

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND REDUCING HOUSEHOLD POVERTY: NANGARAHAR PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN

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Received: 20 March, 2024

Revised: 20 April, 2024

Accepted: 01 May, 2024

Published: 18 May, 2024

ABSTRACT

The main aim of the study was to identify various income generating activities of women in the area of Nangrahar province, Afghanistan. The study also aims to assess the contribution of women into their household income and to identify various socio economics problem faced by women while engaged in their income generating activities. For this purpose, primary data was collected from a sample of eighty households. It was found that people of the research area were quite rigid and traditionally bound and mostly women were thus not allowed to work outside their home, due to cultural and religious constraints, still women were contributing sufficiently in their household income besides performing their household chores. The study also found that in most cases decision made by males rather than females. They were of the view that their financial contribution was a key factor in strengthening their economics status, social contacts, saving and decision making power. It is therefore, recommended that more educational facilities in general be provided in the study area which may help in allowing women to be involved on larger scale in income generating activities that they doing in present. The study also recommended that women organization should be formed and training facilities should be provided to women so that they could be involved in a better way in income generating activities. It is also suggested that credit facilities be provided to women to improve their socio economics condition.

Keywords: women empowerment, poverty reduction, income generating activities, household poverty.

INTRODUCTION

Giving someone the ability and authority to make decisions in every area of their life, household, economic, social, political, is a definition of empowerment. One tool for reducing poverty is the empowerment of women (Nadim & Nurlukman (2017).), People living below the poverty the microfinance institutions (MFIs) provides the opportunities for them. Poor women's families are especially supported by these institutions, and as results the poverty is decreased when poor households are given access to financing and encouragement. It is asserted that microfinance institutions have a direct impact on household income through promoting productivity, broadening the range of output and productivity, and making the best use of the resources at hand. (Bent, B. B.

(2019).) In order to support women's rights, give them control over their lives, and allow them to have an impact on society, women's economic contributions and empowerment are essential. Women's economic empowerment can lead to sustainable development. Gender equality and empowered women take the lead in scaling up development initiatives (Tiwari & Malati (2023).), One essential element of social and economic advances is the investment in human resources. A country's human resources must be properly utilised if it is to realise its maximum development potential. Nowadays, it is commonly acknowledged that a nation must effectively utilise its human resources. When it comes to development and benefit distribution, both sexes can participate equally. The

human potential is drastically lost when women are excluded from equal participation in the population, which is typically composed of half males and half females. In the realm of development, the phrase "women empowerment" is now the most contentious. It is widely acknowledged that empowering women is crucial to achieving sustainable economic growth and reducing poverty in emerging nations. (Klasen1999), Unmistakably, the World Bank Policy Research Report indicates that women's empowerment is increasingly acknowledged as a crucial policy objective for enhancing not only the well-being of women but also the family unit. (King and Mason, 2001).

Empowerment is probably the totality of the following or similar capacities:

- Having positive thinking on the ability to make changes.
- Having decision making power of their own.
- Ability to learn skills for improving one's personal or group's power.
- Involving in the growth process and changes that is never ending and self-initiated.

Empowerment of women also called gender empowerment; it has become a significant topic of discussion in regards to development and economics. Gender empowerment is the process, and the outcome of the process, by which women challenges gender- based discrimination against women /men in all the institutions and structural of the society. The entire nation, business, communities, and groups can benefit from the implementation of programs and policies that adopt the nation of women empowerment. Empowerment is one of the main procedure concerns when addressing human rights and development. Women's empowerment has many aspects. It is an intricate and rising perception within advance literature. It has different cultural, religious, economic, social, personal, and psychological essentials. Women's empowerment has been defined in different ways by various writers. Women's empowerment is capacity to make choices i.e. choices about, number of children, mobility, employment, marriage, and standard of living. It entails wellbeing, access to resources, awareness-rising and control (UNICEF 1994). Is economics of women really substantial in today's male dominating world? Would it make a different if women are

placed in a significant position and participate in the decision making process just like their male companion? One of the answer is no, if it was a case of a few women the answer may be much positive, if a large number of women participate in nation in economic and political decision making process. Historically speaking, since the specialization period of seventeenth century the labor has not yet been in parity. Women are not represented in the government and leadership of the country.

Here we take an example of two families, family A contains only man's income while family B contain income of both men and women, comparing the living style and standard of both the families, family B is in better condition than family A because in family B the female members also earn, as a result their living standard is much better than the other one.

MAIN OBJECTIVES:

- To assess the extent of women participation in raising household level of income
- To see the impact of various income generating activities on their living standard.
- To identify the effect of women's earning activities in decision making process and attitude toward work
- To improve the participation of women in the decision making process especially issues related to the field of economics
- To analyze the effects of employed women on literacy rates among women.

HYPOTHESIS TO BE TESTED:

The following hypothesis is to be tested, it was assumed that:

- The most women are financially independent the most would be their decision making power and help in reducing poverty.
- There is low participation of women in economics decision making.
- Economic independence of women has a positive impact on the female literacy rate.

LITERATURE REVIEW

We will also review some relevant studies on empowerment of women and poverty reduction. In addition, valuable information on research may be

gained from the review of past studies. Some review of relevant studies is given below:

Rashid, A., & Kumar, P. A. (2023), Since microfinance has been successful in delivering financial services to underprivileged and impoverished individuals worldwide, it has attracted a lot of attention. Microfinance is an organisation that offers its clients instruction in business development together with financial services. to look into how the standard of living, health, and education of those who receive loans from microfinance institutions relate to the size of the loans themselves. To examine whether the magnitude of the loan amount predicts the three aspects of poverty mentioned above, an ex-post facto design was used. The significance of the number of years that a participant in the microfinance programme participated has been examined using analysis of variance. The results showed a favourable influence on the three aspects of poverty mentioned above.

