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The Impact of Education on Poverty Reduction in Afghanistan

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Abstract

This research aimed to explore the pivotal role of education in alleviating poverty in Afghanistan. Employing a quantitative research approach, the study utilized random sampling with a sample size of 302individuals, employing Morgan's method. The data was collected through the employment of the Likert spectrum questionnaire, which demonstrated a commendable accuracy rate of 91% as determined by Cronbach's alpha test.to ensure rigorous analysis and precise inference, various statistical techniques wereemployed, including stepwise regression analysis, factor analysis, internal consistency, Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin, and Bartlett's test. The research findings revealed several significant and positive impacts of education on poverty reduction. These include the creation of job opportunities through knowledge, rapid technological adaptations, increased employment rates, enhanced access to financial resources, augmentedhousehold income, and improved access to production factors through knowledge acquisition. Moreover, the research findings firmly reject the null hypothesis and instead lend support to the alternative hypothesis,underscoring the substantial influence of education on poverty reduction. Consequently, it is highly recommended to prioritize education as a key strategy in combating poverty in Afghanistan. By doing so, the nation can empower individuals, foster economic growth, and create a brighter future for its citizens.

Keywords: Afghanistan, Poverty, Poverty Trends, Education Trends

1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of poverty rates in Afghanistan can be associated with a stagnating economy. Currently, the poverty line is defined as an income of 70 Afghanis a day, which is equivalent to about 1 U.S.dollar. The Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (ALCS) reported that the national poverty ratehas risen from 38% in 2011–12 to 55% in 2016–2017, with slowing economic growth and a deteriorating security situation as two causes. In this context, an overview of the poverty trend in Afghanistan is discussed by considering the correlation between Poverty and Lack of Education as well as the education system in Afghanistan. It gives an overview of poverty in Afghanistan and the education system in Afghanistan it also points out the factors affecting it. The correlation between Poverty and Lack of Education is also taken into account. Lastly, the Socio-Political Factors responsible for poverty are highlighted.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Poverty is pervasive in Afghanistan's rural and urban regions. Poverty in Afghanistan, on the otherhand, is said to be concentrated mostly in rural regions. Rural areas are home to four out of everyfive impoverished individuals, according to estimates. Many newborns and toddlers are stunted, emaciated, and die each year in these rural regions because of a lack of proper nutrition. The East,Northeast, and West-Central areas of Afghanistan have about half of the population living in poverty. According to the Afghan government, 42 percent of the Afghan population lives in poverty. In addition, 20% of persons living just over the poverty line are at risk of sliding into poverty. Over half of the population is living off less than a dollar a day. Another finding from thesame report showed that from poverty many other problems branch out, as food insecurity has risen by 14.5% in five years, and despite large population growth, the agricultural industry and unemployment have both become increasingly worse. A 2018 U.N. report noted that more than 2million children aged 6-14 worked to support their families. With an average of 58 percent of Afghan families unable to afford food, full-time work becomes a higher priority than education. In February 2019, UNICEF, the U.N., and the government of Afghanistan launched a long-term education response program projected to help half a million children in the country. The programhopes to raise an additional $35

million within the next year to help support education infrastructure and secure teachers, supplies, and similar needs for schools across the entire country.

Afghanistan is put 168th out of 189 on the UNDP human advancement marker and requires a significant unfamiliar guide to accomplish its industrious and brilliant people's maximum capacity.The financial improvement of Afghanistan has been deferred by over 3% behind the country's yearly populace development, bringing about a new per-capita decrease in GDP. Neediness rose from 36% to 55 percent and food frailty influenced 1.9 million people. One in each four working- age Afghans is jobless and many working individuals have problematic businesses. The quantity of people looking for lacking abilities is expanding impressively consistently, with an energetic and under-instructed populace, while the number of organizations starting every year has been diminishing in recent years (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 ishome 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 $549.39per Capita (the year 2020).

Afghanistan's educational framework has been desolated by right around fifty years of constant conflict. Regardless of late advancement in expanding selection, completing grade school stays a drawn-out objective for countless youngsters all through the country, especially in provincial locales and among females. In Afghanistan's least fortunate and most rustic regions, enlistment rates differ broadly, and ladies keep on being denied equivalent access. An expected 3.7 million Afghan youngsters are out of school, with ladies representing 60% of the aggregate (UNICEF, 2017). Afghanistan's educational framework is being upgraded. The Ministry of Education (MoE)is answerable for fundamental and helper education, while the Ministry of Higher Education is accountable for postsecondary education. State-subsidized education is, in principle, free, fundamental, and elective education are both obligatory. In Afghanistan, a four-year confirmationlevel of education is a perceived capability (ALCSC,2016-17).

