



Obstacles to Home Economic Growth in Laghman Province

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ABSTRACT

It is crucial to create a foundation and pave the way for the development and growth of a region's home economics; unfortunately, there has not been enough work to do so for the growth of home economics in Afghanistan, particularly in Laghman Province. This research aims to identify the current obstacles to the home economic growth of Laghman Province. The selected population of this research is the people living in Laghman Province, among whom the data has been collected from economists, employees, and common people through a structured interview developed by the researcher, for content validity, authorized by Laghman University's central research committee's professional board. Taking the Saturation Point into account, a total of 20 interviews have been conducted. For the purpose of analyzing the collected data, the researcher has used the thematic analysis method. As a result, the researcher found that there are several interconnected obstacles to the growth of Laghman Province's home economics, which include educational, economic, infrastructural, and cultural dimensions. The identified list is consist of six major parts: Low levels of education, Lack of skills and expertise, Low salaries for officials, Lack of population control, Poor infrastructure in terms of quantity and quality, and high expenditures due to culture and traditional factors, So the policy maker should consider the mentioned obstacles to pave the road for sustainable development of Laghman Province home economics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since human stepped into this world till now, he has been dealing with economic problems, because human wants and needs are unlimited and the means and resources are limited; But there is still a class of people who have more resources than they need and also there is one another class of people who don't have enough essential and basic resources, such as food, cloth, house to survive, this class of people live in poverty which create home economic problem, and these people can belled poor, destitute and indigent. Also, as we witnessed due to an increase in population and scarcity of means, day by day, poverty and home economic problems is increasing in the world (Wahdat, 2022).

Poverty is a global concern that countries have been focusing for years to reducing it (Agola, 2014), Even with the current developments, still the world facing the problem of poverty, which poses a threat to everyone, especially those who live in rural areas (Shaiq, 2022), Three out of four poor people in developing countries live in rural areas (Pose & Hardy, 2015), Where residents do not have access to basic medical facilities and drinking water (FAOUN, 2013, And WHO, 2018). Statistics show that the majority of people on the planet were living in poverty in 2019: 85% of people lived on less than \$30 per day, two-thirds on less than \$10, and 10% on less than \$1.90 per day (severe poverty). When some countries are experiencing economic growth, the poor people of middle-income countries cannot get sufficient share of the increase capital of their country to get out of poverty (Max Roser, 2019 et al, B. Milanovic, 2016). Among the poorest nations in the world is Afghanistan, which is suffering from poverty, hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. Afghanistan which is a vulnerable country facing challenges and poverty; Although the government and international financial institutions have focused on reducing poverty, this phenomenon of poverty has increased over time (Brinkley, 2012, Donini, 2007, And Trani et al., 2016).

The findings of an American organization called "Gallop" show that due to increase in poverty in Afghanistan, 94% of the country's population suffers from their living conditions. Since 2001, the international community has made significant efforts to rebuild Afghanistan in education, health and other areas, but many challenges and problems still remain (Shaiq, 2022).

As Afghanistan is a backward and traditional country, most of its people live in rural areas, and the studies show that as compare to urban areas the poverty in rural areas is higher; In other words, four out of every five poor people live in rural areas, and the rural areas of Afghanistan are facing various economic, social, environmental and physical problems and challenges (Shaiq, 2021).

Furthermore, the poverty and housing situation is not the same between urban and rural communities, and poor housing exists in rural areas (Central Statistics Organization, 2014), Lack of food and shelter means a low standard of living and is considered a sign of multidimensional poverty (Shaiq, 2022). The Central Statistics Organization indicates that the national poverty rate in Afghanistan primarily relies on individuals residing in distant regions. (2022 Shaiq,).

The fact that poverty has multiple dimensions should not be forgotten. Throughout the years, numerous definitions of poverty have emerged (Abdulai & Shamshiry, 2014, Kanbur, 1990). Sen argued that income alone cannot be a core and basic need (Sen, 1999).

Recent studies have suggested that a one-dimensional approach is not effective in reducing poverty to help home economic growth and have emphasized the multi-faceted aspects and dimensions of poverty (Nolan & Whelan, 2010). Thus, the degree of well-being of people can be accurately assessed by taking into account elements and dimensions including the capacity to meet basic needs and the availability of medical and educational resources. (Lasso de & Urrutia, 2009).

