

## **Perspective strategy of Islam for Treatment Poverty**

**(Effective Ways to Prevent Poverty in society)**

**Wahidullah Azami<sup>1</sup>, Fizullah Qazizadah<sup>2</sup> Rahmatullah Azimi<sup>3</sup>**

### **Abstract**

The existence of the poor and the rich in the world is as old as humanity itself. If the ancient possible civilization is analyzed critically, one finds both upper and poor classes as defining parts of the society. In different ages across history, many attempts were made to eradicate poverty, but with little or no success. In the present modern age, the breach between the rich and the poor is increasing to an alarming degree. On one hand, we have the elite class which has easy access to all necessities and luxuries of life; however, on the other hand, we have the great majority of people, termed as the poor or deprived class, living from hand to mouth. Islam instructs the rich class to help the poor class. This action is termed as “Sadqa” in Islamic Sharia. Islam promises great rewards for the people adhering to this command of the Almighty, and warns the defiant of wrath of Allah. If everyone in the world obeys this command of Allah and in accordance with his/her capability, provides financial assistance to the needy, we will be able to solve the problem of poverty to an acceptable degree. This research paper throws light on the Islamic strategies which can be adopted to resolve the terrible social problem named “Poverty”.

**Key words:** Islam, society, the poor, poverty reduction strategy.

### **Introduction**

Poverty is one of the most crucial and biggest social problem of the modern age. Unfortunately, the number of people living below poverty line is increasing day by day at an alarming rate. Poverty is a social problem that further gives rise to more distressing problems, like, unemployment, crime, depression, etc. Sincere efforts are being made to find a

---

<sup>1</sup>- Senior Teaching Assistant, Head of Department Islamic studies, Sharia Law Faculty, Kandahar University, Afghanistan.

Email: wahidullahazami336@yahoo.com.

<sup>2</sup>- professor, Department of Islamic Culture, Islamic Law Faculty, Kandahar University, Kandahar, Afghanistan and PhD Student at

IIUM University of Malaysia. Email: faizullahsafi@yahoo.com.

<sup>3</sup>Senior Teaching Assistant Department of Islamic studies, Islamic Law Faculty, Kandahar University, Kandahar, Afghanistan and

PhD Student at IIUM University of Malaysia. Email: rahmatullahazimi2017@gmail.com.

solution to this issue. However, poverty continues to afflict us by growing at an ever-increasing rate. Different measures have been taken to cope with poverty, but the results have seldom been positive. It is the dream of every society to get rid of poverty and its accompanying crisis, but the question that torments us is “How can this goal be achieved?” Poverty and economic deprivation are the causes of anarchy and instability in many countries of the world.

Although poverty is a very old social problem that mankind and different societies have faced since the beginning of civilization, the kind of divide that now exists between the “haves” and “have not” is an unprecedented one. Different religions have offered different solutions for poverty in different ages. Similarly, various philosophies and ideologies were presented across time to resolve this issue. Unfortunately, everything failed to eliminate this curse from the world. Islam, the religion of peace, offers a very good solution for the elimination of poverty. The Islamic strategy proposes a cure which treats the social disease “poverty” in such a way that no member, rich or poor, of a society would be treated unjustly and unfairly. According to Socialism, the solution to this problem is the eradication of the rich/upper class itself. Restricting individual ownership of the means of production, and making it the duty of the government to distribute the necessities of life among the masses are the strategies of Socialism. Contrarily, Socialism as a cure did not yield very good results in societies where it was implemented. Poverty could not be eliminated (Ma’ashiat Islam, 1998).

Socialism was a wrong method to solve a priority social problem. Encouraging the labor class to revolt against the elite class for achieving the rights of “have not” did not prove to be a very fruitful step. Despite the efforts of Socialism to abolish poverty, their atheistic views created much anarchy in societies. It finally ended up entangling itself in a battle between social classes. To sum up, it failed to accomplish the objective of eradicating poverty (Islam ka Iktesadi Nizam, 1994).

Islam proposes a very just and balanced approach to solve this problem. Islam believes in protecting and safeguarding the rights of both the rich and the poor. Islam strives to resolve the problem of poverty, but not at the cost of treating any member of the society with injustice. One member should not be given the right to thwart the rights of other individuals in the society, nor should any member be dealt with unfairly.

## **Hypothesis**

To find out the reality of Treatment Poverty of Islam provisions, the following are the hypothesis of this article.