As per Ahmad and Rahimi (2015), ignorance, defenselessness, an absence of cutting-edge information, and an absence of information are seen as pointers of need. An absence of informationis a significant issue that prompts failures in the organization, misuse of assets, and non-standard approaches for development and advancement. The family's monetary achievement is for the mostpart controlled by the top of the family, and his status is perhaps the most telling indication of poverty. It was noticed that the head's degree of capability (27.6%) is lower than the level of absence of education (41.6 percent). Besides, the crushed populace has a high rate of ignorance; therefore, a higher pace of lack of education suggests a higher pace of poverty.

The presence of about 60% ignorant people, the heft of whom dwell in provincial regions, may significantly affect the decrease of poverty. Around 6,000,000 children are currently denied the chance to go to class, while over 1,000,000 teens ask and work hard. Someone unquestionably connected education to levels of poverty in Afghanistan. Education, point of fact, prompts more freedom for family members to bring in cash through their organizations. As indicated by the NRVA 2007/08, "both the family's capability and education levels compare to diminished degrees of poverty." The frequency of poverty diminishes as the upper family turns out to be more instructed." The Ministry of Education distributed a report in 2010 that summed up the discoveries. The low quality of education in this post-war country is causing pressure for all educators and instructors; EFA (2015), NESP (2015), UNESCO, UNICEF, Care International, theWorld Bank, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA), the British Council, and other globalassociations have been working together with the Afghan government, especially the Ministry of Education, to upgrade Afghan educators' master abilities.

The past thirty years of conflict and political unrest in Afghanistan have decimated the country's education system in terms of staffing, premises, curricula, and student attendance, for both male and female students. The education sector has been at the forefront of the political battles and conflicts between competing interest groups during the wars of resistance and ideological and ethnic conflicts that have plagued the country over the past few decades. The changing political ideologies have taken a toll on the quality of

education services and weakened governance. The current Government is committed to tackling issues of security, poverty reduction, governance, and shared and inclusive growth.

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 a9-fold growth since 2001. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), the gross enrollment rate (GER) was 111.88, 55.64, and 8.66 for primary, secondary, and tertiary education,respectively.

Gross enrollment rate estimates for Afghanistan for earlier years are not always reliable - both enrollment and population records during this time could be incomplete. Nonetheless, UIS summaries show a rapid increase in gross enrollment rates beginning early 2000s. Accessimprovements at the primary level came early: according to UIS summaries, primary GER now stands at 111.7 percent compared to 73 percent in 2002. Growths in participation at the lower andupper secondary levels peaked in 2010 and, according to UIS summaries, stand at 66 percent and43 percent respectively. Tertiary GER was 12 percent in 2013, up from 3.4 percent in 2007. But, progress in enrollment rates has slowed or stopped since 2010 Women and girls in Afghanistan continue to face widespread discrimination and human rights abuses. The country ranks among the least favorable on the Gender Inequality Index and the literacy rate for women is among the lowest in the world. Violence against women and girls is rife and the majority don't go to school. Yet women make up 50 percent of the Afghan population. Progress for them means progress for all, and it is critical for the future of the country and the stability of the nation.

Poverty and education are mutually exclusive. As a result, the greater a country's population's educational level, the fewer or lower the number of poor individuals in that population. This is because education offers information and skills that lead to increased pay (Cremina & Nakabugob,2012). As a result, investing in human capital via education is critical for poverty reduction and economic progress. Education has a direct influence on poverty reduction through increasing earnings/income or wages. From the perspective of 'human poverty,' the indirect influence of education on poverty is significant because as earnings

rise, meeting necessities becomes simpler and the standard of living rises, implying a reduction in human poverty (Mihai et al, 2015).

