

Assessment of Poverty Determinants among the Rural Households of District Harnai, Balochistan:

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Abstract:

Balochistan is enlisted as one of the poorest areas in the world. Despite availability of rich natural resources and geographic importance, the majority population lives below poverty line. Harnai District is further marked in the bottom five Districts in terms of living condition and poverty. Although, the area has coal mines and other natural resources other than abundant water resources, but due to mismanagement and weak policy existence or its enforcement, the population is bound to live under poverty conditions with no hope of growth in prospect. Therefore, in order to suggest viable policy guidelines, it appears imperative for the study to highlight major determinants of poverty in District Harnai with elaborate statistics to support the inferences empirically. Therefore, the study was carried out by conducting a pragmatic survey of the area with a view to identify major problem areas in terms of economic or social determinants as well as identify grey areas in development of infrastructure/ institutions and highlight areas under deprivation. All these determinants are then put in to obtain a mosaic of determinants in order to obtain a wholesome picture of poverty condition in the area. Basing on which the policy measures are suggested to the major stakeholders at District, Provincial and National

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levels.

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Introduction:

Poverty is a term that encompasses various dimensions, in addition, there is no single way for measurement of poverty, thus the households are considered to be poor if the poverty line is somewhat higher than their income. (Adnan et al., 2015) (Stephen J et al. 2010).

Poverty is basically considered as the welfare's obvious dispossession of an individual or a household and the ones who have no adequate earnings or consumption to put themselves on a position that could be above some kind of abundant least level of comfort in the society (World Bank, 2000). Poverty is a phenomenon which is geographically diverse that is the poor masses are noticed to be settled in specific areas. (Olaf Erenstein et al 2009). "The living conditions which are unfavorable to the specific requirements of well-being, ease / relief, and economic development" (Elvidge et al. 2009).

Working to reduce poverty level as a process including main factors in public, popular approaches, national institutes along with financial enhancement, minimizing disparity and lessening poverty growth (see Lane & Ersson, 1997, p. 190; Todaro, 1985).

Researchers reported that in developing countries not only producers but users are also benefited by better fertilization and agriculture methods, at the other hand at the same time many rural areas with much population had been ignored (Freebairn, 1995; Pachico et al., 2000; Evenson and Gollin, 2003).

Several studies show that when geographically rural, small and bypassed areas are targeted and paid attention the spending of administrations working there remains useful and the actual neglected poor is addressed more efficiently (Baker and Grosh, 1994; Bigman and Fofack, 2000; Elbers et al., 2004).

By making better travel paths and establishing different common facilities, money and time can be secured (Glenn et al. 2005).

It is very essential to look in to different factors deeply causing poverty so that the environment can be protected by its bad influence (Bourguignon

and Chakravarty, 2003).

Conclusively, unidimensional based assessment of poverty is generally argued with in the contemporary research works. In rural areas source of income is only not enough to explain possible draw backs of poverty in developing countries. Sen (1999) Reported that only income of a person cannot explain or reflect its poverty conditions, health, and food and life security should also be considered. Here, poverty is considered as an issue of competence disappointment and also as a means of deprivation of human needs (Chakravarty, 2008).

Alkire and Foster (2008) have the credit to develop the Multidimensional poverty assessments. The argument is further raised by Atkinson (2003) stating that the factors that because poverty cannot be included in the income poverty.

Baulch and Masset (2003) argue that in a single dimension, the various dimensions of poverty cannot be presented conventionally. Bibi (2004) assessed the results of poverty data of household expenses as an alternate income shortage and rooms in a house as a substitute of deprivation of accommodation. The measure of multidimensional sustainable life was assessed by Beranger and Chouchane (2007) using the Standard of Living (SL) and Quality of Living (QL) indices. In 2010, UNDP (2010) used and suggested the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) that identifies a new league of issues of poverty. Thus, in order to comprehend the problems of poverty as a whole, it is imperative to have known the different dimensions of poverty in depth and breadth

There are many sources that are playing its role to become the cause of poverty that is insufficiencies in the management of revenue assistance, inequality of the social and economic mechanisms. If the system of social security is switched to the socioeconomic system that can to a great extent get us the eradication of poverty. (M.A Bhatti et al.19999).