Haque, S et al (2024), While their presence is essential to ensuring household food security, women in developing countries are frequently characterised by poorer social status, less participation in decision-making, lack of access to resources, and lesser mobility. examined the degree of household food security, the factors influencing it, and the relationships between food security and women's empowerment (WE) in Bangladeshi farming households using primary data gathered from 350 homes and the modified project-level women empowerment in Agriculture Index, a study demonstrates that in order to empower rural women to accomplish the SDGs on time and ensure food security, a workable policy is required, Wassie et al (2024) Since women are frequently the primary carers for their children, their empowerment may have an impact on the nutritional status of their offspring. However, little is known about how maternal empowerment affects Ethiopian children's nutritional health. A community-based cross-sectional study involving 582 mothers and their 6- to 59-month-old infants was carried out. A multiphase sampling method was employed to choose research participants. We examined whether women's empowerment and its characteristics were related to childhood stunting using binomial logistic regression analysis, according to the findings, there were 114 (19.6%), 312 (53.6%), and 156 (26.7%) participants who exhibited low, moderate, and high levels of empowerment, respectively. Furthermore, 255

mothers (43.8%) gave birth to stunted children, meaning that the children were too small for their age. This suggests that a higher level of women's empowerment was linked to a decreased risk of childhood stunting. The results point to the necessity of expanding the scope of child feeding programmes to include specific methods for empowering mothers in addition to examining the underlying causes of stunting, Irfan Shehzad (2015) stated that in Pakistan, recent events of earthquake, floods and rains have underscored the need for greater attention towards social protection issues especially for the most vulnerable, including women. "Benazir income support programme", as a main social safety, net programmed and its impact on women's empowerment in Pakistan a large number of women in interior parts of sindh and southern Punjab have been benefited from the program resulting in a rise in their consumption levels.

Takyi Harriet (2014) stated that economic roles and contribution that women play in reducing household poverty. It is clear that the low educational levels of most women in the country has contributed immensely in the most women finding jobs and employment in the informal sectors by engaging in petty businesses that are not adequately rewarding especially in monetary terms. Even with most women engaging in petty economic activities, most of the women engage in them as a means to use the meager returns to supplement family and household incomes, Sajid Khan (2013) viewed that Women particularly living in rural areas of Pakistan have limited access to information, education and health facilities and employment opportunities. Majority of fortunate women who have access to economic activities face different forms of exploitation at homes and in offices and at their workplaces. Men are seen to assert control on women's income and property. In such a scenario, can we say that poverty alleviation leads to women empowerment? It seems to be a tricky link in the context of Pakistan. Although there is an evidence that women's access to economic participation does play a role to enhance their empowerment, there are certain other factors also to be considered. Non-economic factors like socio-cultural conditions, misunderstood religious interpretation and political situation of the country does have significant influence to enhance or restrict women's empowerment, SSCHOLASTICA C. UKWOMA MISS AND EZII O. Njoku (2013) stated that Provision of information for all to embrace is a

timely Theme, empowering rural women is necessary especially as a popular saying has it that 'Train a woman you have trained a nation'. These women are industrious and eager to Work, assistance should be provided to enable them improve in their occupation. Though some government and NGOs are trying in providing assistance, but the government should intensify in his effort to provide assistance and encouragement to rural women that they will have a sense of belonging, Sayeda Nabahat et al (2014) The primary goal of the study was to investigate how microfinance affects women's empowerment by utilising concepts such as making decisions about borrowed funds, household expenses, social visits, and child-related matters. Married women, according to him, make more decisions for their homes. Women's capacity for making decisions increases with age. Living in a nuclear family gives women more influence than other family types. It was also determined that women gain power when the length of credit accepted grows, Niaz muhammad, et al (2010) They believed that women's empowerment is seen as a sin in Pukhtun society since they have their own set of rules known as "Pukhtunwali," and anything that goes against them is impossible. Nonetheless, women in Pakistan and other Asian nations now have a respectable amount of power due to the impact of rising educational rates. It doesn't mean that men have been side-lined; rather, it means that both sexes have begun to participate in all aspects of daily life, their research focuses on examining the different effects of women's empowerment, including family economics, decision-making and sharing, family dynamics, the education and socialisation of their children, and the recognition of gender discrimination in children, Ruslan & Hidayat (2024, January). The method used is experimental design research using qualitative and quantitative approaches to women entrepreneurs in the city of Medan using primary data in the form of interviews. This allows us to explore the potential of women entrepreneurs in the city with the approach of empowering women through training for female heads of impoverished families in order to increase the level of family income and provide academic policies to the Medan City Government in developing models of empowering poor women in entrepreneurship, The findings indicate that empowering women through training that is imaginative, creative, and based on social capital and