The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) was created recently to account for the degree of deprivation and poverty. The World Bank claims that poverty is a glaring loss of affluence (Haughton & Khandker, 2009). However, poverty is a complex phenomenon that encompasses several factors, such as a lack of income and education, bad health, a low standard of living, low-quality employment and work, discrimination, societal pressure, and more. According to a 2016 study by the World Bank and the Afghan Ministry of Economy, the country's poverty rate rose from 36% in 2012 to 40% in 2014. The majority of the impoverished live in rural areas, and half of them are under the age of fifteen. Of them, 75.6% are illiterate. Trani, Kuhlberg, Cunnings, and Chakkal

(2016) have revealed that virtually all adults in Afghanistan suffer from at least one facet of poverty, and the poorest ethnic minority is characterized as those residing in rural regions, including women, the elderly, those of childbearing age, and mental disorders.

A UNICEF report states that in many regions of the country, the primary barriers to education are a lack of schools and inadequate transportation; fewer children attend school because of a long walk. Children find it difficult to get to school due to geographical obstacles, particularly in hilly regions. Only 48% of teachers have the bare minimum of academic credentials (an associate degree), so once kids do make it, they frequently receive a lesser quality education.

Educational attainment in Laghman Province is limited, with many individuals lacking basic literacy and numeracy skills. This deficiency restricts employment opportunities and hinders economic growth. A report by UNICEF highlights that a shortage of schools and insufficient transportation are major obstacles to education in some parts of the country, leading to fewer children attending school. (UNICEF 2017), Afghanistan has made great strides in improving access and enrollment in primary schools, but gains beyond this level of education have been limited. In 2016, out of a population of 34.66 million, more than 9.2 million Afghan youths and children were enrolled in school, representing a 9-fold growth since 2001. (World Bank aug.15.2018),

Afghanistan needs a major unfamiliar guidance to reach the full potential of its hardworking and intelligent people, since it ranks 168th out of 189 on the UNDP human advancement index. Afghanistan's economic progress has lagged more than 3% behind the nation's annual population growth, resulting in a new decline in GDP per capita. Food fragility affected 1.9 million people, and the percentage of persons in need increased from 36% to 55%. Working age Afghans make up one in four of the unemployed, and many of them own troubled businesses. While the number of organizations that are starting each year has been declining in recent years, the number of people searching for people with insufficient talents is growing remarkably consistently, with an active and under-educated population (UNDP, 2019). Asia is the largest continent in the World with 17 million square miles of area and the most populous continent with 3.8 billion people. The continent consists of 48 countries including India, China, Russia, Japan, and South Korea. The Continent is home to

economically developing countries, and many of the poorest countries' income depends on Agriculture and small trading systems. Afghanistan is the Poorest Country in Asia with \$549.39 per Capita (the year 2020) (Mohammadi2023).

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As in the field of Laghman Home economics there is lack of academic researches and as well as the government is seeking to identify the obstacles related to sustainable development of home economics of Laghman Province, So the researcher has conducted this study to fill the gap of knowledge and provide a guide to the policy maker to tackle the obstacles and accelerate the process of sustainable development of home economics in the region.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This study identifies the obstacles to home economic growth in Laghman province to inform policymakers, organizations, and stakeholders. By addressing these barriers, effective policies and programs can be developed to combat poverty and improve livelihoods. Additionally, it raises public awareness, encouraging collaboration with the government and organizations to tackle this issue collectively, help households to grow their economy. So the policy maker should consider the mentioned obstacles to pave the road for sustainable development of Laghman Province home economics.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study, which is conducted under the title of obstacles to the home economic growth in Laghman province, aims to reveal the obstacles which cause to avoid the home economic growth in the Laghman province.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the obstacles to the home economic growth in Laghman province?

2. METHODOLOGY

This research explores obstacles to home economic growth in Laghman province. The study is descriptive, focusing on identifying and explaining the barriers which causes home economic growth. It applies a qualitative approach to collect and

analyze data. To gather detailed information structured interviews were conducted. The research is applied in nature, aiming to solve practical life problems. The interview questions were designed by the researcher and validated by Laghman University Research Committee. Primary data was collected until reaching a saturation point with 20 respondents. The qualitative data collected was analyzed in the form of words, phrases, and sentences by using thematic analysis tool. In final the results were presented in paragraphs, highlighting frequency-based findings.

