

Review Article

IMPACT OF POVERTY OF WOMEN ON COMMITMENT OF SOCIAL ABNORMALITIES BY WOMEN

***Fariba Valadbeigi**

MA in Women's Studies at Tarbiat Modarres University

**Author for Correspondence*

ABSTRACT

Poverty is the origin of many physical, mental and social diseases. As women are vulnerable class of the society and as they have key role in the family and are responsible for education and training next generation, considering poverty of women and its impact on their mental health and its impact on commitment of social abnormalities like theft and prostitution should be investigated. In regard with poverty of women, 4 theories are existed as follows: womanish nature of poverty, structural adjustment strategy, Islam and theory of dual labor market, which would be assessed in this study. As in the theory of Islam some strategies have been presented in order to prevent poverty of women, it has been selected as the main basis of presented strategies in this study.

Keywords: *Poverty, Womanish Nature of Poverty, Social Abnormalities*

INTRODUCTION

Obtained data from statistical centers of countries indicate that although number of family head women is less than number of men, women are poorer considerably than men. Hence, poverty can affect employment of people and especially women as a result of access to education and facilities. Also, employment can have key role in definition of poverty and one can define type of employment of a person as an indicator for being poor or not. The probability of suffering from poverty for families with female heads is 35% in urban areas and is equal to 65% in rural areas. Studies indicate that divorced women or left rural women are exposed to acute poverty for most probability (Foruzan and Biglarian, 2003).

Hence, the main objective of the present study is investigating roots of poverty of women, expressing relevant theories, its impact on position and situation of women and finally presenting specific strategies for reduction of poverty. The present study is a qualitative study conducted using documentary method. The study has attempted to investigate poverty and its impact on women due to findings of other researchers.

Scale for Measuring Poverty

Poverty line is one of the scales for poverty that has abundant uses. Poverty line can measure level of poverty using deficit of purchase power of the family. Through measuring average income level required for providing enough food and all needs of family members, mean population would be indicated in a manner that daily energy required for them can be met (Khani, 2006).

Theory of Womanish Nature of Poverty

The term "womanish poverty" was published for the first time in the paper of Diana Pearce by 1978. The term was applied for explanation of the paradox that contrary to relative progress of women in labor market, families under management of women indicate higher rate of poverty (ibid).

Adherents of the mentioned theory indicate that women head families have been not only spread all around the world, but also percent of woman head families in low-income population has been also increased. The issue has been even observed in those countries that have had the most advanced rules in benefit of women. In these countries, the women are becoming poorer than before contrary to governmental supports for them.

On the other hand, children in these families have welfare and emotional facilities; meaning that firstly because of being poor, they can attend schools less than others and their educational failure would be more than other children in families with management of both parents. Secondly, because of low literacy

Review Article

of mothers, they would be encouraged to do their homework less than others. In addition, delinquency and crime level among adolescents of these families is more than it in others. Other specifications of head women are lack of access to high class and dignity jobs.

In other words, these women are mostly unemployed or have marginal and part-time or low-income jobs. Another problem that can increase vulnerability of these women even if they have high class and dignity employments is the responsibility of setting time for managing responsibilities in and out of their home. The problem has been named by scholars in this field as "time poverty"; meaning women, who work in official labor, market full time and have not enough time for managing their responsibilities in the home and training their children and their own. Time poverty, along with money poverty, can make the group more vulnerable than before (Kissman; quoted from Mohammadi, 2006).

Effective Factors in Poverty

Gender and Poverty

Majority of 1.5 billion people, who live with daily 1\$ or less than it, are women. In addition, the gap between men and women has been increased over the decade. The phenomenon has been generally interpreted as womanish nature of poverty. In average, women earn money more than 50% of men. Women living in poverty are generally deprived from access to vital resources such as credit, land and heritage. Their workforce is unknown and they are not prior to others in terms of healthcare and food needs. They have lack of access to education and sport services and they have insignificant participation in decision makings in home and outside. Through involvement of women in poverty cycle, they would be deprived from having access to those services and resources that can result in change in their position and situation in the society (woman and poverty, Iran Economy, 2000).