personal character for women heads of impoverished families is one way to address the issue of poverty in the city of Medan. Additionally, women entrepreneurs who also work as housewives can enhance their creative competency through the ability of social innovation in entrepreneurship to increase economic income, Lesmana, C. I. (2024). explains the required dangers that are observed in development finance micro sharia, such as credit traffic jams, fraud, and risk reputation. Effective risk management is now essential for business continuation. Making use of Islamic principles, waqf, and zakat potential is also essential. It is anticipated that inclusive and sustainable microfinance models will have a favourable effect on women's economic empowerment. With an inclusive and sustainable approach, it is envisaged that women will be able to significantly contribute to the reduction of poverty and the improvement of various societal strata in Indonesia, Adeleye (2024), Using Web of Science databases to search for relevant articles, a final sample of 1095 publications was extracted for this purpose. The study aims to present a bibliometric analysis of publications that focus on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, which aims to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." The study shows that studies on women's empowerment within the Sustainable Development Goals are becoming more and more important in both developed and developing countries of the world. It also offers an insight into the reality of scientific production on women's empowerment topics after the SDGs were adopted, with recommendations for their future development and support for policymakers in initiating relevant policies for women's empowerment, Paul, S. (2024). The World Bank reported that during 2006–07 to 2021–22, livelihood and microfinance initiatives for women in developing countries gained popularity as a means of enhancing women's economic rights through increased financial literacy, livelihood options, employment, and earning prospects. Longitudinal empirical studies on the impact of the Jeevika programme on women's empowerment and poverty alleviation are also rare due to data limitations. Secondary evidence suggested that the programme achieved a significant scale during the past ten years, and the average per-beneficiary implementation cost declined significantly because of the scale effect, You, W., et al (2024), The process of systematically eliminating deeply ingrained uneven power

structures is known as women's empowerment, which profoundly alters power relations. The findings suggest a development intervention and the critical front-line worker who facilitates empowerment by "nudging" GBC women borrowers to empower themselves. The findings draw on qualitative data from Grameen Bank China (GBC) and an inductive case study, asserting an empowering methodology based on preconditions for membership and three mechanisms through which traditional gendered hierarchical power relations shift: relational justice, self-governance, and repetitive praxis, Zhu, Y. et al (2024), The Taliban government has severely restricted women's access to education and employment, among other things. We investigated the relationship between women's education, employment, and household food security using data from the 2017 Afghanistan Food Security Survey (n = 5027 households). The results show that households with both men and women having a formal education were 50% more likely to have a diverse diet and were 52% more likely to be food secure than a household without any formal education. Reversing and censoring women's rights under the current regime is certain to worsen the already dire rates of food insecurity and to further impair the well-being of all Afghans.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the detail of methodology used to achieve required objectives of the Present study. Scientific methodology is basically a set of rules and procedures on which the foundation of research is laid down. This chapter will also provide background information with respect to the respondent and various incomes generating activities of the respondents.

METHODS:

The research methodology was based on data collection from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data sources were given prime consideration in the research process. questionnaire method was used as part of the study. Care was taken to ensure to design the questionnaire in a way which can be easily filled by the respondent, because of majority of women in the research area are illiterate so the questionnaire was conducted in interview mode with the flow of conversation determining the sequence of questions, rather than a dialogue determining the flow.

Population for the study

As the present study has been carried out in the Nangrahar province, Afghanistan, all women of age (18-48) and also includes girls living in the Nangrahar province, Afghanistan

Units of analysis

As this study is designed to assess the women's empowerment, so Sampling units or units of analysis or respondents for this study are all women of reproductive age (18-48), and also includes girls. Brief information about the socio-economics, respondents and various income generating activities prevailing are as follow:

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDANTS IN THE RESEARCH AREA:

The study focused on the role of women in various income generating activities in the Nangrahar province, Afghanistan .in the research area women are performing a variety of socio-economic activities, but their work can be divided into three broad categories

1. Household level
2. Farm level
3. Community level

As mother and house wife women are responsible for managing the household activities including child racing and chores which includes cooking, washing, food processing and cleaning etc.

As a farmer women are involved in wedding, livestock, and poultry rising etc.

Their household and farmer activities make them daily manager, supervisor and administrator of the area they reside. They contribute substantially to the household labor because their daily, weekly and seasonal activities within household, form and social organization activities evaluate the women's role in terms of economics value.

At the village, community level women's role is involved in ceremonies and rituals, e.g. birth and death etc. so it is always difficult to make generalization about the women role confined to a specific category. This fact can't be denied that the role of women in rural areas relates to a complete range of socio-economic activities. Women besides shouldering the burden of daily household and facing activities make a significant contribution in a number of other productions activities throughout the year.

DESCRIBING VARIOUS INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES OF SAMPLE AREA

By income generating activities we mean all those legal activities through which income is generated. On the sample area, women are actively involved in various income generating activities. these income generating activities are divided into two broad categories.

1. Farm activities
2. Off-farm activities

Farm activities

The main sources of income of male in sample area are agriculture. But employments of women in particular area were as wage labor it was rarely seen in the sample area. It was due to socio-cultural factor of the area. The purdah system was observed in the research area. As result, the women were restricted to perform their activities inside the house. But some old aged women were rarely seen in the research area that they performed and helped with their males in agriculture field.

Off-Farm Activities:

The major off-farm activities in which women are actively involved in the research area are as follow.

1. Livestock
2. Embroidery
3. Sewing

Livestock:

A lot of women were involved in livestock caring. Some of the important activities were maintenance of animals sheds, cleaning making during cakes and eggs hatching and poultry care, manure collection. these women were earning their income by selling milk and eggs in their close vicinity.

Embroidery:

The next important activity in the research area was embroidery. Almost a good number of women were having this activity as part time and full time income generating activities. Although there was no women’s organization or training centers in the research area to provide then raw material or skilled programs which they needed. Also there was no proper market to buy or to sell their product as result they getting lesser income as compared to tier work. Inspire of all these constraints women were constantly involved in embroidery, making clothes

and sheets etc, to reduce poverty and generate income for their selves.

Sewing:

These activities were also undertaking by the women as one of their income generating activities in the research area. At least in every third house one woman was involved in this activity. Some of the women were expected in stitching of clothes but due to lack of work opportunity they were involved only in sewing clothes for themselves, for children and for other family members.

