



THE ROLE OF HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY IN REDUCING CRIME: A STUDY OF AFGHANISTAN'S EASTERN ZONE

Abdul Basit Khedam¹, Nazifullah Niazi^{2*}, Tariqullah Malakzai³

¹ Department Law & Political Science, Al-Taqwa University, Nangarhar, Afghanistan.

² Head of Quality Assurance, Lecturer, Law & Political Science, Alfalah University, Nangarhar, Afghanistan

³ Department of Law & Political Science, Al-Taqwa University, Nangarhar, Afghanistan.

*Corresponding author email: nazifn20@gmail.com

Article Info:

Received:
24/10/2024

Revised:
26/12/2024

Accepted:
20/04/2025

Presented:
30/04/2025

Published:
31/10/2025

Keywords:

Crime
Reduction,
Household
Economy,
Household
Income,
Poverty
theory,
Public Safety

ABSTRACT

Household economy plays an important role in the social and economic stability of a society. This study examines the relationship between household economic status and crime in the eastern region of Afghanistan (Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, and Nuristan). The results show that economic problems such as unemployment, poverty, and financial instability lead to an increase in crime, however, good economic conditions, sound financial management, and access to education and social services are effective in reducing crime. The research uses a quantitative method and data was collected from a questionnaire administered to 217 participants. 95% of participants believe that economic power leads to a decrease in crime. The main factors of crime are unemployment, poverty, and inability to meet basic family needs, while proper financial management and a stable income were considered important for reducing crime. The research emphasizes the need for economic development programs, increased employment opportunities, and the implementation of educational measures to improve the economic situation of families and ensure social stability. The results indicate that solving family economic problems is a strategic way to reduce crime. Future studies should be conducted in other regions to confirm the generalizability and validity of the results.

1. INTRODUCTION

The household economic plays an important role in the economic and social structure of a society, as the economic situation of families has a direct impact on social stability, individual well-being, and crime. Families with sufficient income, sound financial management, and economic opportunities are less likely to engage in crime, while unemployment, poverty, and lack of income lead to an increase in crime.

This study analyzes the relationship between the financial situation of families and crime in the eastern region of Afghanistan and shows that improving economic conditions leads to social stability and a decrease in crime. The study assesses the impact of economic problems such as unemployment, low income, and financial irregularities on crime and provides practical solutions to improve the economic situation of families and reduce crime rates.

The direct impact of household economic status and unemployment on crime is clear. Research shows that if household income, financial management, savings, and investment improve, crime rates can be reduced, while economic problems are the main factors that increase crime. Families that are economically stable not only maintain stability for themselves, but also make a significant contribution to reducing crime in society.

1.1. Household Economic

Household economy (Family Economics) includes all the activities of a family that are done to meet the needs of the family, such as earning income, managing the budget, and allocating the necessary resources properly, as well as the social and economic development of the family economy. It is the foundation because it provides the basis for the continuity and stability of economic activities in the society(Becker, 1993). Household economy means how the family earns its income, how it spends on needs and wants, keeps a part of it for the future and how much it spends on activities that can get additional benefit from it. It plays an important role in good life and economic stability(Keynes, 1936). Household economy plays an important role in social development. When the economic status of the family is good, the level of education, health, and social welfare increases, which in turn reduces the crime rate(Wilkinson &

Pickett, 2009). Today, the Household economy considered vital for social and economic development rather than just for personal gain, as it provides the basis for other economic sectors of society(Ehrlich, 1973). One of the important ways to improve the Household economy to get a stable income, which reduces economic problems with the availability of sustainable financial resources. Education also plays an important role, because education provides opportunities for higher-paying jobs, Good financial management, which is done through budgeting, saving, and investing, helps to strengthen the economic situation. In addition, social services such as health, education, and employment opportunities are fundamental to the development of a family's economic status(Deaton, n.d.).

