
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Estimating the Impacts of Livelihood Support Interventions on Poverty Reduction in Rural Balochistan

Syed Abdul Hadi ¹

Lecturer of Political Science at Education Department of Balochistan.

Article Info

Abstract

Keywords:
Balochistan
Rural,
Descriptive
Analysis,
Livelihood
Interventions,
Poverty.

The study evaluates the impacts of livelihood intervention programs implemented by the Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP) on poverty reduction in Balochistan. The estimation of livelihood impacts is gauged through several indicators, including the Income Generating Grant (IGG), Community Investment Fund (CIF), and Skill Development (TVET). To this end, data from 1500 households segregated into 950 IGG, 250 CIF, and 300 TVET are selected using a two-stage stratified sampling technique in 8 selected districts of Balochistan. This study mainly adopted mixed research approaches, including the descriptive analysis of the data to reflect the role of these interventions in poverty reduction in Balochistan. In addition, Poverty Score Cards (PSC) values have been used to determine the poverty levels. After implementing livelihood support intervention, it was obtained that Households (HHs) monthly income of IGG, CIF, and TVET beneficiaries increased by 17%, 20%, and 39%, respectively, on average. The meaningful tabulation of livelihood interventions positively impacts multifaceted aspects of rural HHs. The results also give evidence of employment generation and income-earning prospects in rural Balochistan. The results also show that gender equality and support for women's empowerment are positively changed in rural Balochistan. Therefore, the tabulated results of community and HHs' specific funding programs and human capital formation via skills provisions to ultra-poor and poor rural people justify Balochistan Rural Development and Community Empowerment (BRACE) as a livelihood support initiative for poverty reduction in rural Balochistan. The government and non-government organizations (NGOs) may get insightful policy interventions from this study to bring effective socioeconomic development in rural Balochistan.

¹ Syed Abdul Hadi has done MS in International Relations from BUIITEMS, Quetta. His Areas of Interest Include the United Nations Organization, Global Conflicts, Foreign Policy of Major Powers, and Global Nuclear Politics.

Introduction

Despite rising living values, enormous gains in well-being, and improving economic standards, 10% of the world population still lives under \$2 a day. Ironically, the exploitation of resources, unequal distribution, and geometric progression of the population have trapped individuals, communities, and even countries in the vicious circle of poverty. More importantly, such communities lag in the fast-developing world, and their sufferings accelerate. Therefore, poverty becomes the major hurdle in ensuring a sustainable livelihood. Moreover, poverty is one of the phenomena for people not to afford basic needs of consumables, safe drinking water, shelter, basic health facilities, and other necessities for living in decent ways.¹ Poverty embraces the lack of productive resources and income that hinders sustainable livelihood. The variables included are limited access to education and other necessary services, lack of food and malnutrition, social discrimination and exclusion, and not being included in decision-making.² To achieve the desired goals, the global community needs to justify supportable resource use and controlled population growth for the dignity of people and their living standards. Unless we work consciously on eradicating poverty, we may not ensure the prosperity of the public.

In 2015, more than 736 million people lived on less than \$1.90 a day. However, with the intervention of technology and humanitarian organizations, the share of global workers living in extreme poverty has fallen from 14.3 percent in 2010 to 7.1 percent in 2019. The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2021, covering 109 developing countries, also said that 1.3 billion out of 5.9 billion people are multidimensional poor. South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa account for 80 percent of people living in extreme poverty. The situation is further deteriorating due to continuous

¹ "Poverty & Equity Brief Pakistan", World Bank Group 2019, https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/publication/poverty-and-equitybriefs2019/Global_POVEQ_PAK.pdf.

² Ending Poverty", United Nation 2022, <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/ending-poverty>.

conflicts, climate change, and food insecurity. This is a rising dilemma for countries like Pakistan, which already has a weak economy in line with huge debt traps from international monetary institutions.