Those women who were earning income through this activity, they were charging Rs 150-200 per suit, which is very lesser as compared to their work and also to the one of in urban area.

RESULTS AND ANALAYSIS

This chapter deals with the result of the study which was carried out and discuss the interpretation of the research findings on all aspects of the study. It further describes the various characteristics of the sample respondents.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were used to draw the relationship between such characteristics and their empowerment and economic role in reducing poverty. These were age, marital status, educational level and the number of household dependents.

THE AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE WOMEN INVOLVED IN THE STUDY IS SHOWN IN TABLE

Age influences every aspect of human life. It helps to determine output in terms of employment, fertility rates, retirement and benefit. It also enables the calculation of life expectancy rates and other important factors (Opoku-Yeboah, 2006).

Table :1 Ages of the respondent

Ages (years)	Frequency	Percentage
18-28	32	40.00
29-38	28	35.00
39-48	20	25.00
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey2024)

The same results shown in chart below

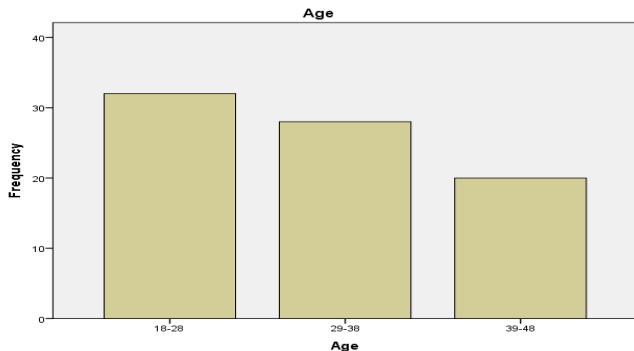


Table and chart indicates that 32 (40%) respondents were within the age range of 18-28 years, 28 (35%) were within 29-38 years, while 20 (25%) of them belonged to the age category of 39-48 years. Translating this into cumulative percentage terms, it is inferred that majority of the women were (75%) within the age range of 18-48 years which is still in the fertility stage and sexually active stages of life. and from age distribution we also know that in such a stage, if women become empowered they will contribute to the income of household head or to their husband income and will also reduce the household poverty, because the implication of such age distribution in the Nangrahar province, Afghanistan gives a strong signal of a greater possibility of more women giving birth to more children and may account for large families and larger number of dependents in a household.

MARITAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENT IN SAMPLE AREA

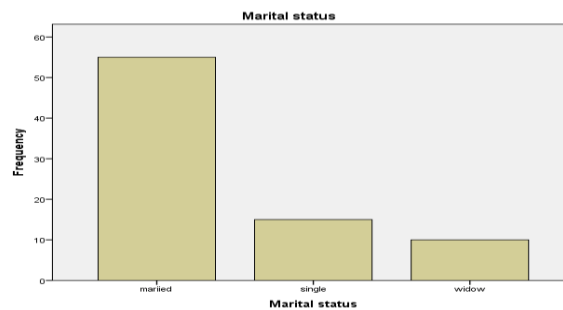
In a society largely influenced by traditions and norms relating to marriage, the marital variable was important for the study in identifying the household composition of the respondents.

Table:2 Marital status of the respondents

Marital status	frequency	Percentage
Married	55	68.75
Single	15	18.75
Widow	10	12.5
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



The study identified that (55), about 68.75% of the respondents were married, (15)18.75% were single, (10)12.5% were widowed. Essentially, the marital status of a woman in society is an important factor that influenced household member’s tendency to work and earn income and also influence the saving capacity of the household. In third world country, on the whole and particularly in the rural areas of Afghanistan like, Nangrahar province, Afghanistan early age marriages are quiet common and hence it easily be find numbers of child labours. Moreover, these early age marriages put an extra burden on the household’s economy. It was also seen in research area that women besides managing their daily household chores, these women were actively involved in various income generating activities.

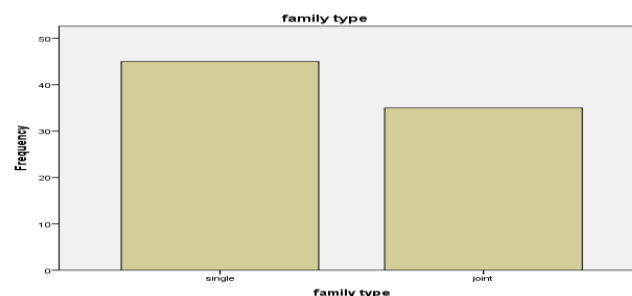
FAMILY TYPE OF THE RESPONDENTS IN SAMPLE AREA

Table :3 family type of the respondents

Family type	Frequency	Percentage
Single	45	56.25
Joint	35	43.75
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



The above table shows the family type of the respondents in sample area.

Family structure of the respondents shown in table 4.3 that I research area, 45(56.25%) of the

respondents were belong to single family system, while 35(43.75%) were lived in joint family system. The reason to live in single family system according to respondents was, that most of the household fall in poor groups and each one was supposed to take the responsibility of his family on his own shoulder and it was found that the families which were living in single family system were much more satisfied that those who were lived in joint family system.

