



Leveraging Household Economics for Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation: Strategic Recommendations for the Afghan Government

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Article Info:

Received:
13/10/2024

Revised:
17/12/2024

Accepted:
20/04/2025

Presented:
30/04/2025

Published:
31/10/2025

Keywords:

Development,
HCT,
Household
Economics,
National
Development,
Poverty
Alleviation

ABSTRACT

The matter of household economics is considered an important field for solving social and economic problems in the world. Especially in Afghanistan, where poverty is deep and widespread, the implementation of household economics offers practical solutions for SDGs and poverty reduction. The importance of household economics lies in the fact that it contributes to the effective management of household resources, financial independence, and improving the quality of life, and leads to equitable development and women's empowerment. This study used a qualitative research design to evaluate household economics policies and poverty reduction mechanisms using literature review, human capital theory, and thematic analysis. The study findings revealed two main themes: the implementation of household economics measures and the role of the government in poverty reduction. The results show that household economics measures are effective in poverty reduction, but the active participation of the Afghan government is necessary for their effectiveness. As a result, it is recommended that the government increase its efforts in skills training, women's economic participation, and food security to improve the standard of people's livelihood and accelerate national development.

1. INTRODUCTION

The subject of household economics in Afghanistan has a special scientific and practical value in the process of national development and poverty reduction. After 2021, the country's political, social, and economic situation has faced serious challenges, as a result of which the poverty rate has increased and the living standards of the people have significantly decreased. According to international reports, about 85 percent of the people live on less than one dollar a day, and gross domestic product has shown a significant decline in recent years. In this context, household economics is considered a fundamental scientific and practical framework that is considered a powerful tool for combating poverty through improving household skills, increasing income, and effective resource management. The value of the subject lies in the fact that strengthening household economic activities not only leads to the improvement of the lives of individuals, but also has a direct impact on the overall stability of society, the economic participation of women, ensuring food security, and national development processes. Human Capital Theory suggests that improving people's education, skills, and capabilities is vital for economic development, and is considered an effective way to reduce poverty in the household economy, especially in Afghanistan, where the labor market is limited. Therefore, the main question of this research is formulated as follows: What household economic strategies reduce poverty and how can the government support these measures?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Household Economics: Concept and Importance

Human Capital Theory (HCT) is an important theory in economics that considers human education, skills, experiences, and other intellectual and life skills as valuable. According to this theory, humans, through their knowledge, skills, and training, play an important role in economic development, just like natural resources or capital (Fleischhauer, 2007). By strengthening the household economy, the government can take necessary measures to reduce poverty and contribute to the national development of the country. Home economics provides a wide range of services to all aspects of family life (Ukpore, 2005), and is a skill-based subject that develops the basic skills of individuals to become self-sufficient and contribute to the economic and social development of society (Onuorah, 2023). According to the human capital theory, human

capabilities and resources are not only considered physical and material resources but also their knowledge, skills, and experiences (Mayilyan & Yedigaryan, 2022). In Afghanistan, there is strong evidence that poverty reduction through strengthening household economies is possible through household skills, knowledge, and training (Fleischhauer, 2007). In developing countries where employment opportunities are limited, strengthening household economies is essential to develop skills and create new opportunities. Government focus on skills and knowledge can improve people's living standards (Wani, et al., 2022). Household economic measures such as financial management, utilization of household economic resources, and expansion of women's economic activities lead to poverty reduction and development (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024; Onyernama, et al., 2024). Developing human potential and skills promotes economic development (Schultz, 1964). Women's economic empowerment is essential for strengthening household economies, and expanding women's economic opportunities is critical for poverty reduction and national development (Mayilyan & Yedigaryan, 2022; Funmilayo & Larai, 2015; Baker, 2010). Agriculture and livestock are fundamental components of household economies, and developing agricultural skills and establishing household and community training programs can lead to poverty reduction and economic development (Onyernama, et al., 2024; Ikeogu, et al., 2013; Schultz, 1961). The government should expand social assistance to reduce poverty, including employment opportunities, education and training programs, and skills training (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024; Haryatie, 2022). However, investments in education, skills, and training contribute to economic development, poverty reduction, and strengthening domestic economies, but weak institutions and limited resources hinder implementation.