Investigation of poverty based on gender indicates that over the decade, percent of poverty in woman head families has been more than it in men head families. In other words, when women are head of family, the probability of being in circle of absolute poverty would be more than those families that are under management of men (Talab, 2003).

Education and Poverty

The gap between education and poverty can be investigated from two dimensions as follows:

1. Taking strategy of poverty eradication through investment in education and through emphasizing promotion of skills and reproduction among poor families (Saied,)
2. Considering poverty as a barrier against products of education in public and individual level (children in poor families would not take benefit of higher education). Facilities of education in developing countries are usually provided for men more than women (ibid).

In rich countries, equal educational facilities are available for men and women; although there are many inequalities between men and women in poor countries in terms of amount of educational services and amount of services for men compared to them for women.

The expenditure for education of girls is too expensive and return of capital invested for their education is very low. This is because; wages of educated men and women are different from each other. As girls live their home after marriage, the capital spent for their education would not be returned. On the other hand, the issue of security of girls in the way of school in poor families, which their houses are far from school, can be considered as a barrier for them to continue their education (ibid).

Therefore, the relationship between education and poverty is a mutual relationship. As poverty can affect access to education and especially in regard with girls and women, lack of access to education can be also a factor for poverty in the future.

Employment

Women have tendency for using their earning mostly in the basic needs of the family and home and especially for promoting level of healthcare of children. Such conditions mean that women have more dominance than men on their earning and consumption (Khani, 2006).

In addition to improve level of welfare of the family through earnings, participation of women in economic activities and especially outside activities and non-traditional jobs can have positive effect on noneconomic dimensions of poverty and welfare. This issue can also cause positive effect on qualitative

Review Article

dimensions such as education and health of children, creativity, equality of rights of men and women. This is because; an employed woman is more concern about future of her children than others. This can in fact determine size of the family and her role and position in the family and society (ibid).

Marriage

Marriage should be considered as one of the effective factors in poverty, since single individuals can meet their material needs hardly by themselves. However, marriage means having spouse and on the other hand, having children can cause individual to spent earned money for needs and costs of the family members.

On the other hand, one of the reasons for poverty of women is on this basis that families with woman head are poorer than families with two heads (wife and husband). These families have no head and support, but also they should also take care of some of their relatives (Fova, 2000, quoted from Shadi Talab Jaleh, Gerayi Nejad Alireza, p.51).

Other Factors

Many other factors can also affect poverty of individuals such as lack of availability of economic resources and unequal distribution of wealth. However, in regard with women, some factors such as inequality in rights and citizenship rights of women can be also existed. Inequality in capabilities, as a result of inequality of opportunities and unequal outputs, structural adjustment policies, womanish nature of economic sector and deprivation of women from official bonuses, migrations and wars and destruction of family support networks have not only resulted in increase in womanish poverty, but also they have resulted in attachment of special class of women to the group of "poorest of the poor" (Chant, 1997).

On the other hand, deprivation of women from social relation network and lack of their access to social capital, which can be resulted from cutting relationships and sometimes can be resulted from preference of isolation to relationships with others, can affect poverty of woman (Shadi Talab Jaleh, Gerayi Nejad, p.52).

Impact of Poverty on Health of Women

Physical Health

Poverty is one of the most important factors effective in malnutrition and is also one of its outputs. Poverty can cause malnutrition and mental and physical disabilities, which can it cause more poverty than before (Kimiagar and Bajan,).

Problems resulted from malnutrition include protein malnutrition, energy deficiency, anemia, iron poverty; disorders resulted from iodine deficiency, zinc, calcium and vitamins A, B2 and D deficiency (ibid).

Mental Health

Positive relationship between poverty and mental health problems is one of the accepted issues in regard with mental pathology. Obtained results from some studies indicate that low income level with low social and economic position is in relationship with high range of mental disorders. Obtained results of Bell (1990) indicate that mental disorders of poor classes are at least 2.5 times more than high social classes (Zohreh, 2001).