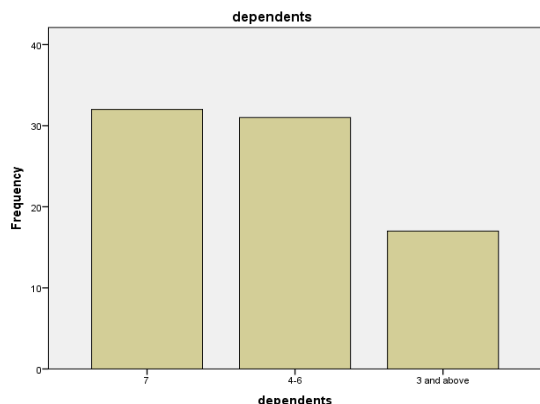
NUMBER OF DEPENDANTS IN THE REASEARCH AREA

Table:4 No. of dependents

No. of dependents	Frequency	Percentage
7	33	41.25
4-6	31	38.75
3 and below	16	20
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey2024)

The same results shown in chart below



On the issue of dependents, it was revealed that more than half of the respondents have to provide for the needs of at least four (4) dependents. Results from table 4.3 of the study indicated that 33 (41.25%) and 31 (38.75%) of the respondents have to take care of the needs of 4-6 dependents and seven (7) or more respectively. Only16 (20%) out of the eighty (80) respondents have to provide for the needs of three (3) dependents or less in a household. The effects of the high proportion of dependents in each household is that, it reduces the number of care-takers’ working hours since they have to spend much of their time in attending to the social, medical, and nutritional needs of these dependents. Majority of these dependents are usually the aged and also those who are too young who could hardly to take care of themselves. This high dependency burden is also effect the household

income by the fact that almost half of the women who earn income for the needs of the family have to spend on the number of the dependents and they could not save any income for the precautionary demand. And majority of women who are empowered and earns they have to serve those who are dependents.

EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS IN THE RESEARCH AREA

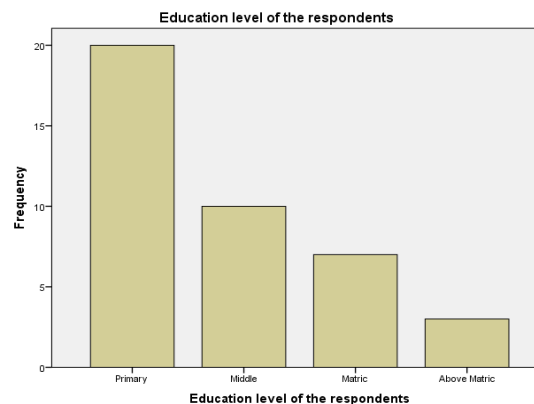
The educational background as one of the determinant variables of a person’s socio-economic status in the society was examined. The ability to adjust oneself to the existing opportunities in every modern society depends largely, if not completely, on one’s level of education. Since through education, people are able to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and values which equip and develop them to become versatile to the changing patterns of modernity, its relevance to this study cannot be glossed over. Particularly, it helps to establish the relationship existing in the nature of economic activities undertaken by the women as an economic means of livelihood.

Table:5 Level of education

Level of education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	20	25
Middle	10	12.5
12 th grade or metric	7	8.75
Above	3	3.75
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



Results from table 4.4 on the educational levels of the respondents revealed that majority of the women could not read and write at all or half of the respondents were not educated. Statistically, 40(50%) of the respondents have never had formal

education before, 20(25%) had only primary level of formal education whilst just 10 (12.5%) of them can boast of middle, 7(8.75%) got the 12th grade or metric level of education, whilst 3(3.75%) got the education level of above metric. The high level of illiteracy rate among women in the study area has a positive relationship with the type of economic activities undertaken by them. Some good amount of women involved in the study engaged in agriculture as their major occupation, it gives the indication that with little or low level of education, one is not opened to several opportunities for employment and is thus limited to either manual or menial activities that largely do not require any specific skills. Hence, it is not surprising that most of them were not employed in the formal sector of the economy and thus not wage earners. This finding is line with the assertion that job opportunities in the formal sector require educational qualifications for which most women did not have.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF WOMEN

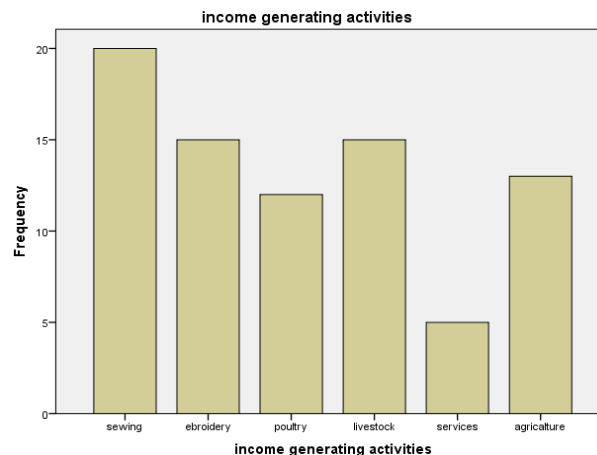
Women from the study area like all other women are engaged in several economic activities which range from farming to off-farming. These activities have had dramatic impact on the wellbeing of their various households. That is to say, women’s economic contributions are part and parcel of their efforts to improve the livelihood of their households in particular and the community as a whole. The type of economic activity undertaken by the women in the study is summarized in the table 4.6 below:

Table 6: Economics activities of the respondents

Economics activities	Frequency	Percentage
sewing	20	25
embroidery	15	18.75
Poultry	12	15
Livestock	15	18.75
Services	5	6.25
Agriculture	13	16.25
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



The table above indicates that 20(25%) women were involved in sewing, whilst 15(18.75%) were engaged in embroidery, 12(15%) were engaged in poultry, whilst 15(18.75%) were engaged in livestock and table above also indicates that 5(6.25%) were engaged in services and 13(16.25%) women were engaged in agriculture. during an interview with some women in research area it was seen that that majority of their males were engaged in agriculture as their main source of income but their women were rarely seen in agriculture field because purdah system was observed in research area and old aged women were seen in agriculture activity and it was difficult for young women to go outdoor or to agriculture field. Although other forms of jobs in the informal sector such as sewing, embroidery, poultry, Livestock, services and agriculture is dominant in the area; it is largely undertaken by the women, with irregular and unreliable income. Such proceeds constitute an important component of women’s income that support family expenditure especially for providing household needs like foods stuffs, And ingredients and clothes for children and other household members.