In ongoing many years, the connection between destitution and the absence of education has beena conspicuous report subject. Destitution has various, convoluted, and interconnected causes, andthere is nobody size-fits-all arrangement. Education, then again, might be viewed as a danger decreasing part of outrageous destitution, maybe keeping a group of people yet to come from beingfurthermore unfortunate. More than one billion individuals live in serious neediness, which is characterized as procuring under $1.25 each day (Chen and Ravallion, 2008). Destitution is characterized as an absence of or insufficiency of essential endurance needs. Neediness lighting is a common cultural obligation. Notwithstanding, in most non-industrial countries, numerous individuals keep on living in outrageous destitution, with restricted admittance to a satisfactory sanctuary, food, and attire. One of the elements of destitution is one's education level. The absenceof admittance to education is a vital sign of neediness transmission from one age to another, and getting an education is quite possibly the best technique to achieve monetary security (Boateng,2019).

Education is regularly viewed as a basic factor in wiping out destitution and achieving long-haul improvement. In numerous countries, education has given an adequate comprehension of development. As indicated by Jaiyeoba (2009), education benefits both the business and public areas. As indicated by UNESCO insights delivered in 2018, more than 2 million youngsters are out of school across the globe. Youngsters miss school for an assortment of reasons, yet every oneof them begins with destitution. The logical center's system of reference is a meaning of neediness that underscores the ability to practice fundamental rights as a method for guaranteeing sufficientliving conditions. Neediness is brought about by an absence of rights and social rights. The right to education, which requires, notwithstanding school accessibility and affirmation, states of adaptability and adequacy, which alludes to a school's capacity to receive the extraordinary conditions of youngsters, react to their necessities and interests, and guarantee a suitable degree of education, is of specific concern (Tomasevski, 2004 and Coneval, 2018).

Education has arisen as a basic requirement for diminishing destitution and advancing the living conditions or occupations of agricultural countries like Afghanistan.

Destitution in Afghanistan and all through the globe has a falling impact on education. Helpless families think that it's harderto get well-rounded schooling, which renders them more ruined in the long haul. After the contention and illegal intimidation in Afghanistan lessened in 2002, numerous kids were permitted to continue their education. Notwithstanding, 33% of the kids were female Coneval, 2018).

During that very year, practically 80% of females in every one of the 34 regions were not selectedschools (UNICEF, 2005). Horticulture is the monetary spine of Afghanistan. Rustic ladies' ranchers do most of the horticultural work in Afghanistan, representing practically 80% of rural work. In any case, regardless of their critical job in the rural improvement measure, admittance toeducation and other monetary administrations stays restricted (USAID, 2015). Ranchers that are accomplished are more productive and worthwhile, and they can help Afghanistan's food securityissue altogether. Besides, most of the hypothetical conversation on the job of education being developed and monetary advancement, along these lines in the battle against neediness, focuses on the financial side of education. A few pieces of information and studies show that a populace's level of education is identified with their degree of monetary turn of events (Mihai et al, 2015). Efendi et al. (2019) took a gander at the connection between destitution rates and monetary turn of events, well-being, and education.

Of sure, contrasting Afghanistan with the past uncovers significant contrasts; however, contrastingthe present with the past is certifiably not a logical strategy for evaluating the circumstance. Indeed,it could be a technique to give a setting to the crowd; however, the specific measuring stick for advancement is the dependable insights delivered by respectable associations, such as the UN. Afghanistan has marked and focused on carrying out the United Nations Sustainable DevelopmentGoals on Education by 2030.

3. RESEARCH GAP

Despite the continuous efforts and the attention given to previous research findings, there is a noticeable dearth of comprehensive research examining the direct influence of education on poverty reduction in Afghanistan. While certain studies have touched upon the general correlationbetween education and poverty on a global scale, there exists a crucial

need for research that specifically delves into the Afghan context. This gap is prominently underscored in the ongoing study, where the researcher aims to meticulously investigate and derive logical conclusions regarding the pivotal role of education in alleviating poverty in Afghanistan. The outcomes obtained from this study possess the potential to enlighten policymakers and guide evidence-baseddecision-making processes.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, we have utilized a quantitative research method to derive logical conclusions and examine the impact of education on poverty reduction in Afghanistan. The present research is categorized as applied research due to its objective. The target population of this study comprises302 individuals residing in Kabul City. To gather data for this research, a Likert scale questionnairewas employed. The questionnaire items were rated on a scale of 1 to 5, ranging from "strongly agree" (5) to "strongly disagree" (1). Subsequently, the collected questionnaires, devoid of any missing data, were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS. Pearson correlation, exploratory factor analysis, and stepwise regression were utilized to analyze the data and test the research hypotheses. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, the adequacyof the sample size was examined through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure, and the correlation between variables was evaluated using Bartlett's test.

