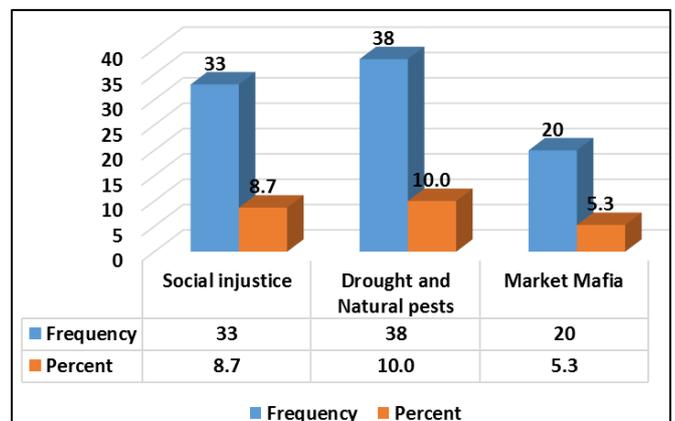
Afghanistan is an agricultural country, with an estimated 80 percent of Afghanistan's population engaged in agriculture. It is clear that in such a situation, natural disasters such as floods, plant diseases, locust infestations, droughts and any other hidden natural disasters will have a profound and significant negative impact on the poverty situation in Afghanistan. The consequences of drought and natural disasters in Afghanistan are food poverty and declining incomes, which in turn widens the scope of poverty in our impoverished country [3].

**6. Market mafia**

Experience has shown that in war-torn or post-war countries, mafias are more capable of illegally interfering in the political and economic affairs of other countries. Afghanistan, as a war-torn country, can in no way be exempt from this negativity.

According to a Transparency Watch study, the Afghan market is monopolized by the everyday, and they play a key role in determining the price of goods in the country. This is not the only Transparency Watch report that reveals such an issue, but every economically aware person will find out if they take a little effort and pay attention to it.

It is also clear that the mafias set prices higher than the normal prices of goods, which has a direct negative impact on poverty in Afghanistan [3].



**Fig 2:** Social Injustice, Drought and Natural Pests, and Market Mafia

Figure (2) shows that out of a total of 378 students, 33 students, (or 8.7 percent), found that Social Injustice a reason of poverty in Afghanistan. 38 students, (or 10.0 percent), said the reason of poverty in Afghanistan is

Drought and Natural Pests and 20 students, (or 5.3 percent), said that Market Mafia is the reason of poverty in Afghanistan. In summary, the majority of students said that Drought and Natural Pests is a major reason of poverty in Afghanistan.

### 7. Monetary inflation

Inflation is an economic term, a condition in which the general level of prices of goods and services rises continuously over a period of time (usually one year)

Rising public prices could be one of the causes of poverty, ending the purchasing power of society.

According to the poverty line, society can be divided into four categories:

- Those who are much higher than the poverty line.
- Those who are slightly above the poverty line.
- Those who are on the poverty line.
- Those who are below the poverty line.

In our country, after those who live below the poverty line, most people are those who live below the poverty line or slightly above the poverty line. Inflation first lowers those who live below the poverty line. It is on the poverty line and slightly above the poverty line, and then slowly swallows the highs and lows.

Those in our country who are safe from the bite of inflation, their percentage is very small compared to the poor and those who live close to the poverty line. It should not be forgotten that inflation inflicts the greatest damage on those with fixed incomes, such as teachers and ordinary employees and mercenaries in government offices, and so on [4].

### 8. Not paying attention to the Zakat System and strengthening the spirit of Takaful

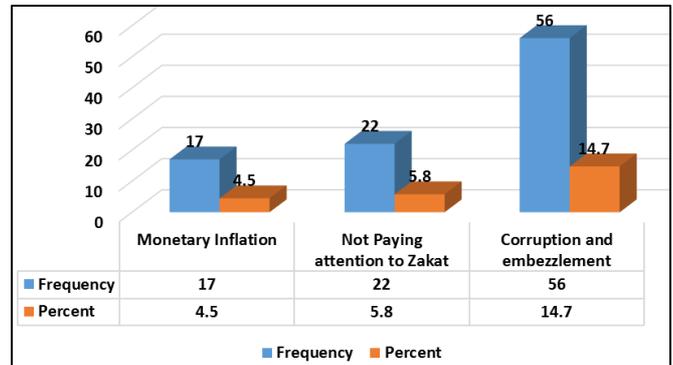
Zakat is 2.5 percent of the money received from the wealthy property that has reached the quorum (the amount of property for which zakat is obligatory), is distributed by the government and distributed to the needy. Zakat is the fourth of the five pillars of Islam and has played an important role in reducing poverty throughout the history of Islam [1].