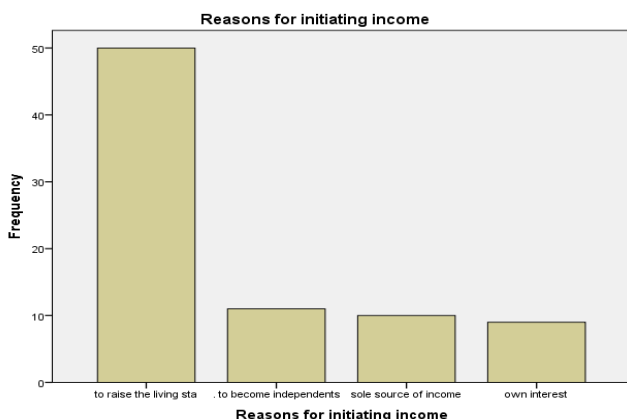
REASONS FOR INITIATING INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES IN THE SAMPLE AREA

Table :7 Initiating of income generating activities of the respondents

initiating of income generating activities of the respondents	Frequency	Percentage
To raise the living standard	50	62.5
To become independents	11	13.75
own interest	10	12.5
sole source of income	9	11.25
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

T
he same results shown in chart below



The above and chart table shows reasons for initiating income generating activities in the sample area. As we can see from table 4.7 that out of total respondents in research area about 50(62.5%) of the respondents who were involved in income generating activities want to earn, because they wanted to raise the living standard of their lives. According to them they were low income group and only male members were unable to support their families because of these women participation in economics activities and work with their male’s side by side their living standard have been improved. Others 11(13.75%) of the respondents declared that they were involved in income earning activities, because they wanted to become independents, while 10(12.75%) of the respondents indicated that their interest is as the reason of initiating these activities. Only 9(11.25%) of the respondents declared that these income earning activities were the sole income for them. Mostly of

these households were with aged male members in their households.

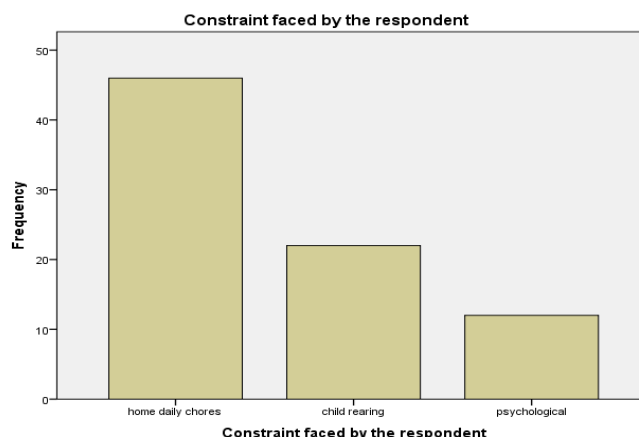
CONSTRAINT FACED BY THE RESPONDENTS IN PERFORMING INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES IN SAMPLE AREA

Table:8 Constraint faced by the respondents

Constraint faced by the respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Home daily chores	46	57.5
child rearing	23	28.75
Psychological	11	13.75
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



The above table and chart shows the constraints faced by respondents in income generating activities in sample area.

Obstacles or constraints that are faced by the respondents in research area in income generating activities were categorized into three groups, home making, child rearing and psychological pressure. Out of 80 respondents 46(57.5%) of them were facing problems in managing household activities. 23(28.75%) of because of child rearing and 11(13.75%) of them because of psychological pressure. The main reasons for psychological pressure on females were poverty, low income of their family and having less or no male members in their household.

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

The extent to which an individual can contribute to support the livelihood of his or her household depends much on the level of income earned daily,

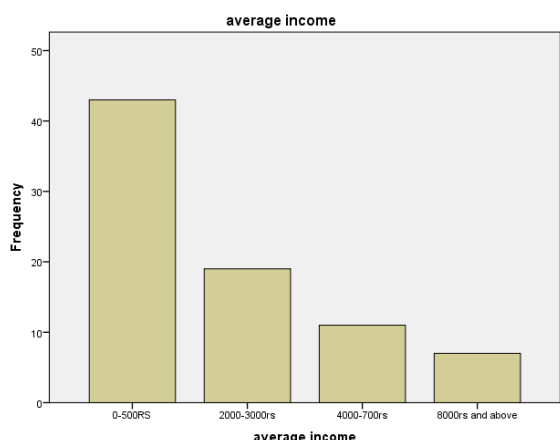
weekly, month or per annum. Since the capacity to generate income is intimately associated with one’s economic activity, it is therefore a truism to state that the size of the income or proceeds generated from a person’s economic activity would largely influence the household expenditure. Usually, income levels have been a major indicator to measure poverty at the individual or household levels and their ability to meet their daily basic needs.