5. Data Analysis and Findings

5.1. The Reliability Test of Questionnaire:

A randomly prepared questionnaire was administeredto a sample of 302 individuals from the target population, which included 25 participants with doctoral degrees, 90 with master's degrees, 147 with bachelor's degrees, 22 with post-baccalaureatequalifications, and others with undergraduate degrees. Among the participants, 72% were male, while the remaining were female. The analysis of the questions using Cronbach's alpha coefficient resulted in a reliability coefficient of 0.91 for the entire test, which is highly desirable and satisfactory. Additionally, the inter-correlation among all the questions exceeded 0.30, indicatingthat there is no need to eliminate any of the questions and demonstrating the

internal consistency of the questionnaire.

5.2. The Factor Analysis of Questionnaire:

To conduct factor analysis, the adequacy of the sample size was initially assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy test to ensurean adequate sample size and to determine if there is a non-zero correlation among the variables inthe population. Bartlett's test of sphericity was employed for this purpose. The results of these twotests are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The Results of KMO and Bartlett's Test

The value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	Chi-Square for Bartlett's	Degree of Freedom	Sig
.910	1156.667	21	.000

As seen in Table 1, the KMO value is 0.91, indicating a sufficient sample size, and Bartlett's test yields a significant result at the alpha level of 0.05. This test confirms the presence of a non-zero correlation among the data in the population. Thus, in addition to having an adequate sample size, conducting factor analysis based on the examined correlations is justified.

5.3. Factor Analysis:

To determine the optimal number of factors for factor rotation, the principal component analysis method and scree plot are employed. Based on the principal component analysis, factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.5 are selected for rotation. The outcomes of this analysis are presented in Table 2.

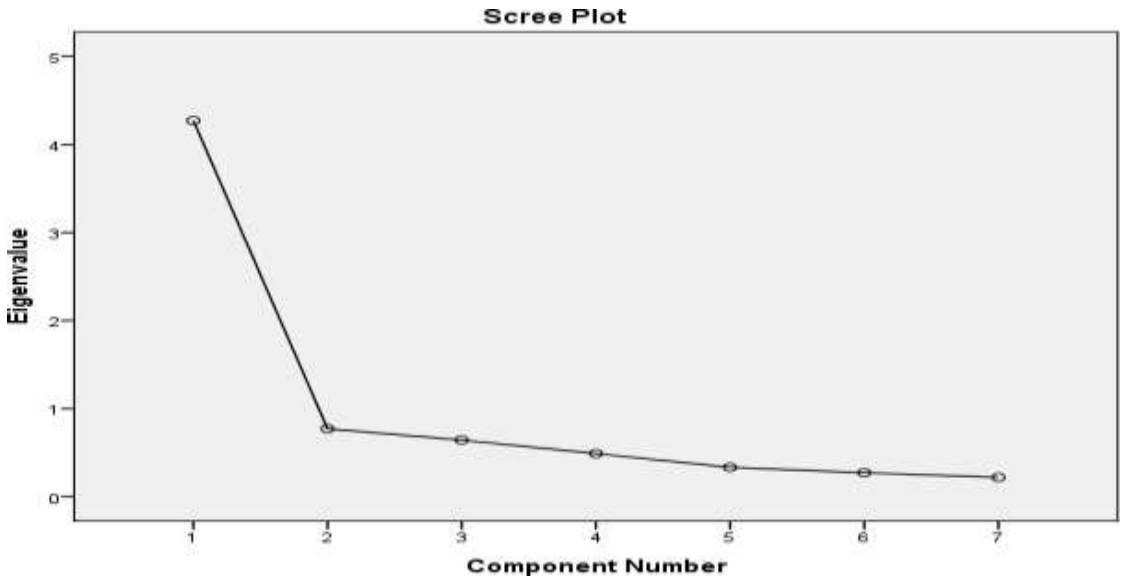
Table 2: Total Variance Explained by Principal Component Analysis

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.272	61.024	61.024	4.272	24	24
2	.772	11.025	72.049			

3	.643	9.185	81.234			
4	.490	6.995	88.230			
5	.333	4.759	92.989			
6	.272	3.886	96.875			
7	.219	3.125	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that the eigenvalue of one factor before rotation is above 1.5, whereas the eigenvalues of the remaining factors are lower. Consequently, according to this approach, one factor is chosen for rotation. This particular factor explains 61.02% of the overall variance in the questionnaire. This information is also visually represented in the following screeplot.