1.2 Poverty Theory, Crime and Family Economy

Poverty theory is a theory that claims that conditions associated with poverty and economic deprivation lead to an increase in crime. This theory is based on the idea that people who are faced with economic pressures and poverty are forced to resort to illegal means such as theft, fraud, and other crimes to meet their basic needs. In this theory, economic problems are linked to social problems such as crime, violence, and isolation (Antonelli & De Bonis, 2021). Poverty affects people's economic lives, and when people do not have enough resources and opportunities, they may be forced to commit crimes to meet their needs. This may lead to theft of materials, fraud, or even the illegal use of human resources(Maguire-Jack & Sattler, 2023). The presence of poverty leads to a deterioration in the social situation of people. Poverty also leads to a lack of education, health, and social support, which ultimately leads to crime. Poverty makes it difficult for people to meet their needs, which acts as a motivation for committing crimes. Illegal activities to meet needs may appear as a result of poverty(Antonelli & De Bonis, 2021). When people face economic pressures, they may become isolated from society, which also leads to an increase in crime. This isolation and lack of necessary social support lead to crime(Maguire-Jack & Sattler, 2023). The economic situation of families is important for implementing the poverty theory. If family members are facing economic pressures, they are more likely to commit crimes to meet their own and their family's needs(Visser et al., 2022). This study on the eastern zone of Afghanistan is related to this theory because there are economic pressures on people in this zone due to poverty and

poor economic conditions. When families have economic weaknesses, committing crimes to meet those needs can be a possibility. According to this theory, in areas where poverty and poor economic conditions exist, crime rates increase (Visser et al., 2022). In Afghanistan, especially in the eastern zone, many people live in economic difficulties due to the presence of poverty and poor economic conditions, which opens the way for committing crimes. This theory shows you how poverty and its economic pressures can increase crime rates, and how we can help reduce crime by reducing poverty (Maguire-Jack & Sattler, 2023). Given the economic situation of the household in Afghanistan, poverty theory is an effective theory for this study, because you are analyzing the relationship between poverty and crime. Applying this theory may provide recommendations for poverty reduction programs, improving economic conditions, and strengthening social support systems to reduce crime. Poverty limits the quality of life and opportunities of people, which in turn forces them to resort to illegal means to meet their economic needs (Antonelli & De Bonis, 2021). In Afghanistan, given the economic conditions of the eastern region, people commit crimes due to poverty and poor economic conditions. Afghanistan is one of the countries in which poverty is a widespread problem. If economic resources are scarce to meet the needs of the people, it will lead to an increase in crime, thus poverty theory explains this situation well. According to this theory, poverty and lack of economic resources not only lead to poor living conditions, but also open the way to social problems, such as crime. This theory is very suitable for analyzing the economic situation of the eastern region of Afghanistan and its effects (Maguire-Jack & Sattler, 2023).

1.3 Family Economics and Crime

The relationship between family economics and crime has been studied in various fields of social science, and research shows that improving economic status plays a vital role in reducing crime, and that family economic status is directly responsible for creating those conditions. Has the effect of encouraging people to commit criminal activities or preventing them from committing criminal activities, we discuss several important issues below:

1.4 Income and Crimes :Adequate income is a fundamental factor of economic stability for households. Families with adequate sources of income rely on legal means to meet their needs and avoid illegal activities, on the contrary, low-income families may come under pressure to meet their needs. This situation provides an environment for them to commit crimes(Raphael & Winter-Ebmer, 2001)

1.5 Unemployment and crimes :Unemployment is considered one of the main reasons for the increase in crimes. Those who are deprived of work opportunities, engage in illegal activities to meet the needs of themselves and their families. Long-term unemployment not only increases the level of crime, but also causes social instability(Raphael & Winter-Ebmer, 2001).

1.6 Poverty and social pressure :Poverty is one of the main causes of social pressure, which forces family members to engage in illegal activities. Comes and starts committing crimes.