Table9:Average monthly income level of respondents

Monthly income	Frequency	Percentage
0-1500 Rs	43	53.75
2000-3000 Rs	19	23.75
400-7000 Rs	11	13.75
8000Rs and above	7	8.75
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



Essentially, the study indicates in table 4.9 that less than half of the respondents earn 0-1500Rs in a month due to irregular flow of their income activities. It is noted that 43 respondents could earn a monthly income of 500-1500Rs which constitute 53.75%. Also, (19) 23.75% of the respondents were able to earn between 200-3000 Rs, while11 (13.75%) respondents earned between 4000-700Rs, the number of respondents who earned 8000 Rs and above were 7(8.75%).

The implication is that the 53.75 respondents who earned 500-1500 Rs in a month finds it difficult in making meaningful financial contributions to help improve the livelihood of their household members in the light of currency valuation and devaluation and

inflationary levels or rate in the country. It is worth stating that since income in the hands of women has a significant impact on their ability to contribute to the wellbeing of their households because the women said in research area that, they invest substantial amount of their income in the household upkeep and wellbeing. Over 90% of these women indicated they were ready and always adopted different strategies possible to supplement their income to enable them reduce poverty in their homes. Those women who said they earned above 8000Rs per month said this was not good enough to provide for basic household needs. Therefore, what does the majority who earn even less manage to provide for their homes?

CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN’S ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES TO THE HOUSEHOLDS

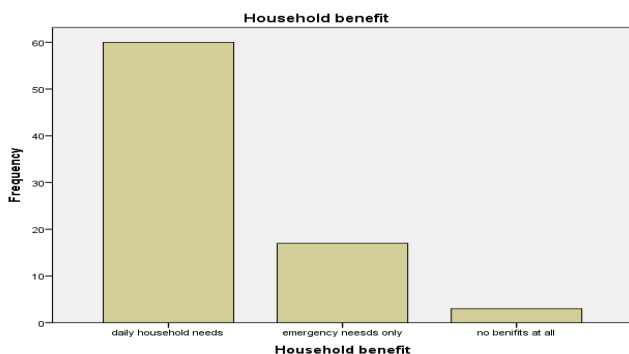
In as much as women engage in a variety of economic activities with the view to supplement family income and reduce household poverty, their relative contribution to the maintenance and eventual reduction in household poverty levels remains doubtful because of the traditional notion of the male breadwinner existing in family structures. Although it is true that men have largely moved outside the home to the labor market for paid employment, it is also important stating that women in recent times also contribute tremendously to the family and household upkeep and sustenance with any economic activity they engage in. In fact, women’s income is noted to be largely invested in the family and household needs rather than heavy investments outside the homes such as building of houses etc although some women build houses but on the minimum.

Table 10: Household benefits from women’s income

Household benefits from women’s income	Frequency	Percentage
Daily household needs	60	75
Emergency household needs only	17	21.25
No benefits at all	3	3.75
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey2024)

The same results shown in chart below



Interviews with the respondents concerning the benefits that their households derive from their income earnings confirms the above statement with most of them stating that large amount of their income from any economic activity they undertake is

spent on household daily needs. Responses from the women respondents as depicted in table 4.10. Households benefit from incomes generated from the economic activities that women undertake. Most women’s income, (60) 75% were committed to the provision of household daily needs whilst (17) 21.25% of women’s incomes are only used in the household whenever an emergency situation occurred. However, 3(3.75%) of the women indicate that their households did not benefit from the income they earned because it was not even sufficient for their own needs.

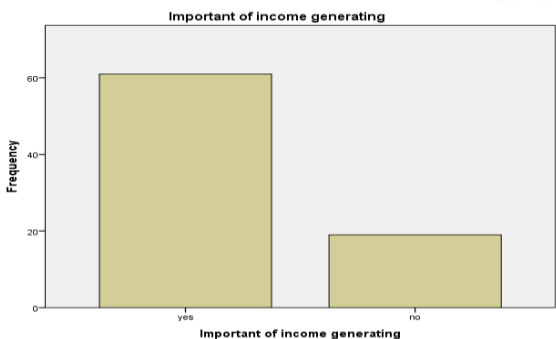
IMPORTANCE OF INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES FOR WOMEN IN SAMPLE AREA

Table11: Importance of income generating activities

importance of income generating activities	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	61	76.25
No	19	23.75
Total	80	100.00

(Source: field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



The above table shows the importance of income generating activities for women in the sample area.

About the question whether the income generating activities are important for women or not?

Out of the total respondents in the research area, 61(76.25%) replied that their involvement in various income generating activities are important because they belonged to low income group.

While 19(23.75%) of the respondents replied with no importance because they belonged rich group or have enough male members in their household.

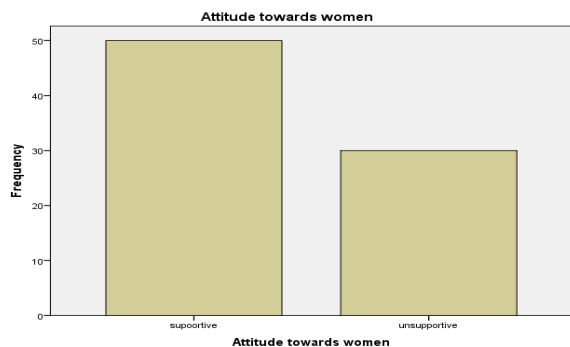
ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN WORKS

Table12 : Attitude towards women works

Attitude towards women works	Frequency	Percentage
Supportive	50	62.5
Unsupportive	30	37.5
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



The above table shows the attitude towards women’s work in sample area.

In our males dominated traditional society. Women though actively engaged in economics activities but couldn’t get proper recognized because of various social and cultural factors.