Conducted studies in 1970s decade indicate that women under hard life conditions are exposed to danger of depression more than other woman. Hall *et al.*, (1985) have reported that situation of family with one head, lack of higher education and employment has been along with increase in symptoms of depression. Half of low-income mothers showed symptoms of depression (ILee, 1998).

Impact of Poverty on Addiction of Woman

Difference between Men and Women In Terms of Drug Abuse

In general, men take action in regard with drug abuse more than women, since legal, cultural, educational and environmental factors can prevent drug abuse among women.

According to statistics of accepted people in reception units and prosecution of addicted people in Iran based on gender during 1996-99: by 1996, number of men has been equal to 2393 people and number of women has been equal to 165 people. The number has for men has been increased to 6557 people in first half of 1997 and for men it has increased to 466 people.

Review Article

In second half of the same year, number of addicted men achieved 5422 people and number of women achieved 260 people.

However, in 1998 suddenly the number of addicted men was increased to 21793 people and number of women increased to 648 people. The process was also continued in 1999 and number of men reached 29071 and number of addicted women reached 739 people (Mohammadi, 2004).

It should be noted that although there is no exact statistics about addicted poor people, as it was mentioned the relationship between poverty and addiction is mutual and one can't ignore it because of lack of availability of exact statistics.

On the other hand, training role of women as mothers in the family can emphasize significance of this issue that poverty can conduct women towards drug abuse and on the other hand, it can destroy their training and educational role in the family.

Relationship between Poverty of Women and Commitment of Theft by Them

According to statistics of captured people in regard with different types of theft from 1996 to 2001, number of captured women has been equal to 1736 persons compared to men that the number has been equal to 85223 (Military Service of Islamic Republic of Iran, p.206). It seems that some factors such as social environment and cultural factors have caused prevention of commitment of theft among women.

The Relationship between Poverty of Women with Suicide among Them

Manner of suicide of individuals during 1998 to 2001 indicate that men use some ways respectively including hanging, using weapons and poisonous; although women use self-immolation, poisoning and hanging themselves.

The Relationship between Poverty of Women and Prostitution

In the book "On Prostitution in Tehran", prostitution has been defined as follows: prostitute is a woman, who earns money through prostitution and has no other job and continues the job under special systems. In another definition, it has been mentioned that prostitute is a woman or girl, who submits herself for satisfying sexual desires of men. Women can neither have authority, nor can enjoy sexually (Abhari).

In general, effective factors in this regard can be categorized in two groups as follows:

a) Factors such as drug abuse; addiction of husband; dominant conditions on family like lack of having head or bad head; acute money poverty; lack of possibility of marriage; having mental or physical disability; failure in life plans and goals such as education, imposed marriage and so on; corrupted culture dominated on the family; having tendency for financial interests; divorce and separation from family; being old girl; hostility with the regime and system; wrong traditional and cultural limitations; unemployment; dissipation; sexual insanity and so on.

b) Inefficiency of some systems responsible for cultural, economic, security, educational and healthcare issues (Newspaper, 2002).

Poverty and unemployment can be considered among factors that can cause prostitution, since the simplest way for a woman, who has no profession and has not educated, for gaining money is prostitution.

A study has been conducted in 1998 under the title of "Prostitution" by the Office of Studies and Crime Prevention on 33 women and 48 girls, who had illegal relationships and the results obtained from the study are as follows:

About one third percent of women had elementary education; although majority of girls had high school education and majority of women had one or two children or had no children and had bad economic situation. The age range of women was 20-30 years old and girls were 15-25 years old. The main effective factors in creation of the illegal relations between them have been respectively as follows:

Economic weakness; sexual needs and tendencies; lack of supervision of parents on children; lack of presence of parents; disputes between children and parents, poverty and unemployment; high ages and sexual needs, escaping from home; allusion; ostracism from home; addiction of parents and so on

Smuggling Woman

In prevention protocol, suppression and punishment of smuggling people, especially article 3 of women and children smuggling approval if 2000, such crime has been defined as follows: hiring, transferring,

Review Article

transporting, refuting or receiving individuals through threatening them or using force or applying types of imposition, kidnapping, cheating, tricking, abuse of power or position or vulnerable situation or receiving payments or interests to gain consent of a person, who has control on another one, for gaining benefit.