2.2. Household Economics and Poverty Reduction

Implementing household economics principles plays a fundamental role in poverty reduction (Temory, 2024). Through these principles, households are provided with tools to better manage their resources, including financial planning, food security, and skills training, to improve their quality of life and reduce poverty (Oluwagbemileke & Uko-Aviomoh, 2023). When households focus on financial planning, household production, and economic skills, they can cope with economic difficulties (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). Implementing household economics principles is particularly important for low-

income households, as it provides a means for better resource management and improved economic status (Onyernama, et al., 2024). Training household members in skills, especially in handicrafts, food production, and financial management, is a key way to reduce poverty by increasing income and improving quality of life (Umoru, 2024). Implementing household economics creates new opportunities for people and is an effective tool for poverty reduction and social development (Wani, et al., 2022). Household economics principles, which focus on financial planning, food security, and skills training, improve people's lives and are effective in reducing poverty (Pace et al., 2015). In developing countries, implementing household economics principles plays a fundamental role in poverty reduction and economic development, through the management of economic resources, skills development, and better financial management (Onyernama, et al., 2024). If people are educated about proper management of their resources and financial planning, they can significantly improve their lives (Yar & Yasouri, 2024). Household economics principles provide skills training and financial management, which are very effective in reducing poverty and improving individuals' income and livelihoods (Funmilayo & Larai, 2015). The development of financial management and skills training programs for implementing household economics, and the cooperation of government, non-governmental, and international organizations are essential for poverty reduction and improving people's lives (Behzad, 2024). Government-sponsored skills training programs, such as handicrafts or food production and marketing, can make a significant difference in poverty reduction. Also, specialized training workshops that promote women's economic participation in the household economy create new opportunities for women to contribute to the economic development of their families (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). Implementing household economics in rural Afghanistan is difficult due to a lack of education, information, and basic facilities, but with appropriate programming and financial awareness from the government and international organizations, it can become an effective tool for poverty reduction.

2.3. Poverty Reduction through Household Economy

Strengthening the domestic economy is considered a fundamental strategy for poverty reduction in developing countries, because through domestic economic growth, the quality of life of the people improves, economic empowerment is created, and proper

management of resources is possible (Temory, 2024). The expansion of economic inequality is a major cause of poverty, because the unfair distribution of wealth and the lack of employment opportunities worsen the economic situation of households (Chaudhary, 2018). Limited educational opportunities lead to a lack of skills and scientific knowledge among the population, which directly leads to an increase in poverty (Wani, et al., 2022). In addition, weak government, corruption, and the lack of development projects contribute to the spread of poverty, but if the government implements policies that support the domestic economy, it can reduce the level of poverty (Nerlove, 1974). War and insecurity limit economic activity, deprive people of the resources to meet their basic needs, and increase poverty rates (Yar & Yasouri, 2024). Strengthening household economies is an important way to reduce poverty. Providing households with financial management, increasing productive capacity, and supporting local businesses are effective measures to reduce poverty (Behzad, 2024). Expanding economic activities for women and providing them with skills and training opportunities is a fundamental step in reducing poverty (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). Women's economic independence not only improves the economic situation of households, but also has positive consequences for society (Temory, 2024). Investment in the agriculture and livestock sector creates employment opportunities for people and leads to poverty reduction (Ehsas & Akhtar, 2024). Government support for the development of agriculture and livestock plays an important role in reducing poverty (Temory, 2024). Upskilling people through education and vocational training is an important poverty reduction strategy, as training programs and educational advancement integrate people into the labor market (Umoru, 2024). However, implementing household economic empowerment has some challenges. Corruption, security problems, and lack of government planning have made it difficult to implement in the political, social, and economic environment (Wani, et al., 2022). To develop the agriculture and livestock sector, the government should expand specific policies for smallholder farmers and livestock keepers (Akhtar & Niazi, 2024). Unequal land distribution, lack of technology, inappropriate policies, and social, cultural, and legal constraints pose obstacles to poverty reduction strategies, although women's economic participation and education development are important.