1. What is the comprehensive definition of Poverty?
2. Is the Quran clearly emphasizing on strategy of Treatment Poverty?
3. What are the causes of violence of Treatment Poverty in Afghan Society?
4. What will be the strategy for Treatment Poverty and what is the guidance of Sharia regarding this issue?
5. Is there any other religion without Islam to respect implementation of Treatment Poverty?

## **Material and Methods**

Research involved the indicators strategy of Islam for Treatment Poverty in the light of Qur'anic verses which have been analyzed by using previous researches, is in fact the most urgent issues of today's human societies that has a long root in Islam, and Qur'an has guaranteed the preservation of their implementation. It praised their implementers and punished their offenders. Therefore, the research included descriptive, analytical, or scientific look over the previous works. The main focus of these is the Qur'anic verses and Islamic Sharia.

### **Effectsof Povertyon Morality**

Islam wants every member of the society to get access to the resources enabling him/her to lead an economically satisfactory life so that the society can save itself from poverty which can lead to moral decline in many people afflicted by it. The beloved Prophet (SAW) highlighted how poverty can influence a person's moral character in the Hadith below: "It is possible that the reaction to poverty and economic deprivation can reach the level of Kufr (challenging and denying God's existence)" (Shoa'ab-ul-Emaan, 1990).

In short, poverty can lead to decline in a person's morality. It can weaken his/her faith, and make him/her despairing. It is difficult for a person to remain steadfast if he/she is suffering from this grave social problem. It can make a person rebellious and defiant; finally, resulting in instigating him/her to challenge the very existence of God. Poverty can encourage or rather force people to indulge in horrendous immoral and criminal activities. Robbery, theft, and other decadent activities increase as a consequence of the moral deterioration caused by poverty. To safeguard a person's faith and integrity from falling victim to such moral decline, Islamic Sharia presents an effective solution. Imam Abu Hanifa (Rehmatullah Allaih), the founder of Fiqah-e-Hanfia, states that one should not seek advice from an extremely destitute person as poverty not only affects a person physically but also morally. Ethical and moral values and ideologies can undergo a decline. Therefore, it can be concluded that poverty can lead to psychological problems. Psychologically ill people cannot offer good advice or work with concentration and consistency (Islam Mein Gareebi Ka Elaaj, 2004).

### **Effects of Poverty on Society:**

Poverty has a negative effect not only at the individual level, but it influences the whole society in a harmful way. Poverty becomes the cause of weakening bonds in a family. Before the advent of Islam, the Arabs were affected by poverty in such a terrible way that most of them merely due to the fear of poverty killed their children as raising children could be a financially impossible task for them. This is an

Unimaginably wicked sin. Allah Almighty, in the Holy Qur'an, strictly prohibits and condemns this action by saying: "And people owing to the fear of poverty, do not kill your children. God is the one who provides people with food and sustenance. Undoubtedly, killing children is a big sin (17:31)." Islam strictly forbids people to take such steps because of poverty. If unequal distribution of money in a society prevails and the circulation of capital is restricted to one powerful elite class only, whereas the great majority of the people are deprived of even the

most basic necessities of life, the result is devastating. People in such a society are likely to become selfish and resentful. The society loses peace and stability. Poverty acts as a stimulant to crime; as a result, crime rate increases. Poverty can also become the reason for divorces as husbands who are unable to support their families lose their worth. Hazrat Abu Zar Ghafari, one of the close companions of the Prophet (SAW), states that how is it possible that a person who has no food at all in his house may not pick up his sword and stand against people (Islam Aur Ma'ashi Tahafuz, 1978). Islam accepts that economic problems affect a person's character and personality.

### **The role of Islam in minimizing the breach between the rich and the poor:**

In every age, people have tried to find effective solutions to overcome the problem of poverty, but these attempts could not yield rewarding results. Islam, in this regard, presents an effective solution. Islam proposes a very logical and moderate strategy to cope with poverty. It also arranges for the upbringing of the children of the deprived class. Plus, it also strives to feed the extremely destitute members of the society who could otherwise die of starvation. Islam assigns certain duties to the rich class. It is religiously obligatory for the wealthy to fulfill these duties. The fulfillment of these religious obligations will solve the problem of poverty in the society. In this way, Islam establishes a system which would ensure the well-being of the needy. Furthermore, Islam does not discriminate between Muslims and non-Muslims treating both of them equally as members of the society, who deserve the right to get all basic necessities of life conveniently. Allah Almighty, in the Holy Qur'an, praises the faithful followers by saying that they, for love of God, give their food to the needy, orphans, and captives. (86:8) Allah is here explaining the characteristic feature of the believers. The sincere and devout followers offer help and assistance to the deprived members of the society. "Sadqa" is the term used for giving charity in the way of God to help fellow human beings. The Prophet (SAW) has explained the advantages and benefits of Sadqa. Likewise, Allah, in many places in the Holy Qur'an has instructed the financially capable to give "Sadqa".