Smuggling women and girls is one of the most benefiting trades around the world. This can cause greedy people to sacrifice women and girls to gain benefit and earn money.

Those women, who participate in smuggling, form large number of illegal female immigrants that are responsible for financial affairs of the family and need enough money. They usually seek good job for earning enough money and hence, they would select marriage or prostitution, so that they consider these ways as the only way for earning money. Women in prostitution business are legally, financially and psychologically attached to applicants and brokers (report of Anti-Smuggling Women Seminar, Office for Crime Prevention Studies, p.2).

Iran Government has taken action for approving specific rules for preventing prostitution, which one example is as follows: the bureau of centers for rehabilitation of women approved in 1992 October 28 has confirmed that: special woman is a woman, who has moral and social deviations such as prostitution and addiction. Negative actions of such woman can cause disruption of public modesty. Action of these women can be legally considered as crime and they would be imprisoned in bazparvary centers (Woman Regulations in Islamic Republic of Iran, Office of Affairs of Women in Presidential Office, p.150).

Poverty of Women and Abortion

Maybe the most important reason for unintentional abortions is same maim of pregnant women. Based on studies of Office of Participation of Women, more than half of women live under anxiety and fear and 18% of them suffer from temporary injuries and even scorch. Among them, physically injured women have been faced abortion to 33% (Mojavezi, 2003).

Methods of Abortion and its Side Effects

Abortion in deprived and poor regions would be performed usually with clumsily and unprofessional actions like striking on the stomach and throwing them down. As a result of such actions, abortion may not be completed and the fetus may gain organ disabilities. In addition, non-healthy abortion may also cause death of mother (assessment of social damages of women over the decade, p.265).

Illegal abortions can cause abundant problems and side effects for women such as anemia, sterility, adhesion of womb, remaining of fetus in the womb that can cause mental disorder can be considered as main results of illegal and non-healthy abortion (Mojavezi, 2003).

Poverty and HIV in Women

AIDS is one of the diseases that are related to immune system disorder of the body, which can be created as a result of being infected to HIV virus. Infection to HIV virus can weaken immune system of the body to some extent that it can't fight some infections and viruses.

AIDS Agent

The main agent and factor of creation of AIDS is HIV virus. The virus can make more than 50% of people infected to AIDS. HIV virus remains inactive in the body for 3 to 10 years and no sign would be emerged from the disease; although after the deadline immune system of body would be weakened and abundant deficiencies would be created in the body of infected person (Azad Armaki,).

Poverty and Family Violence against Women

Definition of violence: in view of WHO, violence is negative and forcible use of power or physical power in terms of forcing or threatening people and groups in the society and even whole society, which can even cause mental damage and death of individuals (Asl, 2008).

Violence can be related to own or others. It means that individuals can bother themselves or others. Different factors can affect violence against women in the family like age, job, income level, education and so on. For both parties, whether victim or the person imposing violence, economic factors can be effective in the party imposed violence to bother the victim. For example, poverty can cause husband, brother or father conduct actions against dignity or modesty like trading drugs, doing home duties and performing services for rich individuals.

Review Article

The contradiction can be itself a sign for violence. On the other hand, financial and economic pressures can pave the way for disputes and maim in the family.

In regard with investigating situation of bothered women in Tehran during 1997-98, it could be found that type of employment of the husband is not in direct relationship with violence. It has been found in a 53-person group of women referred to prevention and rehabilitation centers in Tehran, it has been indicated that husbands of 12 women were worker; husband of 17 woman were teacher or employee; 3 persons were engineer and physician; 16 persons had free occupation and 1 person was student; 3 persons were unemployed and 1 of them was retired in this group (A'azazi).

William Good has presented the theory of "Resources" in field of home violence. Based on the theory, family system has an authorized system similar to other social system or unit. Everyone, who has access to important resources of the family more than others, can make other members to have activity based on his/her wishes and intentions (ibid).