2.4. Government Role in Strengthening Household Economy

The government has an important role to play in poverty reduction in the household economy. Improving the quality of life of the people, developing skills, providing economic opportunities, and managing resources properly are the fundamental components of the household economy. The government should strengthen support for women's training and economic activities so that they can play an active role in the development of the household economy (Simorangkir, et al., 2024). Onyernama (2024) highlights the importance of household economic training for poverty reduction and states that governments should expand household economic training programs to build resilience in the face of economic crises. Women's economic participation not only strengthens the household economy, but is also effective in reducing poverty in the community (Behzad, 2024). To reduce poverty in developing countries, governments should implement new techniques and technologies in agriculture and livestock, expand markets for agricultural products, and improve the quality of products (Ikeogu, et al., 2013). Christiaensen & Demery (2007) consider the development of the agricultural sector as essential for poverty reduction and argue that the government should formulate new policies for the development of agriculture and livestock. The government should expand the labor market and provide economic opportunities to the people. Adams & Page (2005) present government measures to reduce unemployment, which include employment programs, skills development, and job creation for the unemployed. Chaudhary (2018) considers social security programs as important for poverty reduction. The government should implement financial literacy programs, microfinance, job creation, affordable health, subsidized education, infrastructure development, social safety nets, and implementation of sustainable practices to improve household economic performance and help reduce poverty (Temory, 2024). To reduce poverty, the government should develop social safety nets, including household empowerment, low-interest microfinance, vocational training, public health, scholarships, infrastructure investment, and providing assistance in times of natural disasters and economic crises (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). There are some challenges with household poverty reduction efforts in Afghanistan, as programs must consider community needs, women's economic rights, and sustainability of assistance, environmental agriculture, and respect for cultural and social institutions.

2.5. Household Resource Management and Savings Strategies

Household resource management and savings strategies are of particular importance for economic development and sustainable growth in Afghanistan. Proper management of financial resources, economic planning for households, and wise use of land and human resources are essential not only for improving the economic situation, but also for reducing poverty and improving the quality of life (Haryatie, 2022). In developing countries, proper management of financial resources is essential for household economic growth and poverty reduction, because government policies and household plans can properly manage financial resources, reduce consumption, and use better savings methods (Syed, et al., 2017; Temory, 2024). Savings are an important principle of economic development, and households should maintain a balance between income and consumption. With the help of financial advice, people can properly organize their needs and save for necessary goods (Syed, et al., 2017). Afghanistan's vast land resources and human capital provide great opportunities for the development of household economies, but wise use of land, development of people's skills, and training and employment opportunities for women, youth, and low-income households are vital (Ehsas & Akhtar, 2024; Temory, 2024; Umoru, 2024). Reducing consumption, cutting unnecessary expenses, and prioritizing household necessities are important strategies for good financial resource management. Implementing household economies in developing countries is difficult due to corruption, poverty, and poor education (Wani, et al., 2022). For these strategies to be successful, land and human resources must be used wisely and prudently to improve household economic conditions and reduce poverty.