1.7 The effect of economic inequality :Economic inequality between families creates jealousy, competition, and frustration in society, which creates a favorable environment for crime to increase. Studies show that societies with high economic inequality have high crime rates(Kelly, 2000)

1.8 Lack of education and crimes :Education plays a vital role in improving the family economy. Families with financial resources provide their children with education, which in turn reduces the likelihood of criminal activities, on the contrary, lack of education increases the risk of unemployment and criminal activities for young people(Lochner & Moretti, 2004)

1.9 Financial management and crimes :Lack of family financial management leads to unnecessary debt, wasteful spending, and economic instability, which in some cases leads to the use of illegal means. Conversely, proper household budget management can prevent criminal activities(Hilgert et al., 2003)

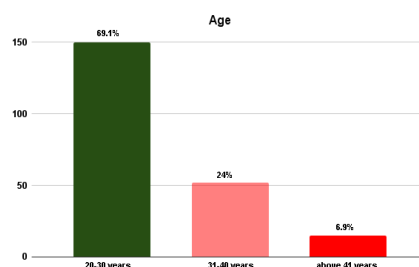
2. METHODOLOGY

For this research, a quantitative method was used, in which the opinions of the people of the eastern regions of Afghanistan (Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, and Nuristan) were

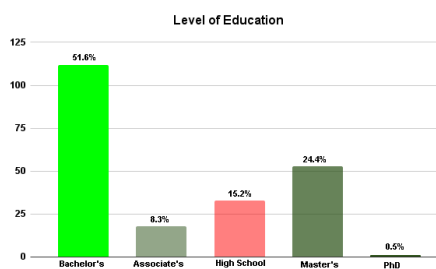
collected. To collect data, a questionnaire was created through Google Forms. Data analysis was conducted based on descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and correlation analysis. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: the first part was dedicated to the social characteristics of the participants, and the second part addressed the relationship between household economy and crime. A random sampling method was used, with 217 participants participating. Each number revealed in the data obtained is explained. The confidentiality of the participants was maintained in the study, permission for participation was obtained, and ethical principles were taken into account.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Q1. The graph shows that the survey participants are divided into three age groups. The majority of participants (69.1%) were aged 20–30, the second is the middle-aged group of 31–40 years, contributed 24% to this research, and the third group is the participants over 41 years old, which accounts for only 6.9%. Overall, the high participation of young people reflects their particular interest in reducing household economic crime, while middle-aged people also play an important role, but older people have remained less active.

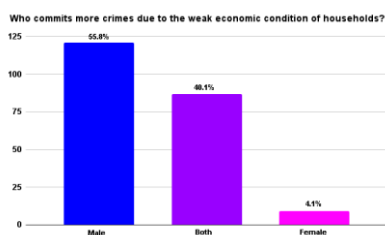


Q2. The graph shows that the survey participants are at different educational levels. with 51.6% having a bachelor's, 24.4% a master's, 15.2% graduate-level, 8.3% an associate's, and 0.5% a PhD. Overall, most participants have higher educational qualifications, especially at the bachelor's and master's levels, which increases the reliability of the research findings and the scope of valuable standpoints on the research.

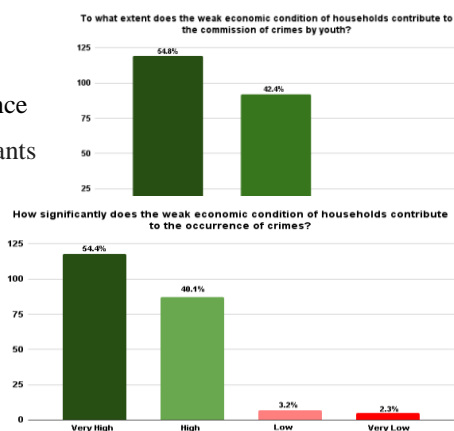


Q3. Based on the results of the questionnaire answers, the economic status of the family plays an important role in reducing crime, with 54.4% of the participants saying "very much" and 40.1% saying "a lot." It shows that almost 95% of the participants believe that economic empowerment of the family can significantly reduce the level of crime in society. Meanwhile, only a small percentage (5.5%) of people said the economy was less effective in reducing crime. This result shows that improving the economic status of families in the eastern zone of Afghanistan is vital for crime prevention and social stability. Therefore, strengthening the household economy must become an important part of the development plans.

Q4 As a result of receiving the answers, most participants (55.8%) believe that family economic problems force men to commit more crimes than women. Some participants say that both men and women are forced to commit crimes, and some think that women commit more crimes. This serious situation suggests that measures are needed to improve the economic situation of families and reduce crime.