In Surah Ba'qara, Allah says, "O believers, whatever you have been given by God, spend from it." (2:254) in the same Surah, He further says, "Those people who spend money in the way of God in a hidden or explicit manner will receive great reward from their Creator." (2:247) in the above verses, Allah commands the Muslims to give Sadqa to please Him. Sadqa is a great step offered by Islam for the well-being of the needy. In Sadqa, the financially capable provide financial assistance to the poor, needy, and handicapped members of the society without expecting anything in return from them. The Prophet (SAW) says that valuable Dinar (currency of the Arabs during the advent of Islam) is one which a person spends on his family, on his animals in the way of God, and on his companions to win God's grace." (Sahih Muslim).

Islam always strives to motivate people to give charity to win Allah's grace and mercy. It is one of the biggest ways of achieving salvation. The Prophet (SAW) has stated that it is obligatory for every Muslim to give Sadqa. The companions (RA) of the Prophet (SAW) once asked, "O Prophet of Allah, what if someone has no money to give Sadqa?" The Prophet

(SAW) replied that one should work with his hands for his gain as well as the gain of others. In the light of the above mentioned Qur'aanic verses and the words of the Prophet (SAW), it is clear that Islam aims and aspires to create a certain ideology which dictates that a person should not just live focusing only on his own needs and wants. On the contrary, a person should think as a member of a society where many needy, homeless, and poor people may require his/her help. In this way Islam promotes feelings of brotherhood and societal collective thinking (Islam ka Iqtisadi Nizam, 1984). The Prophet (SAW) states that a person, who despite knowing that his/her neighbor has no food to eat, ate food and slept cannot be a Muslim. (Al-Targheeb Wal-Tarheeb, 1417).

A good citizen of the Islamic Umma shows concern and consideration for the needs of people around him/her. In this way, Islam strives to build a system which would naturally lead to a decrease in poverty and provide aid to the needy. If every person feels that it is his/her moral and religious responsibility to look after the poor around him/her, the inclination in the poor towards crime will decrease significantly. This system will offer massive financial support to the deprived class. Also, Islam orders the poor to work hard and do their best in order to earn a living instead of sitting idle and waiting for financial help (Islam Mein Ghareebi Ka Ilaaj, 2004).

Allah instructs in the Holy Qur'an, "After fulfilling the obligation of offering Salaat, disperse and try to find God's grace." (62:10). Here, the word "grace" refers to livelihood. Allah is telling people to search for jobs so that a person can struggle to earn a living instead of depending on others. The Prophet (SAW) says that the best earning is the earning of a labourer, but only if he/she did the work with sincerity and devotion (Majma Al-Zawaid, 1408). Similarly, in another place he states that seeking lawful earning is the second most important obligation after the five compulsory worship duties (Al-Ins Al-Akbari, 1994).

These instructions and commands advise the needy and the poor to make every effort to earn their bread. They are not encouraged to sit waiting for aid to arrive from the economically capable class. According to Islam, working or doing a job is the best possible cure to poverty. Islam encourages people to try to pursue a career in every religiously lawful field (Islam Aur Ma'ashi Tahafuz, 1978).

To be specific, in some societies, one of the causes of poverty is the irresponsibility and the idleness of people. For this reason, Islam orders every person in the society to work hard to achieve livelihood. If every financial capable person in a society fulfills the duty of giving Sadqa, every needy will get food and basic necessities of life. This is a marvelous quality of Islam that it proposes a system where without expecting anything in return; a person offers financial help to fellow human beings out of sheer good will and consideration. A person may fix an amount from his income and give it as Sadqa to help the poor. Imam Bukhari (Rehmatullah Alaih), in his book "Bukhari", mentions a riwayat about Hazrat Umer Ibn Khataab that Hazrat Umer would refrain from eating food unless and until a needy would join him for a meal (Sahih Bukhari, 1981). This was Hazrat Umer's routine. Finally, Islam

encourages people to give Sadqa, and also warns the disobedient members of Allah's wrath. The Prophet (SAW) states that if any person has nothing to eat and spends the whole night with empty stomach, then Allah will no more keep His promise of safeguarding that area (Musnad Ahmad Bin Hambal, 1978).