Another issue that has been kept ignored in the analysis and assessment of poverty is the performance of geographic designs and procedures in the welfare outcomes. An area that has great standards of living normally has extensive impacts on those other areas that fall near to it and mutually cluster. Well-off societies and houses produce welfare in their fellow citizen through dispersion of modernizations, social investment, trade, financial

prudence of measure and other dynamics associated to closeness and spatial collaboration. In contrast to this, the reports suggest that normally the poor land plots will be neighbored by the poor land plots. There will always be little chances of integration and trade for the poverty hit societies and the areas that fall in their neighboring. (Glenn et al 2005).

The problem of poverty was more unforgiving in the geographical regions that are considered rural than the urban, which is because of many reasons that are the growth of agricultural inharmoniousness of agriculture, inadequacy of marketplaces, insufficient and feeble network of inter and intra city streets and highways, etc. (Attaullah Khan et al 2011).

The topographical dissimilarity in the prevalence and scale of poverty is usually owing to the spatial elements, e.g. natural resources and access to amenities like such as health and education (Henninger & Snel, 2002). From a terrestrial and chronological viewpoint, the exploration and understanding of poverty is, hence, a valueless contribution with respect to the arguments regarding the causes of poverty, and the measurements needed in order to restrain poverty (Olaf Erenstein et al 2009)

Poverty alleviation is included as part of the seventeen SDGs that end up to 2030. Therefore, it assumes a combined effort for substantial progress in ending poverty and all of its contributing factors is still a huge contest for the global communities. Surprisingly, the estimates of poverty have dropped from 1990 to 2015, but still the poor are striving to enter the middle class bracket and receive basic needs.

Internationally, nearly 8 billion people earn around \$1.25 per day, while still most of them cannot access sufficient diet, sanitation and clean water. The rocketing economic growth in developing states like India and China has uplifted the living standards of a large number of populace; however, the process is not very even. The most affected lot comes out of women, who are still expected to live under poverty because of disproportionate reach to work, education and health.

Poverty has remained one of the considerable and major issues of Pakistan

from the time it emerged on the world map. Along with the increase in the overall population of Pakistan a continuous rise has been noticed in the strength / quantity of the poor due to which this issue has now become an uncontrollable phenomenon. The majority of the people belonging particularly to the rural areas of Pakistan wretchedly live their lives below the poverty line. Moreover, the sources that represent the socio-economic and demo-graphic scales are depressing. Although the economy prevailing in the markets, the governmental and non-governmental organizations have worked to eradicate or mitigate poverty but all these have remained unsuccessful to diminish the poverty. The strategies framed to exterminate poverty have not remained successful to reach their goals. This is because poverty and sustainable development are importantly inter-related in Pakistan.

If the poverty of Pakistan is calculated and presented in %age, Balochistan is at the peak as compared to other provinces of Pakistan. Instead of presenting one-dimensional poverty reports it is strongly required to make good and effective policies with valid calculation multidimensional poverty in order to reduce poverty (Attaullah Khan et al). According to a multidimensional poverty based report Balochistan was the only province with highest poverty rate not only in rural but urban areas too in 2007-2008. With the passage of time poverty situation in Balochistan became more sensitive and severe. In every province the highest poverty ratio is observed specially in country side areas, townships and small cities (Haroon Jamal 2005).

Problem Statement:

The general condition reported about poverty presented that nearly half of the Baluchistan's population live under the poverty line with slight difference as compared to KPK and Sindh (Syed Manzar Abbas Zaidi 2010). While Poverty reduction from different aspects remained one of the positive purposes of human being, it is imperative for us to understand the type of poverty and the factors causing poverty. In this backdrop, our abilities must be advanced to design a map of database and to observe factors in order to produce better and effective policies. To this end, there rises a need to accumulate required data by door to door survey which is both resource and time consuming. Hence the main problem for designing

rules to eliminate poverty is the estimation about the poverty level of main as well as side areas. Thus precise calculations of side area poverty level are necessary for main government and local policy designers to find most precise and current information about socio-economic condition.

Research Objective:

To analyses the socio-economic profile of District Harnai with a view to identify poverty determinants affecting rural households and suggest policy measures for poverty reduction in study area.