The above plot indicates that one factor is deemed suitable for rotation. By thetheoretical underpinnings ofthe study, the questionnaire items were designed to align

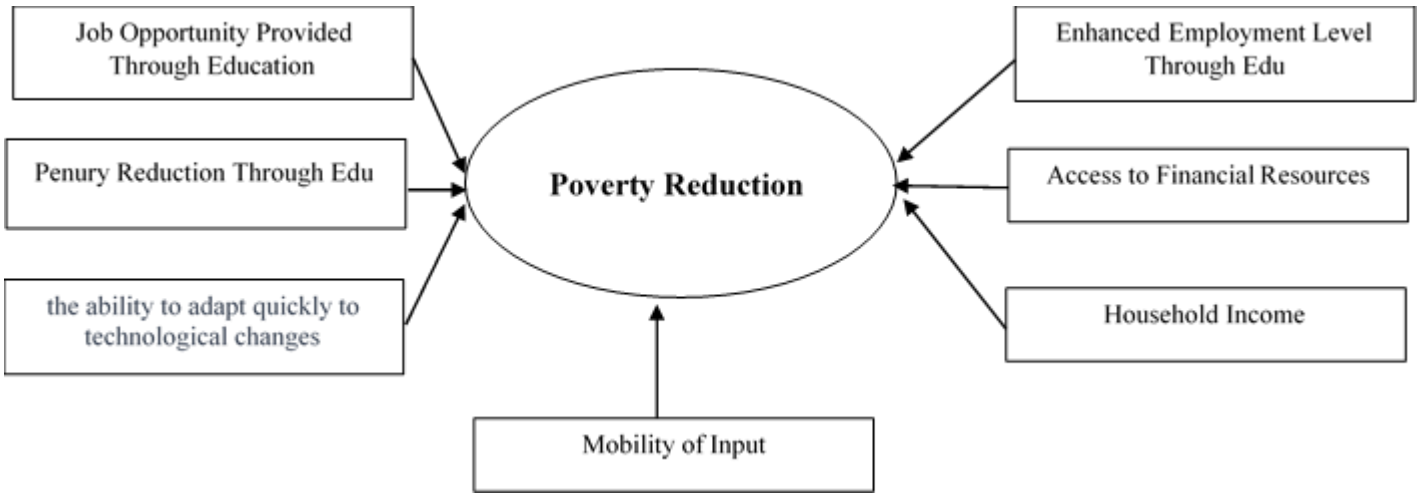
with a single factor. As depicted in Table 3, a totalof seven questions have been selected for the intended factor, exhibiting factor loadings exceeding 0.30.

Table 3: Extracted the Variables for the Component with Coefficients

Component	.901	.864	0.858	0.792	0.749	0.681	0.570
Variables	Opp to Emp	Pov	Tech	Emp	Access to F R	Income	Inp

5.4. Regression Analysis:

The regression coefficients are estimated to evaluate the influence of education on poverty reduction. After extracting a factor based on its theoretical foundations, the research model examining the effects of education on poverty reduction is obtained. These seven variables, collectively accounting for 61% of the total questionnaire variance, function as a singlefactor.



Stepwise regression was utilized to assess the impact of education on poverty reduction. Theoutcomes of this analysis are displayed in Table 4.