2.1 Research population and Area

This research investigates the obstacles faced by households in growing their home economics. The researcher is focusing on identifying barriers to home economic growth in Laghman province so; the research population includes people of Laghman, with the province as the study area. Data was collected from educated and professional individuals across five districts and the Mihterlam city through, structured interviews which were conducted to gather relevant information. The collected data was qualitatively analyzed to draw conclusions and suggestions.

2.2 Sampling technique

The convenience technique was used to collect the data from the respondents

2.3 Sample size

As collection of data from the entire population is heavy and difficult in term of resources and time (Masleh, 2022), In fact by taking the Saturation Point into account, a total of 20 interviews have been conducted with the people who have enough information about the subject matter, So the sample size is (20) respondents.

2.4 Data Collection Tool

As the research is qualitative in form of data and practical in nature, structured interview method was used for precise and effective data collection. In fact, the interview questions were prepared according to the political, economic, cultural, educational and social situations of Laghman province by quoting and deriving from previous articles and were asked from the respondents during a face-to-face interview. The content validity of the interview script has been approved by the professional board of the Central Research Committee of Laghman University.

2.5 Data Analysis Tool

As this research has been done qualitatively, the researcher has used the thematic analysis method to analyze the data. In the process of thematic analysis, the researcher has taken into account the analysis of different themes, the opinions received from the interviewees related to each theme were analyzed in terms of frequency and the results were obtained.

2.6 Data analysis

The research, conducted qualitatively, identified several political, economic, cultural, and educational obstacles to home economic growth in Laghman province. Among the many barriers, six major challenges were highlighted: lack of education, lack of skills and expertise, low salaries, uncontrolled population growth, weak infrastructure and high cultural costs. The most critical obstacle is the low level of education, which plays a vital role in strengthening household economics. Poor education often results from weak infrastructure, unqualified teachers, and limited resources. Interviews revealed that lack of education leads to fewer job opportunities, weak business development, limited enterprise creation, and uncontrolled population, all of which decrease family income and increase expenses. As a result, uneducated individuals struggle to fulfill their social and family responsibilities effectively. The findings confirm that lack of education is directly linked to poverty and the overall weakness of home economic growth in the province.

Table No 1; Low level of education

| No | Respondents' opinion | Respondents |
|----|--|--|
| 1 | Lack of education leads to unemployment | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 18, 19, 20 |
| 2 | Lack of education leads to lack of access to job opportunities | 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 15, 18, 19 |
| 3 | Lack of education causes non-invention of enterprises | 5, 9, 10, 12 |
| 4 | Lack of education prevent business expansion | 14, 15, 16 |
| 5 | Uneducated people are irresponsible and cannot properly fulfill their responsibility | 13, 14, 17 |
| 6 | Uneducated people do not control population | 6 |

Source: Interview Data

Besides the low level of education, another reason related to education is the lack of skills and expertise in one's profession, which gives helps obstacles to prevent home economic growth in Laghman province. How the lack of skills and expertise has become the obstacle to the economic growth, many answers were received from the respondents during the interview, among them: Lack of skills and expertise prevents them from getting a high ranking job, because the employees are not able to meet the need and requirement of the employers, which cause the weakness of income source and production. Lack of skills becomes a barrier to establish or develop one's own business, due to lack of expertise an individual cannot effectively perform his assigned duties, in addition lack of skills & expertise leads to low wages. It leads to low family income and become a barrier to home economic growth.

Table No. 2: Lack of skills and expertise

| No | Respondent's opinion | Respondents |
|----|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Because he can't get a high ranking job | 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20 |
| 2 | It reduce the level of production and weak the source of income | 1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16 |
| 3 | Can't expand your business | 8, 9, 16, 17, 20 |
| 4 | Can't have a good business | 6, 7, 9, 17, 20 |
| 5 | Due to lack of expertise, they can't effectively perform their jobs | 3, 9, 15, 16 |
| 6 | Working at low wages due to lack of expertise | 4, 13 |

Source: Interview Data

And also, another obstacle to home economics has been shown to be the payment of low salaries to government employees. After investigating, it became clear that the payment of low salaries to government employees especially in education sector become the obstacle to the home economic growth in the region that destroys the motivation of quality teaching and weak the level of education. The people who are employed in the mentioned sector, they are not receiving sufficient salaries to support their family and

cannot finance even their family's daily expenses, even their salaries cannot meet their basic needs such as shelter, food and clothing, so government employees are struggling to fulfill their daily life basic needs, and raise their living standards, but cannot do so due to lack of income. As a result, it can be said that the lack of wages is the obstacle to the home economic growth in the region.