According to a report, 21.9 percent of people in Pakistan lived below the national poverty line in 2018³. Pakistan's rural areas have higher poverty than the urban areas. The poverty estimates in 2015 showed that rural areas doubled (30.7 percent) the urban areas (12.5 percent) poverty rate (for details, please see Table 1, based on National Poverty Estimates, 2019). Balochistan was the poorest province with a poverty rate of 42.2 percent. Balochistan is lagging in many aspects, including education, food shortage, water scarcity, health and infrastructure, energy poverty, and governance, which pushes this province further towards extreme poverty.⁴ Only 6 percent of the land is cultivated with less productivity due to arid conditions⁵. The highest poverty rate can well support this argument and the estimated Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is 0.394, i.e., an overall headcount ratio of 71.2 percent with 84.6 percent in rural areas. Moreover, the province has the slowest progress in reducing multidimensional poverty during 2004-5 and 2014-to-15 with a relative change of only 17.7 percent⁶. Additionally, four districts of Balochistan (Killa Abdullah, Harnai, Barkhan, and Ziarat) have the highest rate of poverty and deprivation and are the least socially developed in Pakistan⁷. The leading causes behind the

³ "Poverty Data Pakistan:" Asian Development Bank, 2019, <https://www.adb.org/where-we-work/pakistan/poverty>.

⁴ Mansoor Ahmed Baloch, and Ayşegül Tanık. "Development of an integrated watershed management strategy for resource conservation in Balochistan Province of Pakistan." *Desalination*, Vol. 226, No. 1-3 (2008): 38-46.

⁵ Syed Fazl-E-Haider, "Anti poverty challenge-Balochistan being alone?." *Pakistan & Gulf Economist* Vol. 38, No. 20 (2019).

⁶ Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund. Balochistan Strategy 2020," Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, 2020, <https://www.ppaf.org.pk/doc/Balochistan%20Strategy%202020.pdf>.

⁷ United Nations Development Programme, "Global Multidimensional Poverty Index," UNDP, 2021, <https://hdr.undp.org/content/2021-global-multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi>

prevailing poverty in rural areas are the lack of resources, and ownership issues, absent landlordism, twisted distribution of land, lack of investment, poor infrastructure, and widespread illiteracy⁸. Hence, Pakistan needs to ensure the reduction of poverty in all forms and dimensions⁹.

However, it is quite challenging to assess and measure poverty. Poverty measurement is complex, and there are as many facets of poverty as related to a situation of misery across the regions and sectors of the global world. Thus, the determinants of poverty rely upon randomized control trials and comprehensive national surveys to capture the tough, costly, and difficult task of poverty measurement since the start of the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) in development fields of studies. Following this, one of the quick and low-cost ways to measure poverty is by adopting the Poverty Score Card (PSC). It is a method to analyze poverty by asking questions from respondents/households about ten simple livelihood indicators¹⁰. Similarly, the PSC introduced by has used the 2005/6 Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLSMS) to provide a practical tool for poverty measurement. The scores range between 0 and 100; 0 indicates households most likely below the poverty line, and 100 indicates the least likely below the poverty line.

Table 1: Poverty trends (2005- 2019)

Years	Percentage of Poverty Incidence			Percentage Change in Poverty		
	National	Urban	Rural	National	Urban	Rural
2005-06	50.4	36.6	57.4	-	-	-
2007-08	44.1	32.7	49.7	6.3	3.9	7.7

⁸ Talat Anwar, S. K. Qureshi, and Hammad Ali. "Landlessness and rural poverty in Pakistan." *Pakistan Development Review*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (2004): 855-871.

⁹ "Goal 1: No Poverty," United Nations in Pakistan, 2022, <https://pakistan.un.org/en/sdgs/1>.

¹⁰ Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, Rachel Glennerster, and Cynthia Kinnan. "The miracle of microfinance? Evidence from a randomized evaluation." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2015):22-53.

2010-11	36.8	26.2	42.1	7.3	6.5	7.6
2011-12	36.3	22.8	43.1	0.5	3.4	-1.0
2013-14	29.5	18.2	35.6	6.8	4.6	7.5
2015-16	24.3	12.5	30.7	5.2	5.7	4.9
2018-19	21.5	10.7	27.6	2.8	1.8	3.1

Author`s compilation. PIDE Knowledge Brief 2020 ¹¹

To reduce the extent of poverty in Balochistan, BRACE has initiated a 5-year program. It was implemented by the BRSP and NRSP. The program is executed in 8 districts of Balochistan, including Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Zhob, Loralai, Duki, Jhal Magsi, Khuzdar, and Washuk. The initiative introduced three livelihood support interventions comprising of CIF, IGG, and TVET to enhance the socio-economic development of poor rural households.