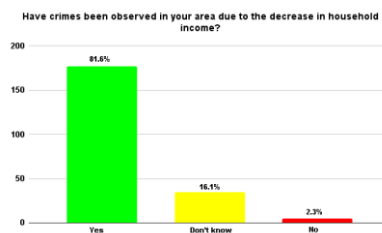


Q5 As a result of receiving the answers, we conclude that the poor economic status of the family plays an important role in the occurrence of crimes by the youth, 54.8% of the participants considered this situation to have a "very high" and 42.4% to have a "high" impact, with only a small number reporting a "very low" impact. These results indicate that economic problems are a major source of stress and negative conditions



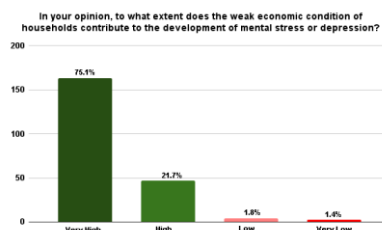
for youth, which in turn motivates them to commit crimes. In particular, the crime rate among male youth is high. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the economic situation of families, reduce the psychological stress of youth, and take appropriate measures to prevent crime.

Q6. In the questionnaire responses, 81.6% of the participants said that poor family economic status was a cause of crime in their area, 16.1% did not know, and only a small number mentioned the absence of crime. These results indicate that family economic status is associated with increased crime. This shows that the weak economic situation in Afghanistan may be a breeding ground for the development of crimes, especially in areas where people are facing economic problems.



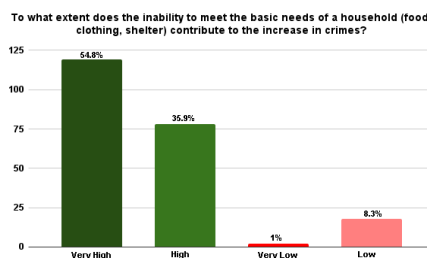
Q7 Based on the responses, it is clear that the poor economic situation of the family plays a direct role in the occurrence of various crimes. The increase in theft, drugs, human trafficking, Household Violence, and moral corruption is a result of economic stress and instability. Legal prosecution alone is not enough to solve these problems, but rather development programs, educational and employment opportunities are necessary to improve the economic situation of families, reduce crime rates, and ensure the security and stability of society.

Q8. The results of the research show that poor family economic status plays a significant role in the development of psychological stress and depression. 75.1% of the participants considered this effect to be "very high" and 21.7% to be "high", while only 3.2% mentioned a low role.



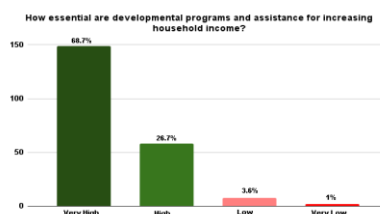
This shows that economic hardship has a profound impact on individuals' mental health. Therefore, reducing economic hardship is essential for improving the situation of families, as well as protecting mental health and social stability.

Q9. The results of the research show that the lack of basic family needs (food, clothing, shelter) plays a significant role in the increase in crime. 54.8% of the participants considered this impact to be



"high" and 35.9% to be "very high", while only a minority of respondents indicated a minimal effect. This shows that the lack of basic necessities creates deep social and economic problems in people's lives and behavior and leads to an increase in crime. Therefore, serious measures by the government and related institutions are necessary to meet the economic needs of families in order to reduce the crime rate in society.

Q10. The results of the study show that there is a great need for development programs and assistance to increase household income. 68.7% of the participants considered this need to be "very high" and 26.6% "high", while only 4.6%



considered it to be a low need. This indicates that, from the perspective of the majority of participants, these programs are vital for improving the economic situation of households. Therefore, relevant institutions should prioritize the implementation of development programs and assistance to strengthen the economic situation of families and reduce the level of crime due to economic pressure.

Q11 Evidence from the research highlights that vocational education and technical skills are given significant importance in increasing household income. This indicates that people want to acquire education and skills to improve their economic situation and reduce poverty.