Research Plan and Methodology:

Since the research merely focuses on identification of poverty indicators and determinants, the research may be categorized as ‘Descriptive and Exploratory Research’. The research is designed as a ‘Quantitative Research’ as the assessment of determinants of poverty, development of indices and the methodology involve the quantitative analysis techniques.

The study scanned the factors influencing poverty in the rural households of Harnai District, using the primary data and multistage random sampling technique.

Socio-economic Profile of Harnai District:

Area-wise district Harnai is the 3rd smallest district of Balochistan and has an area of 3,075 square kilometers, Harnai district lies between 67°13'12"-68°24'34" East longitudes and 29°41'59"-30°23'2" North latitudes consisting of 2 Tehsils and 6 Union Councils. Location of Harnai is at 630 km (aerial distance) south-east (232 degrees bearing) of Pakistan's Capital City Islamabad and 90 km north-west (97 degrees bearing) from Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan. Harnai was separated from Sibi and got district status in 2007. The name Harnai originates from an influential Hindu personality named Harnam Das Harnai. Harnai is also the name of an important town in the district. The district shares its boundaries with district Mastung and Quetta (the provincial capital of Balochistan), in the west and Loralai in the east. In south-west is the District of Sibi while on the North is Ziarat. Harnai has been very significant due to its strategic geographical location. The district is encircled by mountains, having resounding names, Khalifat and Zarghoon. The terrain elevation varies from 192 to 3,545 meters above MSL.

The dominated tribe of District Harnai is Tareen. Majority of the population

is Pushtoon and Afghans, which belongs to Tareen tribe. Baloch tribes that live in the area are Marris and Sailachis. The major language spoken in the district is known as Tareeno, which is different in dialect from Pushto, spoken in most parts of the province. There are a large number of heterogeneous groups. The Abdullani, Khadrani, Aspani, Miani, Shaikh, Waraisi, Maraizai and Bazani etc are the minority tribes.

According to the reports of the P.P.A.F and World Bank Harnai is one of the three districts of Balochistan that are in the extreme poverty zone-1. Despite numerous potentials available in Harnai which can be converted into a massive source of earning and livelihood such as the cultivation and fertilization friendly climate of the district, the natural resources, water availability, agriculture, poultry and farming, Harnai textile mill, reservoirs, proximity to business markets like Quetta, Sibi and Punjab, the coal mines, most of the population of the district is yet below poverty level.

According to ranking by Child Well Being Index, Harnai has 26 positions among 30 districts. In rural areas, the male and female children usually help their families in fodder cutting, collection of wood and bushes. Whereas, girls are exclusively engaged in household activities, water fetching, cleaning the house and doing embroidery work.

Results:

The number of total Household members in the district is put into four groups. The analysis of the data confirms that 69.5% of the Households consisted of the family size below ten, while 26.5% of the families consisted of the family size ranging from 11 to 20 persons where most of the House Hold Heads (68.7%) were aging from 31 to 60 years, 10.7% of the Heads were aging to above 60 years, who are considered too old (**see Table 1**). Age of the House Hold Head (the respondents) is separated into three groups. The analysis of the data confirms that 26.6% of the House Hold Heads were young that is below 30 years, while most of the Heads (68.7%) were aging from 31 to 60 years, 10.7% of the Heads were aging to above 60 years, who are considered too old (**see Table 1**).

Poverty Determinants:

Among various other factors the most common and pronounced determinants of Poverty which are identified worldwide have been taken into consideration for this research. The determinants are as under.

Women Empowerment.

Natural Resources and Environment.

Economic.

Social.

Institutions and Infrastructure.

Deprivation.

Women Empowerment

There are many hindrances in women empowerment in the rural areas such as socio-economic and cultural values, norms, and patriarchal structure of society etc. It has been researched that the households where women have higher decision making authority are better-off and in other words women empowerment is likely to reduce poverty and increase household wellbeing (Khan et 2016).