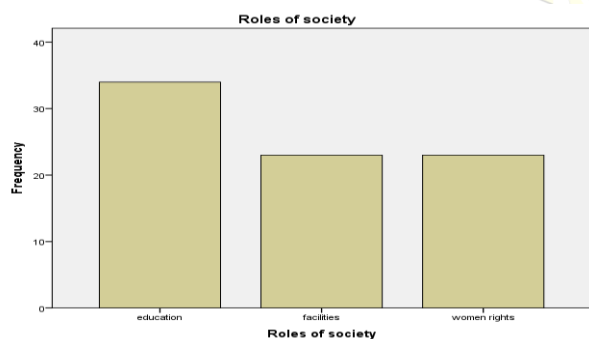
ROLES OF SOCIETY IN IMPROVING WOMEN LIVES IN SAMPLE AREA

Table13: Roles of society in improving women lives

Roles of society in improving women lives	Frequency	Percentage
Education	35	43.75
Facilities	22	27.5
Women’s rights	23	28.75
Total	80	100.00

(Source: Author’s field survey 2024)

The same results shown in chart below



The above table shows the roles of society in improving women’s lives.

About the question that would you like from society to give women comfortable lives? We categories that question into three groups, education, facilities and basic women’s right in response to this question out of 80 respondents replied,35(43.75%) responded that society has to provide education to females because education is most important for woman life and an educated women can manage her house better than an uneducated women.22(27.5%) replied that it is a duty of society to provide basic facilities to women like, food, clothes and etc for the betterment of

As table shows the nature of males towards women’s work and it was grouped into two categories, supportive and unsupportive. According to the respondents 50(62.5%) of the respondents replied that male’s attitude towards women work is supportive, while 30(37.5%) of respondents replied with unsupportive. As revealed by the respondents that the reasons for supportive nature of their males were, poverty and also that they were in low income group and only male members were unable to support Thiers families. Whereas the presence of enough male’s members in the household and males can afford to support their families so their male’s attitude towards women work are unsupportive.

women lives.23(28.27%) were in favored of providing basic rights to women for example they could get their deserved proportion from the earnings of land or property.

CONCLUSION:

The study has primarily focused on the economic roles that women play in reducing household poverty. It is evident that the majority of women in the nation have low levels of education, which has greatly contributed to their propensity to find work in the informal sector by operating small businesses that are not financially rewarding enough. Even when they do engage in small businesses, most of them do so in order to use the meagre profits to supplement their incomes and those of their families.

In essence, even though the majority of women engage in small-scale farming and petty trading and receive little financial or other reward for their efforts, they are primarily driven by the need to provide for their families. Despite the fact that most of them must also reduce their social standing and fulfil their obligation to support their husbands as

wives, the majority of them find that participating in all types of supplemental economic activities benefits the household.

The majority of households are members of low-income categories, according to the survey. Consequently, there was a deficiency in savings and investment. A barrier to rural development in the research area was the lack of adequate training facilities for women, in addition to financial limitations. Women in the study area engaged in a variety of income-generating activities despite having low incomes and savings levels. However, due to a lack of funding and credit options, they were unable to realise their full potential. The survey also found that the majority of the female population under investigation lacked literacy. Even men lacked education in the majority of these cases. The survey also discovered that one of the main issues facing the study area was employment.

It is shown that these activities and efforts have a broad impact on household sustenance and lowering household financial burdens, even though the majority of the efforts women make to maintain the household are not economically valued because it is traditionally considered a duty and responsibility for them as women. Even though they can still engage in other small-scale businesses or petty economic activities as additional sources of income, it is advised that women in the nation receive more education to ensure that they find more financially rewarding jobs. This will increase their income contributions to the reduction of poverty in the household.

RECOMMENDATION:

Given that women are disadvantaged throughout Afghanistan, but particularly in rural areas, there is a pressing need to devise ways to remove the social, economic, and structural barriers that prevent women from being as productive in the economy as they may be. The main components of an elective strategy are the establishment of a welcoming and supportive social environment for women to participate in, the elimination of barriers to women's access to education, training, and employment opportunities, and the removal of isolationist barriers that impede women's access to information and productive inputs (credit, technology, marketing, etc.). Women's employment in positions of decision-making and the strengthening of institutions (governments, NGOS,

etc.) are also directly involved in the development and empowerment of women.

Following recommendation were made on the basis of present findings:

1. The study area has low levels of income, saving, and investment. Credit facilities should be made available to women on favourable terms and conditions in order to help them improve their numerous sources of income and contribute to the household income in order to end the impasse.
2. An increasing number of income-generating programmes for women in the study region should be introduced in an effort to end poverty. This would be useful in helping the women launch other revenue-generating ventures.
3. Training facilities that teach women how to make money from different crafts, like knitting, sewing, and creating jams and squash, should be established. Therefore, initiatives should focus on developing new skills or improving current ones so that women can take advantage of these abilities.
4. Men should be taught to respect women's rights and to include them in decision-making and constructive activities. Males need to raise awareness about granting their women the right to free speech, allowing them to work paid jobs and contributing to the family's financial success. A proper awareness campaign highlighting these issues should be launched in print and electronic media.
5. It is best to treat daughters and sons equally in order to prevent uncontrollably large sizes. To do this, it is necessary to show the woman as the family's financial asset due to her paid employment.
6. Appropriate facilities for education must to be offered to women. The women will be better able to utilise their productive potential as a result of this. It is possible to argue that, of all the variables affecting women's attitudes and behaviours in the workplace, their educational attainment is the most significant. As a result, education in the field of study should receive the highest priority for both genders.
7. The current regime should provide the equal facility in education and also provide the

work environment for women to contribute in economics activities to reduce household poverty.

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