The development of agriculture and animal husbandry in rural areas is essential to increase household income and meet food needs. In addition, the construction of manufacturing plants and employment opportunities plays an important role in increasing income and improving living standards through the development of the industrial sector.

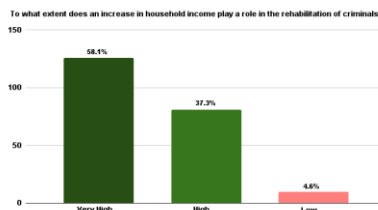
Overall, the implementation of such development programs is vital for solving domestic economic problems in the eastern region and improving social welfare, and is also effective in reducing unemployment and crime.

Q12. Marketing and trade support helps create a stable demand for domestic products and exports and plays an important role in increasing incomes. Construction of cold storage facilities and agricultural advisory services are effective ways to protect and

increase farmers' incomes. Also, the lending and financial support system, especially microfinance and bank financing, creates economic opportunities and increases the growth of farmers and the manufacturing sector.

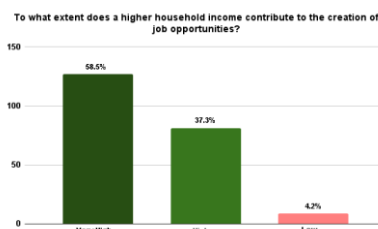
These grants not only increase household income, but are also important for reducing poverty and crime. Increasing income is essential for the economic stability and independence of households and has a fundamental impact on building social well-being.

Q13. According to the results, 58.1% of participants considered an increase in family income to be a major factor in the rehabilitation of offenders, 37.3% considered it to be a minor factor, while only 4.6% considered it to be a minor factor. This shows that economic stability is of fundamental importance for the rehabilitation and social integration of offenders.

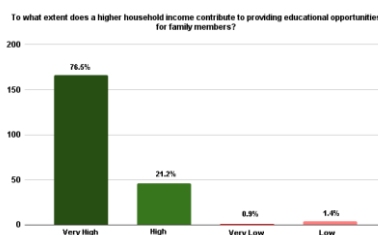


Therefore, implementing development programs and economic support is essential to improve the situation of families, prevent crime, and turn criminals into active members of society.

Q14. According to the results, 58.5% of the participants considered high income to be very important in creating employment and 37.3% considered it to be very effective, while only 4.2% mentioned low impact. This shows that high income is of fundamental importance in creating employment opportunities for the society in addition to the economic stability of the households. Therefore, for economic growth, it is essential to implement programs to increase household income in order to provide an effective environment for employment and social development.



Q15. The results of the responses to this question indicate that high family income plays a significant role in providing education. 76.5% of the participants rated this impact as “very



high” and 21.2% as “high”, while only a small number reported a “low” or “very low” contribution. This suggests that economic stability is vital for creating educational opportunities.

Education is not only the foundation of economic and social development of individuals, but also essential for the development of society. Education creates a change in the mindset of people, makes them aware of legal values, and prepares them for better economic opportunities.

In families where there are equal educational opportunities, children and youth are less likely to turn to illegal activities due to economic hardship. Therefore, education is also an effective tool in reducing crime rates.

As a result, increasing household income is considered an important factor in supporting education and reducing crime. In order to ensure social justice and reduce economic pressures, it is necessary to take continuous steps to increase income and expand access to education. This will be an effective mechanism for social development and reducing crime rates.

3.1 DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that family economic status plays a fundamental role in reducing crime. Nearly 95% of participants believed that increasing family income has a significant impact on reducing crime in society. These findings are consistent with other studies that show that poverty and economic stress lead to increased crime, mental health problems, and depression, especially among young people and women.

Research shows that family economic challenges are a major cause of youth crime, as economic deprivation pushes people towards crime. Therefore, income-enhancing, education, and employment programs should be an important part of development plans.

However, the study was conducted only in eastern Afghanistan and does not cover the entire country, so future research needs to be expanded. Ultimately, these results emphasize that improving the economic status of households is vital for reducing crime and strengthening social stability.