There is a lack of study by academics and policymakers to analyze the impacts of livelihood support intervention in Balochistan on poverty reduction. Similarly, the community and public-based approaches are ineffective due to a lack of coordination between policymakers and those who implement them. Therefore, all such initiatives by the Balochistan government need empirical studies to assess their effectiveness. In addition, the SDGs are facing directionless and almost zero evidence-based mechanisms in rural set-ups of Balochistan to reduce poverty. Therefore, the high prevalence of income-based poverty and multidimensional poverty in Balochistan seek comprehensive policy guidelines based on empirical pieces of evidence of poverty reduction programs. Similarly, the assessment of livelihood support interventions like CIF, IGG, and TVET may show the actual extent of their effectiveness in poverty reduction. Furthermore, the factual findings may help policymakers, governmental institutions, NGOs,

¹¹ Nasir Iqbal, "National Poverty Estimates 2018-19," PIDE Knowledge Brief 2020:3, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics.

national and international donors, and academics reduce poverty in Balochistan. Based on the aforementioned discussion, this study explores the following objectives;

- Assessment of the livelihood support interventions IGG, CIF, and Skill Development (TVET) for poverty reduction in rural Balochistan.
- To give empirical evidence of livelihood support interventions on poverty reduction of poor and ultra-poor households (HH) in rural Balochistan.

With these objectives in mind, this study fills various gaps in the literature; for example, for the first time, the study evaluates livelihood interventions and their impact on poverty reduction in Balochistan. To this end, the study adopts different data sets from BRSP in implementing the said interventions. This paper intends to give empirical evidence of livelihood support interventions for poverty reduction of poor and ultra-poor households in the selected districts of Balochistan. In this context, the theoretical underpinning of the livelihood model in light of SDGs is complemented with proper data analysis to bring forth empirical evidence for community-based development interventions for poverty reduction in rural development. Furthermore, it recommends policy options for reducing poverty by uplifting the livelihood of poor households in Balochistan. Therefore, this study fills various gaps in the literature and will supplement the authorities of rural areas across the globe in devising significant policies to eradicate poverty.

After the introduction, section 2 of the paper sheds light on the relevant literature. Section 3, composed of research methodology and data, also highlights the theoretical framework of the livelihood model adopted by BRACE livelihood interventions of CIF, IGG, and TVET to reduce poverty in rural Balochistan. Section 4 carries out the overall impacts of livelihood support intervention on poverty reduction in the selected districts of Balochistan. Finally, policy recommendations and conclusions are discussed in Section 5.

Literature Review

There are four channels of livelihood interventions applied to reduce poverty. These channels are the Income Approach which focuses on various models like the Bangladesh Model, which refers to providing poultry inputs and services to poor households for poverty alleviation. By providing micro-credit and training, the model helps in income-earning opportunities for poor people and improves their livelihood¹². While discussing the second channel, Provision of Socioeconomic Services, the Cambodian Ministry of Labor & Vocational Training has initiated 4-year Vocational Training for Disadvantaged Young People in rural areas to address the issue of unemployment. The project proved to be fruitful not only in acquiring employment opportunities but also helped them to build their future. Moreover, the beneficiaries responded that the program was more than vocational training. It was instead a way to communicate, think and plan, make decisions, and take responsibility¹³. The third Channel is Human Resource Development, where small and micro-investments to agricultural and rural sectors can enhance the employment and income of rural households¹⁴. They further added that the program has also benefited the beneficiaries in the shape of increased productivity & earnings of crops and livestock. Besides, the socio-economic factor of the beneficiary also positively affected the initiative's outcome. On the other hand, the micro-investment program has helped poor households perform their economic activities in a more organized manner, led them to a higher quality of life, and developed their

¹² Frands Dolberg. "A review of household poultry production as a tool in poverty reduction with focus on Bangladesh and India." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Pro-Poor Livestock Policy Initiative, PPLPI Working Papers (2003).

¹³ Geoff Berry, Suos Sovann, and Moniphea Leng. "Good Practices in TVET for disadvantaged young people in rural Cambodia." *TVET@ Asia*, Vol. 11 (2018): 1-19.

¹⁴ Mizanur Rahman, and Fariduddin Ahmad. "Impact of microfinance of IBBL on the rural poor's livelihood in Bangladesh: an empirical study," *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern finance and management*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2010): 168-190.

awareness of health care, proper sanitation, and safe drinking water. The fourth channel is Industrial Development and Employment Generation; in this context, industrialization is the backbone of sustainable livelihood with the benefits of income generation, employment opportunities, and reduction of poverty ¹⁵. The literature is highlighted in the following ways to show empirical evidence of the channels of the mentioned livelihood earnings to reduce poverty.