Table No. 3: Low payment of salaries to government employees

| No | Respondent's opinion | Respondents |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Low payment discourages quality of teaching | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 |
| 2 | Low salaries cannot finance daily expenses | 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 |
| 3 | Even basic needs cannot be met | 4, 5, 10, 12, 14, 17, 20 |

Source: Interview Data

Another reason among the obstacles to home economic growth in Laghman Province is having many children (growth of population). The fact is that most of the parents of Laghman province are interested and love to have many children and are proud to have many sons, which cause them to remain poor. As to why having more children leads to prevent home economic growth, different answers have been received from the respondents. In the list of these answers, having many children causes an increase in the level of family expenses, which also reduces per capita income, along with this, it also reduces the level of education for many children; And as mentioned above, lack of education cause home economic growth; Which will affect the society negatively.

Table No. 4: Having more children (growth of population)

| No | Respondent's opinion | Respondents |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Having more children increases the cost | 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20 |
| 2 | Per capita income is falling | 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20 |
| 3 | Raising healthy children is hard work | 6, 11, 12, 16, 19 |

Source: Interview Dat

In addition to this, another factor is the lack of infrastructure projects and poor infrastructure in Laghman province, which has become the obstacle to the home economic growth in the region, and during the interview, it was emphasized and insisted by the interviewees. Poor infrastructure such as poor roads, inadequate health services and facilities, among others, stifles economic growth and development, and lack of access to markets. It leads to a decrease in productivity and an increase in expenditure that helps to prevent the home economic growth. Also, due to lack of infrastructure projects, most construction professors, engineers, managers, company owners, laborers, and other similar people are unemployed. This leads to a decrease in their income level and people, especially laborers and construction workers, are forced to work with very low wages and meet the basic needs of life. Therefore, the lack of infrastructure by the government leads to the backwardness of the society and lack of employment, which ultimately became the obstacle to the home economic growth.

Table No. 5: Lack of infrastructure projects by the government in Laghman Province

| No | Respondent's opinion | Respondents |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Poor infrastructure leads to reduce access to market | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14 |
| 2 | It leads to reduced productivity and increased costs | 2, 4, 8, 10, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 |
| 3 | With the lack of infrastructure projects, the unemployment rate increases | 2, 7, 13, 15, 16, 20 |
| 4 | People's income levels are decreasing | 2, 4, 15, 20 |
| 5 | As unemployment increases, they are forced to work for low wages | 3, 5, 6 |

Sources: Interview Data

Among the factors that affects the home economic growth in Laghman province; culture another factor that affects people's income in a negative way. As the people of Laghman have a rich culture, traditions and customs, it is very difficult to ignore them. Among the mentioned traditions, the non-stop wedding expenses such as Eid, Barati, Nowrozi,

wedding cake etc. which is done to force the groom's family for doing so, wasteful spending and extravagance against the Shari'ah in performing the rites of the dead, being ashamed of working because of having low education level and competing each other in luxury goods, which become the obstacles to savings, investment and entrepreneurship, and they are defined as obstacles to the home economic growth in this province.

Table No. 6: Cultural factors that affect the home economic growth

| No | Respondent's opinion | Respondents |
|----|---|---|
| 1 | Unnecessary expenses and extravagance in weddings | 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20 |
| 2 | Wasteful spending and extravagance against Shari'ah in performing the rites of the dead | 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 |
| 3 | They were ashamed to work because of low education | 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18 |
| 4 | Competition between families in luxury goods | 7, 10, 11, 19 |

Source: Interview Data

Note: The reasons mentioned above are closely related to each other, for example: lack of education leads to lack of skills and expertise, which leads to lack of job opportunities, as a result, causes deficiency in income levels. In addition, due to low salary scale in the education sector, professional and expert personnel avoid entering this sector, which further deteriorates the quality of education and causes education level remain weak, and population growth exacerbates all these problems by increasing demand for limited resources which affect the home economic growth in the region.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

This research has been done through primary data collected from the selected population of the study. During the research, 6 obstacles to the home economic growth were found, which are: low level of education, low skill and expertise, low wages (especially in the education sector), in population growth, Lack of infrastructure, and spending more on the basis of culture and traditions.