In case of District Harnai, no significant female employment was observed during the study. **Table 1** below shows the overall percentage of the female household members. In this study the female members of the households have been grouped into four categories i.e. below 5, 6-10, 11-15 and more than 15. The study results show that only 69.5% of the households had less than 5 female members and 26.5% of the households had 6-10 female members. 3.1% households had 11-15 female members whereas 1.5% households had 15 or more female members. With an appreciable strength of female members per household, yet the women are unable to contribute to the overall income of house as they remain ill equipped, unskilled and uneducated.

The **Table 1** below illustrates the gender of the Household head which says that 97.7% of the Household heads were male whereas the remaining 2.3% of the families were headed by females. Hence, the rural population in area also lacks female decision makers of household.

Natural Resources and Environment

The interface between environment and poverty is a complex phenomenon. Poverty reduction needs will be enabled if the poor are allowed access to

natural capital, such as land, water, forest and minerals in order to produce economic goods and marine resources. In the absence of properly calibrated distribution and use of natural resources population growth may further aggravate the situation (Amita Shah, 2003).

The area is rich with natural resources like coal and falls under regular monsoon zone where seasonal rains irrigate the land holdings of local population. But both the resources require initial capital for investment and development, whereas the economic condition of rural population does not meet the basic necessities. It can be seen in Table-1 that above 40 % of workers has farming experience of more than 40 years. However due to unavailability of farming land and its higher cost the workers usually employ as peasants. Similarly, the natural environment supports livestock breeding as can be seen that more than 56 % population associates with livestock however the households having more than 15 livestock commodities is almost negligible number in all categories as given in the **Tables-1** below.

Economic:

The determinants and characteristics of different economic statuses help to identify the factors which increase individuals risk and vulnerability. It has been observed through many empirical studies that different individuals and households within an economic group have almost the same type of characteristics (Hulme and Shepherd 2003).

Nearly 50% of the households in rural Harnai incur monthly expenses ranging from Rs 11,000-20,000 as shown in **Tables-1**. However, in more than 96 % cases the earning members of the family are less than 5 members and almost all comprising from male gender (**see Table-1**). Interestingly, the households are managing to earn an income of up to Rs 20,000 as shown in the **Table-1**. However, the middle bracket of Rs 21,000-30,000 shows a negligible growth in economic condition and presents a huge gap as compared to the highest bracket of Rs 30,000 and above income (**see Table-1**). Similarly, only 4 % of the households have bank deposits or remittances (**Table-1**), showing miserable condition of capitals. Hence, the earning and expense ratio shows that the households are living hand to mouth with

meager chances of economic growth unless intervened by external resources.

Social

Social conditions such as health, nutrition, education and housing influence the productivity, thus affecting poverty status. These in turn are influenced by poverty, affecting the ability of households to gain access to adequate social conditions to improve productivity (FAO 2002).

Social condition as related to economic has further contributed towards poverty. The centrifugal tribal practices contribute very less towards the income rather bear heavy expenses in terms of dowry when it comes to marriages or funerals for that matter or the costs involved in tribal resolutions of conflicts etc. **Table-1** shows the expenditure incurred on social liabilities where 58 % of households are liable to expend on social formalities. Likewise, there is less than 10 % of investment in the form of jewelries with female members, which shows lesser social security to women in case of divorce or widows (**see Table-1**).

Institutions and Infrastructure:

Infrastructure development, poverty reduction and employment creation are linked. Investing in infrastructure creates income opportunities and generates jobs. Directly as employment can be created during the construction and maintenance of infrastructure by using labour-based methods. An increased use of local resources (labour and materials) in addition will have backward and forward linkages further stimulating the local economy. Indirectly, as the assets created they will improve access to income and employment opportunities (ILO, 2014).

In modern economy, the development is considered as a key indicator to the economic growth. The area is overlooked in terms of institutional or infrastructure development. The **Table-1** below shows the nature of employment by workers. Agriculture, though subsistent, remains the second most popular employment which is 22 % after the waged labour 37%. Government employments or other jobs remain under the unemployed

status of 18% which shows poor institutional development in the area.
Deprivation

Measures of deprivation are not the same as measures of income, rather they relate to how people live. Deprivation is the consequence of a lack of income and other resources, which cumulatively can be seen as living in poverty. The relative deprivation approach to poverty examines the indicators of deprivation, which are then related back to income levels and resources (Townsend P, 1979).