2.6. Sustainable Development via Household Economy

Sustainable agriculture and production for sustainable economic growth in developing countries, with good government planning, can lead to economic growth, resource conservation, and environmental improvement (Nzasabayezu et al., 2024). Sustainable agriculture in Afghanistan is an important way to develop the domestic economy. Government encouragement of new agricultural technologies, such as chemical-free farming and water-efficient systems, is vital for increasing production and conserving resources (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). The government should provide training and financial assistance to farmers, support the development of technology and technical knowledge, and ensure cooperation with international aid organizations and local

agencies (Ikeogu, et al., 2013). Environmental protection is an important part of sustainable economic development, and should be included in domestic economic training programs so that people can protect the environment through their economic activities (Funmilayo & Larai, 2015). Government policies should include specific strategies for the proper management of energy, water, and other natural resources (Pratama & Zubaidah, 2024). Awareness of sustainable practices is important in domestic economies, but land degradation, natural disasters, poor use of technology, and lack of financial and technical support make sustainable agriculture difficult to implement (Behzad, 2024). Furthermore, implementing government policies to improve the economic environment faces political and economic challenges, as the material and technical capacity required for the proper and sustainable use of resources on a large scale is limited.

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study is based on a qualitative design, which prioritizes the analysis of library and secondary sources. The data were collected from academic articles, reports, and studies related to household economy, sustainable growth, and poverty reduction. The data analysis was conducted through thematic method to provide appropriate policies and recommendations for strengthening household economy, sustainable growth, and poverty reduction. All sources were reliable and directly related to the research objectives, the sample size was determined based on existing scientific materials, and the validity, confidentiality, and ethical principles of the data were taken into account.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As a result, Thematic Analysis is used as the primary qualitative method to identify key patterns within household economic policies and government interventions. The study categorizes findings into two major themes: (1) household economic measures for poverty reduction and (2) the government's role in implementing these measures. This approach shows how policies, economic activities, and support programs work together to reduce poverty. The role of household measures and government has a two-way effect: the government sets policies and provides incentives, and households increase the

impact of the policy by implementing energy conservation, recycling, and health guidelines. Collaboration is essential for sustainable social goals.

4.1. Household Economic Measures for Poverty Reduction

First, Financial Management and Household Economic Stability includes savings and budgeting, providing financial support, financial education, providing financial independence to family members, and raising awareness about credit opportunities. These measures are important for families to be able to manage their limited resources properly, reduce unnecessary spending, and achieve financial stability in the long term. Increasing financial literacy enables families to use their income wisely and prevent poverty. Second, Education, Skills, and Capacity Building includes investing in education and skills, teaching marketing skills, vocational training programs for adults, encouraging creative thinking, and raising awareness of advances in science and technology. Skills training provides families with the opportunity to find ways to become self-sufficient, compete in the labor market, and increase income through their professional abilities. Third, Income diversification and economic growth pathways include small business development, entrepreneurship, agricultural and livestock programs, horticulture development, support for household production, and increasing women's economic participation. Income diversification reduces the pressure on agricultural households in particular and generates income through various sources. Women's participation, in turn, plays an important role in increasing overall household income. Fourth, Social services, health, and cooperation include access to health and social services, employment and health insurance for the unemployed, building social institutions, and social support systems. These services improve the quality of life of people and increase the resilience of households to poverty. Social cooperation institutions provide the basis for joint efforts for the common good of society. Fifth, Resource efficiency and sustainability include programs for the efficient use of energy and resources, teaching the necessary practices and skills for managing limited resources, and guiding decision-making to improve the quality of life. Efficient use of resources enables households to make rational use of natural and economic resources, reduce waste, and pave the way for sustainable development. In summary, skills training programs for women and youth, such as sewing, handicrafts, and agriculture, play an important role in increasing household income. Products are sold through markets and

exhibitions to support domestic production, and further support is needed through tax exemptions and exports. Microcredit schemes are effective for women's economic empowerment. Economic awareness is raised through public awareness programs. Free training programs for the development of agriculture and livestock, energy-saving projects, and solar power are useful. Women's economic participation is expanded through special programs, loans, and social cooperation institutions. Financial management, health insurance, innovation, and technology open up avenues for families to progress. Ultimately, these measures play a fundamental role in poverty reduction, economic stability, and long-term prosperity.