Good believes that powerful individuals in the family impose their power and physical pressure on others less than others, since they have many other resources for purpose of imposing their power. However, among people with social and economic weakness, the only source of power is physical force and using it (ibid).

On the other hand, according to the theory of deprivation, violence is rooted in external motivations such as deprivation for damaging others. According to the theory, deprivation and disappointment can cause stimulation of people and the main aim of it is hurting people or objects.

Economic problems and pressures, lack of meeting basic needs of the family and hardness of job tasks can cause men lose their tolerance against wishes of their children and wife and become angry, anxious and violent (Mohebbi, 2005).

According to the study, women hide their problems because of some reasons such as fear of facing poverty, being excommunicated by their family, undoing, fear of losing their children and fear of physical damages. They prefer to tolerate the violent conditions (the most important factors of violence against women, Journal of Work and Labor, 2004).

Hence, impact of poverty on social abnormalities on women can't be ignored. Statistics indicate that poverty of women can increase probability of occurrence of such abnormalities in them.

In regard with investigating impact of poverty and economic problems in crimes of women, some issues should be considered as follows:

1. Natural differences between men and women have caused difference in different domains. One of the mentioned domains is associated with type and level of crime commitment. Physical, mental, emotional and social, cultural and economic conditions of women has increased probability of committing crimes such as actions against modesty, addiction and smuggling by women. In some crimes such as actions against dignity, 73% of all crimes are committed by women. In this field, statistics have indicated that actions against modesty have increased from 49542 cases in 1986 to 59374 cases in 1991 (collection of papers of investigating problems and issues of women and priorities, vol.2, pp. 892-893).

2. Usually women are economically attached to men and hence, they are exposed to more damages than men. Particularly, in cases that they have no access to financial resources as a result of an event such as divorce and leaving their husband, they would not be able to fight new emerged conditions and they would be exposed to deviations and crimes (ibid,).

According to the mentioned, studies have indicated that crimes such as actions against modesty, addiction and theft in women can be resulted from economic problems and poverty and such crimes would be committed with the aim of earning money and meeting needs. However, in other crimes such as abortion, role of poverty and economic problems can be observed slightly (collection of papers of co-thinking, pp.918-927).

Solutions for Poverty Eradication

It seems that more than everything, considering Islamic solutions such as paying alimony, dowry and heritage of women can prevent increase of poverty among them and as a result calling them as the "Poorest of the Poor".

Review Article

Islam is a religion that has had specific emphasis on social problems and their impact in social health. Islam has emphasized lack of creation of the term "Poverty of Women" through considering the mentioned solutions more than everything for poverty eradication. Hence, ignoring divine trainings and lessons can have specific role in occurrence of problems such as poverty of women.

On the other hand, occurrence of poverty of women in social level should be solved through considering some solutions, so that one can prevent commitment of crimes and social deviations in women such as theft, abortion, prostitution and so on. On the other hand, through this one should be able to guarantee physical and mental health of women, who are responsible for managing and heading their own family.

CONCLUSION

Statistics indicate that poverty has been changed in to a womanish phenomenon over the two decades through development of modernism and urbanization. Hence, through considering special characteristics and issues of women, this issue is important and special attention should be paid to it. Women face big problems and challenges in the society against economic and financial problems according to their biological traits and their specific physical and mental conditions.

Although the importance of considering this issue has been considered by scholars many times, it should be emphasized and studied by scholars, politicians and sociologists, physicians, nurses and all relevant specialized persons until the time that the poverty has been eliminated from life of women. Poverty of women can be prevented and it has also the capability of being reduced. Hence, inattention to this issue can just intensify this issue and can also provide the conditions for increasing social deviations of women and endangering their physical and mental health.