4. CONCLUSIONS

According to the survey results, the economic status of the family plays a fundamental role in reducing crime. Almost all participants believe that economic power leads to a decrease in crime, especially among young people. Psychological stress due to economic problems, depression, and lack of basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter) were considered the main factors in the increase in crime.

The statistical results show that a large number of participants rated the impact of family economic status as "high" or "very high," and most of them believe that the possibility of an increase in crime among women is high due to economic difficulties. Also, many participants emphasize that development programs and income-raising assistance are vital in reducing crime.

The results show that economic stability is not only important in reducing crime rates, but also has an effective role in the rehabilitation of criminals and the stability of society. Therefore, future research should deeply investigate the relationship between economic status and crime based on the experiences of different regions, and also explore ways to develop educational and vocational programs.

5. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthening the economic situation of families: Financial support, microfinance, and household income-enhancing projects should be implemented to create economic stability and reduce the possibility of crime.
- Development programs: Develop the agriculture, animal husbandry, manufacturing, and industrial sectors so that families have better income opportunities.
- Employment opportunities: The development of industrial and manufacturing projects and the increase of vocational training for youth should be promoted to reduce the crime rate due to unemployment and economic pressure.
- Access to education and skills: Educational and vocational skills programs should be expanded to all families, as education is an important tool for preventing crime.

- Meeting basic needs: Food, clothing, and shelter must be provided for all families, as the lack of these needs leads to an increase in crime.
- Future Research: Research should be conducted in other regions to determine the depth of the relationship between economic status and crime, and to study the impact of education and skills programs.

Conflict of Interest: All authors express no conflict of interest in any part of the research.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Authors Contributions:

Conceptualization, methodology, software, analysis, investigation, resources, original draft preparation, review and editing, visualization, supervision, project administration and funding. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

REFERENCES

- Antonelli, M. A., & De Bonis, V. (2021). Economic poverty: Does the break-up of families matter? *Social Sciences*, 10(6), 224.
<https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10060224>
- Becker, G. S. (1993). *A treatise on the family: Enlarged edition*. Harvard University Press. <https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=byrnEAAAQBAJ>
- Crawford, G., & Abdulai, A.-G. (Eds.). (2021). *Research handbook on democracy and development*. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788112659>
- Deaton, A. (n.d.). *Understanding consumption*. [Publication details unavailable].
- Ehrlich, I. (1973). Participation in illegitimate activities: A theoretical and empirical investigation. *Journal of Political Economy*, 81(3), 521–565.
<https://doi.org/10.1086/260058>
- Hilgert, M. A., Hogarth, J. M., & Beverly, S. G. (2003). Household financial management: The connection between knowledge and behavior. *Federal Reserve Bulletin*, 89, 309–322.

- Kelly, M. (2000). Inequality and crime. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 82(4), 530–539. <https://doi.org/10.1162/003465300559028>
- Keynes, J. M. (1936). *The general theory of employment, interest and money*. Macmillan and Company.
- Lochner, L., & Moretti, E. (2004). The effect of education on crime: Evidence from prison inmates, arrests, and self-reports. *American Economic Review*, 94(1), 155–189. <https://doi.org/10.1257/000282804322970751>
- Maguire-Jack, K., & Sattler, K. (2023). Neighborhood poverty, family economic well-being, and child maltreatment. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 38(5–6), 4814–4831. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221119522>
- Raphael, S., & Winter-Ebmer, R. (2001). Identifying the effect of unemployment on crime. *The Journal of Law and Economics*, 44(1), 259–283. <https://doi.org/10.1086/320275>
- Ravallion, M. (2004). Growth, inequality, and poverty: Looking beyond averages. In M. Ravallion (Ed.), *Growth, inequality, and poverty: Prospects for pro-poor economic development* (pp. 62–80). World Bank.
- Visser, S. S., Edzes, A., Merx, E., & Van Lanen, S. (2022). “It all starts with family”: Mechanisms of intergenerational poverty in the Veenkoloniën, the Netherlands. *Journal of Poverty*, 26(6), 520–548. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10875549.2021.2010872>
- Wilkinson, R. G., & Pickett, K. E. (2009). Income inequality and social dysfunction. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35(1), 493–511. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-070308-115926>