3.2 Discussion

This research confirms the results of the previous researches, different researches have been conducted by different researchers in different times and regions on the mentioned topic. Fewer factors have been shown. Similar and consistent results from (Barlas et al, 2022) it can be mentioned that this research was conducted under the title (Factors of poverty among urban families in Afghanistan), they show that the size of families and the number of illiterate family members have a positive effect on poverty which affect the home economic growth. In this study, two causes of poverty have been shown, one is the size of families (high population) and the other is lack of education or literacy, which supports the results of our research. Similar to (Mohammadi & Tayeb, 2023) the research findings show that education has a significant effect in reducing poverty Hakim and Kumar (2018) the article states that education, land and property ownership, access to infrastructure and civil services, money transfer facilities, geographic location, and development initiatives can help people reduce the risk for home economic growth. Similar to education and infrastructure, other factors have also been shown as the obstacles to the home economic growth. Also, more and less factors have been revealed in accordance with the research findings in the following studies: (Asghar Ali & Sajid Ali, 2018) the research shows that unemployment has a direct and positive relationship with poverty and home economic growth. According to (Miankhail, 2009): low level of education, weak government, political instability, backward industrial sector, lack or absence of land in rural areas, managerial incompetence, tax evasion, inflation, trade deficit, increasing unemployment, corruption, Unequal distribution of resources (lack of transparency and transparency in the distribution of resources), and various reasons, the lack of foreign investment, the rise of the inflation rate and the increase in population are the causes of poverty in Pakistan. is (Hyder & Sadiq, 2010), The study made the

following recommendations for reducing poverty and help home economic growth: providing higher education, increasing employment, educating family heads to plan for the number of family members (population control), developing the skills of family heads. To be able to use different ways of income, implementing the best and beneficial policies from the government and focusing on the quality of education. Nadeemullah (2012) the major causes of poverty which affect the home economic growth in Pakistan are lack of education, environmental issues (pollution, etc.), inadequate governance (corruption, political instability), feudalism (Maluk al-Tawaifi or Khani), war, inequality, natural disasters or events, poor government policies (policy making without awareness of the situation), economic weakness or collapse, corruption, materialism, large-scale imports, social hypocrisy, etc. (Addae-Korankye, 2014) in this study the causes of poverty in Africa, are corruption, weak governance, limited employment opportunities, poor and low use of land or no use at all, poor and weak infrastructure, poor water supply system etc...), under-utilization of resources, regional wars, endless political conflicts, weak policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are among the causes of poverty and home economic growth. Also, according to this study, poverty is caused by cultural and structural factors. (Baloyi, 2013) in his master's thesis, the causes of poverty and lack of home economics are lack of agriculture, lack of capital, weak education and training system, weak infrastructure, and moral backwardness. According to Dong et al. (2020) the study found that lack of education, medical issues, housing, wedding gifts, and caring for the elderly are still the main causes of poverty and home economic growth in China. (Jayakumar & Vincentsahayaraj, 2015) One of the main causes of poverty that affects home economics in India is the lack of productive work for the employable, i.e. those who have the ability and interest to work, as well as the delay in the implementation of policies and programs. which have been created for the development of rural areas. So, according to the researches of the above researchers, six causes of poverty that affects home economics in Laghman province have been revealed in this study, which were mentioned earlier. As the 6 obstacles mentioned in the research have been identified, the relevant authorities will consider these factors in policy-making to eliminate the barriers to the home economic growth in Laghman province.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This research has been done to reveal the obstacles to the home economic growth in Laghman province. The data was collected through structured interview method by getting a saturated point from (20) professionals and analyzed them qualitatively. The result shows that the obstacles have a strong relationship with each other. These obstacles include low level of education, low skills and expertise, low wages for employees, especially in the education sector, population growth, poor infrastructure, and increased costs based on culture and traditions.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings it is cleared that the obstacles to home economics are the above six, which will avoid the home economic growth in Laghman province, the following recommendations are made to eliminate the obstacles to the home economic growth:

1. The Ministry of Education is the guarantor of solving all problems, increase the level of education and improving its quality should be given the most attention.
2. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA) should plane to arrange the capacity building seminars for all governmental staff and in fact for teachers.
3. The Ministry of Education (MOE) is required to prepare a policy for teachers' salary increment, the salary level should be increased for teachers, so that it can help to meet the need of their lives and encouraging students to train and use every effort in their training.
4. The Ministry of Public Works (MOPW) is required to invest in transportation, water supply, health services and etc. to create job opportunities, for people and create training opportunities generation.

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