4.2. The Government's Role in Implementing These Measures

First, the government's primary role in reducing poverty is to promote Education, skills and capacity building. This includes training women in income generation, raising awareness about computer literacy, teaching business and management skills, and encouraging self-reliance projects. If people's skills are improved, they can find new ways to earn an income and be able to compete in the market. Such investments are important for long-term economic stability. Second, another important aspect is Women's economic participation and social inclusion. Income generation programs for women not only support the household economy, but are also fundamental for the development of society. Utilizing women's capabilities, providing them with small business capital, and raising social awareness lead to women becoming economically independent and increasing household resilience to poverty. Third, the government should pay serious attention to the development of Agriculture and Livestock Development and Food Security because most Afghan families depend on agriculture. Integration of agriculture with other professions, innovative techniques in agriculture, livestock development programs, and ensuring food security are among the important tasks of the government. Food security guarantees that families are protected from the risk of hunger and malnutrition and, accordingly, the need for migration is reduced. Fourth, Business Support and Economic Growth Programs includes supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, building business networks, tax exemptions, and economic subsidies. These measures lead to people starting businesses in an innovative way and finding new opportunities for economic stability. Strengthening small businesses not only increases household income, but also expands employment

opportunities for the entire country. Fifth, the government can use public awareness programs to promote economic development among households, such as education on financial management, capital accumulation, and effective use of resources. In addition, the management of Zakat and Waqf resources is an important mechanism for supporting the poor. If these resources are used effectively, poverty in the community will be fundamentally reduced and the quality of life of the people will be improved. To reduce poverty in Afghanistan, the government should prioritize skills training and capacity building so that people can generate income. Loans and tax breaks are needed to support small and medium-sized businesses. Women's economic participation is increased through special programs, and the creation of business networks provides opportunities for joint projects. Agriculture and livestock development is carried out through new technologies and improved seeds. Food security, tax reduction, and subsidy programs reduce economic stress. Public awareness programs provide information on economic development. These measures reduce poverty and improve the quality of life.

The study results indicate that the role of the Afghan government in poverty reduction is important in several areas, such as skills training, capacity building, women's economic participation, agricultural development, and public awareness programs. The results emphasize that learning sewing, handicrafts, and agricultural skills can increase household incomes and strengthen their economic independence. Special business programs and loan schemes for women are effective in strengthening the household economy. In addition, the use of improved seeds, vaccines, and modern technology is essential for the development of agriculture and livestock, which will bring positive changes in food security. The results also recommend that specific training programs be developed for the unemployed according to market needs to increase their employment opportunities. However, the implementation of these programs faces challenges, such as lack of infrastructure, low quality of training, and the existence of cultural barriers that particularly affect women's economic participation. In light of human capital theory, these results demonstrate that skills training and women's participation are fundamental to the economic stability of households.

5. CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the study, it can be concluded that household economic measures play a special role in reducing poverty, but the government needs to make more efforts in this area. Also, it is clear that with the help of the government and NGOs, household economic measures will be better implemented. In addition, household economic measures will give people the opportunity to improve their lives. The role of the government in reducing poverty in Afghanistan is vital through household economic measures. The government should encourage and support households to participate in their professions in addition to agriculture. Families should be made aware of the importance of self-sufficiency and self-employment. Household economists and governments should encourage cooperation between households so that they can participate in small businesses together. NGOs should participate in institutional programs to reduce poverty. The government should encourage Household economics professionals to use their professional skills to teach about poverty reduction and community empowerment. Household economics practices may vary across different cultural and regional contexts in Afghanistan. Research can examine how these practices fit with local customs, traditions, and the economic needs of different communities, in order to design more specific and appropriate interventions.

6. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Encourage family participation beyond agriculture, promoting diverse home-based professions.
- 2) Raise awareness on self-sufficiency and self-employment through public campaigns.
- 3) Support collaboration among households for joint small business ventures.
- 4) Involve NGOs in structured poverty-reduction programs.
- 5) Mobilize home economics professionals for community training and awareness.
- 6) Conduct region-specific research to align strategies with local traditions and needs.

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