Income Approach to Reduce Poverty

Income generation is a global scale that measures the development and poverty of a nation or society. In this context, a study has also distributed various countries into developed, developing, and under-developed countries in the context of their income level in three broader categories low, middle, and high-income countries. Moreover, income is the basis of a person's or society's livelihood. ¹⁶ livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources), and activities required for a living. For this, the authors have analyzed the micro-date of 370 income livelihood beneficiaries in the district Pishin of Balochistan. The questionnaire-based survey identified a positive relationship between micro-credit and income support interventions to reduce poverty in rural Balochistan.

The Livelihood Enhancement and Protection (LEP) program under the shadow of the mega poverty reduction initiative 'Ehsaas'. Their assessments were based on a survey of beneficiaries in the Khyber Pakhtun Khawa and Balochistan provinces. They concluded that the poverty alleviation intervention is a social safety net. The program intends to provide assets and skill training to poor

¹⁵ Jianjun Ding, Zhang Wang, Yanhong Liu, and Fangwei Yu. "Rural households' livelihood responses to industry-based poverty alleviation as a sustainable route out of poverty." *Regional Sustainability*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2020):68-81.

¹⁶ Aziz Ahmed, Abdul Wadood, and Noor Mohammad. "Tracer study of socioeconomic and demographic impacts of technical and vocational education and training (tvvet) for women in Balochistan." *Pakistan Social Science Review*, Vol. 4. No.3 (2022): 824-838.

households. The results were entirely satisfactory by increasing the earnings and ensuring sustainable livelihood opportunities for poor households. The international evidence in literature is also highlighted in the following manner to show channels of livelihood interventions for economic activity generation to raise the income of its poor people¹⁷.

China has designed and implemented Rural Land Consolidation (RLC) to achieve sustainable land use by combining land system reform and policy innovation to increase the income of its poor people. To examine the impacts of livelihood capital endowment on income generation and poverty reduction, the author applied the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA).¹⁸ A primary data-based Survey has been collected in four counties of Hubei and Guizhou provinces of China. Moreover, the fuzzy set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) was used to empirically study several combinations of initial livelihood capital endowment after the implementation of different modes of interventions to raise the incomes of poor individuals. The results depicted a picture of poverty alleviation by improving income growth and reducing the vulnerability of households.

The Indian government has initiated the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) to create efficient and effective institutional platforms for the agricultural poor, enabling them to extend household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services. To analyze the impacts of these initiatives a study was conducted in the Lathur district of Maharashtra by collecting primary data from NRLM through questionnaires and formal discussions with villages and

¹⁷ Asif Javed, Vaqar Ahmed, and Bakhrul Khair Amal. "The Social safety nets and poverty alleviation in Pakistan: an evaluation of livelihood enhancement and protection Programme." *Britain International of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2021): 21-36.

¹⁸ Wenxiong Wang, Yuanqin Lan, and Xu Wang. "Impact of livelihood capital endowment on poverty alleviation of households under rural land consolidation," *Land Use Policy*, Vol. 109 (2021): 105608.

block officers. The study found NRLM helpful in increasing income generation and incredibly empowering women by bringing them together in groups and providing training to poor women to help them improve their income via sustainable livelihood programs¹⁹.

Gamidiriya has adopted a poverty reduction strategy funded by the World Bank for livelihood interventions for income generation in Sri Lanka's poor communities. A pilot study was conducted to examine the initiative's economic enhancement of the rural community²⁰. The study took place in 4 counties of the Matara district. A field survey was employed with the application of SWOT analysis to collect primary data. The results showed that most loan borrowers increased their income by 20%.

Community-run Forest Programs are also a source of income generation for poor households in many states in Bhutan. The component of livelihood interventions for the Community Forestry Program (CFP) helped poor households experience higher income in different areas of Bhutan. It allows local households to get fuel wood, construction timber, mushrooms, bamboo, and vegetables, to mention a few. The scheme then experiences livelihood interventions for domestic uses and increased access to forest products the local communities can sell to gain extra income. The contribution of community forests to rural livelihoods in Bhutan includes the relatively new goal of income generation to alleviate rural poverty. The questionnaire-based interviews of locals and forest officers reported that adjacent communities to the forest got various products to sustain their livelihood and earn more income. The excessive products were sold to locals in the international market for a handsome amount. Thus, the study found that a well-

¹⁹ H.S Patil, "A Study on National Rural Livelihood Mission–A Government Initiative for Women Empowerment." *ANVESAK, UGC Care Group-1 Journal*, 51, No. 1 (2021): 45-54.