The households in Harnai are living in a deprived environment as seen from given data. For instance, agriculture being the major employment area still remains subsistent because basic modern equipment like water pumps or agriculture machinery remain unavailable to the workers (**see Table-1**). Similarly, in the absence of basic health facilities by the government, the population is totally dependent on bearing healthcare and medical treatment expenses (**see Table-1**).

Table – 1

S.No.	Socio-economic / Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1	The Age of the Household Head <30 Years 31 to 60 Years >60 Years Total	27 90 14 131	20.6 68.7 10.7 100.0
2	The Gender of the Household Head Male Female Total	128 3 131	97.7 23 100.0
3	The Education of the Household Head Illiterate Literate (Grade 1-5) High School (Grade 6-10) College or University Total	92 12 18 9 131	70.2 9.2 13.7 6.9 100.0
4	Major Occupation of the HHD Head Agriculture	29 49 12	22.1 37.4 9.2

	Wage labor Employment Imamat Others Nill Total	1 16 24 131	0.8 12.2 18.3 100.0
5	The Number of Total Household Members <10 11-20 21-30 >30 Total	91 34 5 1 131	69.5 26.5 3.0 .8 100
6	The Number of Female Household Members <5 6-10 11-15 >15 Total	91 34 4 2 131	69.5 26.5 3.1 1.5 100.0
7	Farming Experience <10 Years 11-20 21-30 31-40 >40 Total	39 2 3 9 53 131	29.8 1.5 2.3 6.9 40.5 100
8	Live Stock Owned Yes	57 74	43.5 56.5

	No	131	100.0
	Total		
	Number of	128	97.7
	Total Cattle	3	2.3
	Owned	0	0
	<5	131	100
	6-10		
	>10	123	93.9
	Total	7	5.3
	Number of	1	0.8
	Total Sheep	131	1000
	Owned		
	<5	114	87.0
	6-10	10	7.6
	11-15	5	3.8
	Total	2	1.5
	Number of	131	100.0
	Total Goats		
	Owned	115	87.8
	<5	7	5.3
	6-10	2	1.5
	11-15	7	5.3
	>15	131	100.0
	Total		
	Number of		
	Total Poultry		
	Owned		
	<5		
	6-10		
	11-15		
	>15		
	Total		
9	Total Monthly		
	Income from	43	32.8
	all Sources	49	37.4

	<10000 Rupees 11000-20000 21000-30000 >30000 Total	8 31 131	6.1 23.7 100.0
10	Remittances Received Yes No Total	125 6 131	95.4 4.6 100.0
11	Total Number of Earning Members < 5 6-10 >10 Total	127 4 0 131	96.9 3.1 0 100.0
12	The Expenditure of the HHD per Month <10000 11000-20000 21000-30000 >30000 Total	12 65 28 26 131	9.2 49.6 21.4 19.8 100.0
13	Expenditure on Family Social Liabilities Yes No Total	76 55 131	58.0 42.0 100.0
14	Expenditure on Medical	0	0

	Treatment etc	131	100.0
	No	131	100.0
	Yes		
	Total		
15	Bank Deposits		
	No	120	91.6
	Yes	11	8.4
	Total	131	100.0
16	Jewelry		
	No	119	90.8
	Yes	12	9.2
	Total	131	100.0
17	Having Water Pump		
	No	128	97.7
	Yes	3	2.3
	Total	131	100.0
18	Having Agricultural Machinery		
	No	121	92.4
	Yes	10	7.6
	Total	131	100.0

Policy on Poverty Alleviation:

From already conducted studies and probed conclusions & findings multiple kinds of policy measures can be derived. It is reported that the strategies suggested for poverty mitigation shall be specific to the areas and dimension fixated, keeping in view all the profile specifications of the individual poverty event, gravity, rigorousness and the per cent influence to combined poverty. Furthermore, rules/laws governing dynamic poverty alleviation will serve even effective in the transmission of the results of economic growth to those who fall below poverty line. In this way poverty

can be reduced specially in Sindh and Balochistan rural areas. By applying such policies poverty reduction target can be achieved to some extent. (Attaullah Khan et al).