It is also stated that whatever amount is spend as given as Sadqa is like a debt that Allah Himself is taking from a person (Ma'ashiaat Islam, 1998). Allah Almighty is in no way dependent on any one. He is omnipotent and the Sustainer of all. However, he loves and appreciates people who feel that it is their responsibility and duty to provide economic assistance to the needy and destitute. He acknowledges such kind-hearted people by saying that he is indebted to them, and He will give them the reward they deserve. The solution that Islam offers for eliminating poverty is an incredible and unparalleled one. If we think from the worldly perspective, a practical approach would be to give and get something in return. Offering financial aid without asking for something in return is unthinkable in the modern economic systems operative in the world (Fiqa Al-Zakat, 1907).

Furthermore, if a person is forced to take loan because of poverty, and if he/she passes away without paying it back to the giver, it is the responsibility of the state to pay back his/her loan if his/her family is incapable of returning the amount. The Holy Prophet (SAW) states that I am very close to the believers, if any one dies in and is indebted to someone, then it is my duty to return his/her loan, and if s/he had wealth, then that is the property of his/her heirs (Sahih Bukhari, 1981).

In this way, Islam provides protection and economic relief to the needy. It treats the deprived class as an important section of the society whose wellbeing is the responsibility of the rich and the State. The Islamic strategies of solving the problem of poverty should be adopted by everyone in order to eradicate the curse of poverty from the world. out of sincere goodness and compassion, if people give charity, the world will be able to address the problem of poverty in an effective way. The world will turn into a peaceful place. Sadqa can bring a significant decrease in poverty. To sum up, everyone, whether Muslim or Non-Muslim, should consider giving Sadqa to fight poverty at a global level.

### **Conclusion**

The basic ideology of Islam is that Allah Almighty is the real owner of the wealth that He has given to humankind. We must spend wealth in accordance with Allah Almighty's commands and instructions. It is obligatory to spend money in the way of Allah and refrain from spending wealth on things from which Allah has stopped us. In this way, Islam establishes a system for the financial assistance of the destitute and the needy. out of sheer kindness and generosity, helping fellow human beings will help eradicate poverty to a great degree. on the other hand, Islam also orders the needy to struggle and work hard in order to get a living instead of solely relying on the economically wealthy class. Therefore, this system has a balance where no class of a society is exploited.

**References:**

1. "Ma'ashiat-e-Islam". 1998, pg.53. Maulana Moododi. Islamic Publications. Lahore.
2. "Islam Ka IqtesaadiNizaam". 1994, pg.19. Hafa-ur-Rehman Siyuhaarvi. IdaraIslamiyat. Lahore.
3. "Shuaib-al-Emaan". 1990. Abu Bakr bin Hussain. Darul Kitab-ul-aalmia. Beirut. Lebanon.
4. "Islam Main Ghareebi Ka Elaaj". 2004, pg. 31. Yousuf Qarzaavi. Maktaba Islamia. Lahore.
5. Al-Qur'aan. Surah Bani Israel. 17:31.
6. "Islam aur MaashiTahafuz". 1978, pg.21. Dr. Yusuf Qarzaavi. Al Badr Publication. Lahore.
7. Al-Qur'aan. Surah Aldahr. 8:76.
8. Al-Qur'aan. Surah Baqara. 254:2.
9. Al-Qur'aan. Surah Baqara. 247:2.
10. Sahih Muslim, v. 2 pg. 691, Muslim bin Hajaj Al-Qushairi, Daru Ihya-e-turath, Bairut, Lubnan. 11. Sahih Bukhari, 1981, v. 2 pg. 524, Muhammad bin Ismail Bukhari, Darul Qalam, Bairut, Lubnan.
12. "Islam Ka IqtesadiNizaam". 1984, pg.372. Hafiz-ur-Rehman Siyuhaarvi. IdaraIslamiyat. Lahore.
13. Al Targheeb Wal Tarheeb, 1417 hijri, v. 2 pg. 363, Abu Muhammad Abdul Azeem, DarulKutub Al-Ilmia, Bairut, lubnan.
14. "Islam Main Ghareebi Ka Elaaj". 2004, pg. 64. Yousuf Qarzaavi. Maktaba Islamia. Lahore.
15. Al-Qur'aan. Surah Al-Juma'a 10:62.
16. MajmauzZawaid, 1408 Hihri, v. 4 pg. 61, Noorul Hasan Ali bin Abi Bakar, Darul Kitab Al-Arabi, Bairut.
17. Al-Sunan Al-Kubra, 1994, v. 6 pg. 128, Abu Bakar Ahmed bin Husain, MaktabaDarul Baz, Saudi Arabia.
18. Islam Aur Ma'ashiTahafuz, 1978, pg.21. Dr. Yusuf Qarzaavi. Al Badr Publication. Lahore.