REFERENCES

- A Butt Pamela and Vales Keller (2001).** *Women Sociology*, Manijeh Najm Araghi, (Ney Publications).
- A'azazi Shahla (2002).** *Family Violence Mugged Women*, (Sali Publications).
Alikhanloo Towhid, Resalat Press, 2002
- Entekhab Newspaper, Mojavezi Paksima, (2003)
- Esfandiari Ismail (2003).** poverty and social deviations, conditions or motivation, 6 edition. *Journal of Women Social Council* 21.
- Esfandiari Ismail (2003).** Poverty and social deviations; field or motivation, 6th edition. *Journal of Social and Cultural Council of Women* (21).
- Fazileh Khani (2006).** *Gender and Development*, (publications of Social and Cultural Studies Research Center).
- Foruzan Setareh and Biglarian Akbar (2003).** family head women, opportunities and challenges. *Journal of Women Studies* 1(5).
- HIV, poverty and women Chaturaka Rodrigo, senada Rajapakse in *ternational Health*, 2 , (2010)
- Intra – house hold gender inequality: hidden dimensions of poverty among polish women, Elzbieta tarkowska. *Communist And Post-Communist Studies* 35 (2002).
- Iran Economy (2000).** *Women and Poverty in Different Countries*, 3rd edition, 23.
Islamic Republic of Iran Press, 2002
- Karin Quran
- Khosravai Zohreh (2001).** Investigation of mental-social damages of head women. *Scientific-Research Journal of Human Sciences* 11(39).
- Khosravi Zohreh (2001).** Investigation of mental-social damages of head women. *Scientific-Research Journal of Human Sciences* 11(39).
- Kimiagar Masud and Bajan Marjan (2005).** Poverty and malnutrition in Iran. *Scientific-Research Journal of Social Welfare* 5(18).
- Labor market flexibility and poverty dynamics, catalina Amvedo – Dornates, Ricardo serrano padial. *Labor Economics* 17 (2010).
- Mahmudi Vahid (2002). Measuring poverty in Iran. *Journal of Commercial Studies* (24).

Review Article

- Mohammadi Asl Abbas (2008).** *Gender and Violence*, (Gol Azin Publications).
- Mohammadi Zahra (2006).** Head women, theory of women and poverty with vulnerability of family head women, *Social Cultural Council of Women*.
- Mohebbi Fatemeh (No Date).** Social pathology of women, violence against women. *Journal of Women Book* (14).
- Mosaed Ali (2005).** Investigation of the relationship between poverty and health in Iran. *Scientific-Research Journal of Social Welfare* 5(18).
- Najafi Bostan Hosein (2009).** *Islam and Gender Differences*. Research Center of the University.
- Oshtori Behnaz (2011).** *Smuggling Women, Contemporary Slavery*, (Foruzesh Publications).
- Reza Veisi Pour Parvin (1998).** Employment; way of fighting poverty of women. *Journal of Legal And Judicial Press*.
- Sadeghi Masud and Amarzadeh Mostafa (2004).** Analysis of economic factor effective in employment of women in Iran. *Women Studies* 2(1).
- Saied Pedram (No Date).** Gender and poverty eradication (in development plans). *Journal of Women Rights* (22).
- Sarukhani Bagher (1996).** *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, (Keyhan).
- Seif Ahmad (2001).** *Globalization Of Poverty And Adversity, Structural Adjustment Strategy In Practice, Collection Of Papers*, (Agah Publications).
- Shadi Talab Jaleh and Gerayi Nejad Alireza (2004).** Poverty of family head women. *Women Studies* (1).
- Shadi Talab Jaleh, Vahabi Masumeh and Varmazyar Hassan (2005).** Income poverty; just one aspect of poverty of head women, 8th edition. *Scientific-Research Journal of Social Welfare* 17.
- The Most Important Factors of Violence Against Women*, (Publications of Labor and Laborer), (2004)
- The office for nutrition of the society (2003).** Health Organization, physical training and treatment and research institute of nutrition studies and food industries of Iran
- Women and poverty : beyond earnings and welfare randy A Ibelda the Quarterly Review of economics and finance , 39, (1999)
- Women and poverty: A gender – sensitive approach, Amelia Bastos, Sara F. casaca, Francisco Nunes, jose pereirinha. *The journal of socio- Economics* 38 (2009).
- Zahra Mohammadi (2004).** Investigation of social damages of women during 1991-2001. *Public Relations of Social Cultural Council of Women*.