In order to engage with the issues raised quantitatively in this report in a way which links analysis to potential strategies for more effective poverty eradication, we need to establish an analytic framework which links the conditions of poor people to their aspirations for improved and more secure livelihoods, and to a progressive agenda for the country's duty bearers. In a sense, normatively, this is a plea for a new political settlement in Pakistan which reforms the present dysfunctional welfare regime towards a more inclusive strategy for social policy. (PPAF 2008).

To form a good map in order to secure the food for those who fall below poverty line researchers, stakeholders and those who make policies need to have good cooperation and participation among them (Glenn et al 2005). Different systems such as GIS, SAE working for the alleviation of poverty are summing up all the poverty causing factors at a broad spectrum in order to assess them. (Deichmann, 1999; Stoorvogel et al., 2004). For example, after assessment of different types of factors, good services and helpful maps are designed which are helpful to measure unknown far distance and making the targets approachable (Higgs and White, 2000).

Balochistan Specific Policies

Along with the intensity of Poverty in Pakistan as a whole, Balochistan is the province that is most severely hit by Poverty most particularly the rural of it. (M. A. Bhatti et al. 1999). If the poverty of Pakistan is calculated and presented in %age, Balochistan is at the peak as compared to other provinces of Pakistan. Instead of presenting one-dimensional poverty reports it is strongly required to make good and effective policies with valid calculation multidimensional poverty in order to reduce poverty (Attaullah Khan et al). According to a multidimensional poverty based report Balochistan was the only province with highest poverty rate not only in rural but urban areas too in 2007-2008. With the passage of time poverty situation in Balochistan became more sensitive and severe. The similar observations have been noticed by Cheema (2005). The most severe occurrence of multi-dimensional poverty was identified within Balochistan that comes to below 50% (Attaullah Khan et al). The poverty incidence in small cities and towns,

barring Balochistan rural areas, is the highest in all provinces. (Haroon Jamal 2005)

Suggested Policy Measures:

This study explores a number of factors determining rural household poverty in Harnai district as a case study. It is empirically studied that socioeconomic empowerment reduces the household poverty; government should develop the policies which enhance the socioeconomic empowerment of rural households. In the recent policy options for reducing rural household poverty a variety of the options have been offered by the government.

One of them was the implementation of usher and zakat system. The other was the electrification and infrastructure development of the rural area (five-point program). Similarly, the subsidized construction of drainage system and streets was one of such type of programs. Recently the biogas subsidy and green tractor schemes have been introduced. Our results support the notion that socioeconomic empowerment of the rural households is needed not only to eliminate rural household poverty but proper implementation of all above mentioned schemes. It may have spillover effects like proper implementation of rural support programs and rural health schemes. The socioeconomic empowerment may be increased through education, training and awareness at the grass root level. In the presence of basic democratic system and local government, the union councils, tehsil councils and district councils may be helpful for enhancing the rural household's empowerment. These policy options can successfully work in the long run provided that implementation of these policies is consistently pursued.

The study concludes that remittances have played an enviable role in reducing rural household poverty. An important policy recommendation is in connection may be that government should focus on the income from remittances.

Study significantly accepts the general belief that an increase in female to male ratio in the household increases household poverty. Head of household who has agriculture occupation increases the probability of being poor. Household size also increases household poverty. Study strongly recommends policy makers to increase employment opportunities for rural

households. This policy is supported by the results of positive impact of remittances on poverty reduction, negative impact of the variables like household employed in only agriculture, the female to male ratio and finally the household size. From these results it may be conferred that more employment opportunities should be provided to the rural labor force other than agriculture. One of the options may be small scale industry. It will increase the productivity of the workers and eliminate the disguised unemployment.

Conclusion:

Poverty is a multivariable phenomenon which diversifies complicatedly from area to area. In this manner a generalized policy stand by government may not suffice to alleviate its precedence from the study area. Hence, a comprehensive assessment of the determinants of poverty in each district or tehsil level may provide a subjective map to prescribe policy solutions for each area separately. Thus, not only involving the local communities in the policy development but also utilizing the full potential of the community resources to address the issue. While the problem radiates multiple strands of related challenges, the solution still lies in the identification of determinants and recommendation of correct measures to address the anomaly hence resulting into reasonable reduction in poverty level of Harnai.

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