Takaful in its simplest sense is that the basic needs of the poor are met by their wealthy relatives.

### 9. Corruption and embezzlement

Corruption is the use of government powers and facilities for personal gain, and misappropriation of government property by government employees is called embezzlement. Although there are no exact figures on the volume of corruption and embezzlement in the country, it can be said that billions of dollars in our country - especially in the last eighteen years - have been corrupted and embezzled.

If this huge amount of money went to the national economy, the situation of poverty in Afghanistan today would not be like this. Therefore, the causes of poverty in the country are corruption and embezzlement. In addition, factors such as low productivity, inefficiency in resource allocation, waste and extravagance, the existence of moral corruption, lack of proper spending among families, lack of coordination of labor with labor market conditions, reduced aid to the international community and Etc. He pointed out as the causes of poverty in the country, each of which has increased the poverty rate in the country as much as its share.



**Fig 3:** Monetary inflation, not paying attention to Zakat and Corruption and embezzlement

Figure (3) shows that out of a total of 378 students, 17 students, (or 4.5 percent), found that monetary inflation is a reason of poverty in Afghanistan. 22 students, (or 5.8 percent), said the main reason of poverty in Afghanistan is not paying attention to Zakat and 56 students, (or 14.7 percent), said that corruption and embezzlement is the major reason of poverty in Afghanistan. In summary, the majority of students said that corruption and embezzlement is a major reason of poverty in Afghanistan.

### Conclusion

It has been said before that every disability is the result of a cause - or a cause. Every time the cause or causes are removed, the disability also disappears. Poverty, as a negative disability, is born of causes in our country, and if those causes are removed, poverty in the country will decrease. The student of Kabul University determined a comprehensive, unified and rational strategy - taking into account the realities of Afghanistan, the region and the world - should be formulated by the political, economic, social and cultural elites of the country, and have a strong and national executive guarantee as they said, more which I have written in the following order in numerical and regular form, which, if taken into account, will certainly help the country in the direction of poverty alleviation:

- All national forces should be mobilized to bring real and lasting peace to the country and start working in this direction, so that the war ends as a hated and poverty-causing phenomenon in all areas, and national programs and Private poverty reduction will be fruitful.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and other institutions working in this field, to implement plans that on the one hand help reduce the damage of drought and natural pests and on the other hand, lead to the quantitative and qualitative growth of the agriculture and livestock industry. Be. With nearly 80% of our people engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry, paying attention to this area compared to other areas can greatly help reduce the poverty rate in Afghanistan and increase the food security of our people.
- Students' believes that since poverty is directly related to unemployment, the government should provide employment opportunities for the unemployed through the public and private sectors, both at home and abroad, and deal a strong blow to the body of poverty from this address.
- Their understanding is that the government should stop the political-economic mafias from interfering in the

affairs of market prices and provide the ground for real competition among the country's businessmen.

- They say our government, by adopting a reasonable monetary and fiscal policy, should control the inflation rate in the country and seriously monitor it in this area.
- There is a believes that we have to choose solutions for the distribution of wealth that are able to distribute wealth fairly and equitably among different sections of society, in this case, the experiences of countries such as Malaysia, etc., which have acted successfully and powerfully in this field can be used.
- The government should eliminate, or at least reduce, corruption and embezzlement in the country.
- Finally, they conclude their saying by reviving the Zakat system and strengthening the spirit of Takaful. Furthermore, it is necessary for the government to collect Zakat - and tithes of agricultural products, the amount of which is mentioned in jurisprudential books - and distribute it fairly among the needy classes mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. The best way to fight poverty. And continue to strengthen the spirit of Takaful in society. In addition, the fight against corruption, increasing the efficiency of the country's employees, optimal allocation of resources, prevention of waste and extraction, attention to the mining industry, raising the level of economic knowledge of society, etc. can be effective in reducing poverty in our country.

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