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Table (4): The Results of Stepwise Regression for Determinants of the Impact of IndependentVariables on Dependent Variable

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		R-Square	Correlations
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
(Constant)	.012	.026	-----	.454	.650	-.039	.062	---	---
Job Opp	.197	.009	.249	21.898	.000	.179	.214	.793	.890
Adapt to Teach	.178	.008	.239	23.155	.000	.163	.193	.868	.847
access to F R	.158	.006	.221	26.272	.000	.146	.170	.922	.764
Mobility to Input	.141	.006	.176	24.148	.000	.130	.153	.948	.603
Household income	.153	.006	.191	24.155	.000	.141	.165	.969	.689
Emp level	.167	.008	.202	21.898	.000	.152	.182	.988	.778
505 ; Sig.F = 0.000									

Table 4 illustrates those independent variables such as job opportunities provided through education, the ability to adapt quickly to technological changes, access to financial resources, mobility of production tools, increased household income, and enhanced employment levels through education have been considered about their effects on poverty reduction, which serves asthe dependent variable of interest. Among these variables, job opportunities provided through education have the most significant impact on poverty reduction, showing a positive correlation. This implies that a 1% increase in job opportunities resulting from education leads to a 0.197% decrease in poverty within society. The positive sign indicates that as job opportunities increase, poverty decreases proportionally.

The second influential factor is the ability to adapt quickly to technological changes, which has aneffect size of 0.178%. This is followed by increased employment through education at 0.167%, access to financial resources at 0.158%, increased income due to

education at 0.153%, and accessto production tools at 0.141%, all contributing to poverty reduction. The positive signs signify thatfocusing on these variables contributes to a greater reduction in poverty. Considering the R-Squarevalue, these six variables collectively account for an estimated 77.8% of the variation in the dependent variable. By considering the entered variables in the regression, the following regression equation can be utilized to estimate the poverty reduction score, while taking into account the independent variables:

$$\mathbf{Y = 0.12 + 0.197X1 + 0.178X2 + 0.158X3 + 0.141X4 + 0.153X5 + 0.167X6}$$

The variables used in the above regression model are as follows:

Y = Poverty Reduction

X1 = Providing Job Opportunities through Education

X2 = The ability to adapt quickly to technological changesX3 = Access to Financial Resources

X4 = mobility to Input

X5 = Increase in Households IncomeX6 = Increases in Employment Level

Based on the aforementioned, we cannot confirm the null hypothesis stating that education has noimpact on poverty reduction in Afghanistan. On the contrary, the alternative hypothesis is supported, indicating that education significantly contributes to poverty reduction in our beloved country. To investigate these effects, several independent variables have been considered, including job opportunities, rapid adaptation to technological changes, access to financial resources, access to production tools, increased household income, and elevated employment levels resulting from education. All of these variables

exhibit positive effects, and with a significance level of 95%, as evidenced by the F-value of 0.000, they are deemed statistically significant.

6. CONCLUSIONS

A strong education system is key to getting more children into school and helping them to becomeresponsible citizens. Even in safer and more progressed regions, the Afghan government has attempted to give brilliant education. This study focused on examining the impact of education on poverty reduction in Afghanistan, with a specific emphasis on education as the dependent variable. The variables investigated encompassed job opportunities through education, adaptability to technological changes, access to financial resources, mobility of production tools, increased household income, and enhanced employment levels resulting from education. Among these variables, job opportunities stemming from education emerged as the most influential factor, demonstrating a strong positive correlation with poverty reduction. It was observed that a 1% increase in job opportunities led to a proportional decrease of 0.197% in poverty. The ability to adapt quickly to technological changes was identified as the second most significant factor, with an effect size of 0.178%. This was followed by increased employment through education at 0.167%, access to financial resources at 0.158%, increased income due to education at 0.153%, and access to production tools at 0.141%. Each of these variables made substantial contributions to poverty reduction, exhibiting statistical significance with positive signs. Collectively, these sixvariables accounted for approximately 77.8% of the variation in poverty reduction, as indicated bythe R-Square value. In this paper used the qualitative research approach, the study utilized a Likertscale questionnaire and employed statistical analyses such as factor analysis, KMO, Bartlett's, andregression. Based on the findings, we reject the null hypothesis that education has no impact on poverty reduction in Afghanistan. On the contrary, the alternative hypothesis is strongly supported, underscoring the significant contribution of education to poverty reduction in Afghanistan. This investigation encompassed multiple independent variables, including job opportunities, adaptability to technological changes, access to financial resources, access to production tools, increased household income, and elevated employment levels resulting from education. All of these

variables exhibited positive effects and achieved statistical significance at a 95% confidence level, as indicated by the F-value of 0.000. These findings highlight the pivotal role of education in reducing poverty and emphasize the need to address these variables for sustainable socio- economic improvements.

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