²⁰ G C Samaraweera. "Economic and social assessment of poverty alleviation programs in Sri Lanka-special reference to the Gemidiriya community development and livelihood improvement project." *Journal of Emerging Trends in Economics and Management Sciences*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2010): 60-65.

managed community forest program is also a source of income and reduces poverty in Bhutan's vulnerable uplands ²¹.

Socioeconomic Services Provision to Reduce Poverty

Providing socio-economic services to poor households is likely to reduce poverty globally relatively. It further generates means of earnings and sustains livelihood. Various developing states have adopted numerous poverty reduction initiatives to alleviate poverty and adopt measures to maintain a prosperous livelihood. In this context, Poverty Alleviation Resettlement (PAR) is a state-led conversation and development program by the Chinese government to lift the poor out of the poverty trap and graduate poor individuals to enter into sustainable livelihoods by delivering improvements in housing conditions, infrastructure services, public amenities, and living standards. Analyzing the PAR from the perspective of vulnerability, a household survey with 657 questionnaires was conducted by in six townships of district Ankang of Shanxi province²². Despite the difference in exposure, sensitivity, and the adaptive capacity of rural households with different relocation characteristics, the overall impacts of the livelihood intervention were fruitful in reducing poverty.

Specifically, assessing the impacts of the CIF on the socio-economic life of rural women, a study was conducted in five districts of Sindh, Pakistan. According to the study, the quasi-experimental design approach included two groups, i.e., beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. A total of 708 sample collected from both the experimental groups. The results indicated that the program

²¹ Wangchuk Dorji, "Opportunities and Constraints to Community Forests for Local Income Generation and Livelihood: A Case Study of Four Community Forests in Bumthang District, Bhutan," Master's Thesis, University of Montana, 2011, <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/1201/>.

²² Ming-Yue Liu, Xiao-Long Feng, San-Gui Wang, and Yu Zhong. "Does poverty-alleviation-based industry development improve farmers' livelihood capital?." *Journal of Integrative Agriculture*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (2021): 915-926.

responded to women's empowerment, income generation, and satisfactory poverty reduction²³.

The experience of Indian state of Telangana has initiated a state-wide poverty reduction project to help the rural poor improve their livelihoods. The program was launched with the name Indira Kranthi Patham (IKP). The initiative intends to empower women by forming, developing, and strengthening women's Self-Help Groups and their federations. The study was conducted in two (Yadadri & Bhongir) districts of Telangana. Through purposeful interview methods combined with a Simple Random Technique for 380 beneficiary respondents of IKP concluded that IKP showed increased women empowerment and earnings that caused reduced poverty in the area²⁴.

Besides capital generation, skills provision is also a source of the socio-economic development policy interventions to reduce poverty via enhancing socio-economic opportunities for the poor across the developing world. To examine the socio-economic impacts of TVET provision²⁵, a detailed study was conducted in Samoa. Data from 15 skilled respondents was collected and further framed with sustainable livelihood and capabilities approaches. The methodology of the questionnaire and focus group discussion was carried out to show that at least one TVET-certified member can make positive physical and social contributions toward improving the livelihood and socioeconomic levels of poor rural individuals.

²³ Pervaiz Ahmed Memom, Muhammad Ramazan Kalhor, Kiran Tariq, Paras Sindhu, and Suman Shaikh. "Socio-Economic Impact of the Interest-Free Community Investment Fund: A Case Study of Rural Sindh, Pakistan." *Economies*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (2022): 18.

²⁴ M Narsaiah, Indira Kranthi Patham a Poverty Eradication Programme in Yadadri Bhongir District of Telangana: A study. *Int. J. Multidiscip. Educ. Res* 8 (2019): 148.

²⁵ Susana Taua'a, and Frances K. Penaia. "Exploring the impact of a Technical and Vocational Education and Training qualified person on the socio-economic well-being of the household: A case study from Samoa." *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, Vol. 63, No. 2 (2022): 290-305.

According to a study, fragile ecological region causes land degradation responsible for poverty persistence in China. From a socio-economic perspective, it deepens poverty and lessens economic activities and rural revitalization. In this context, the Dingbuan government has arranged 36 projects to consolidate degraded land with an area of 4921 hectares in rural set-ups in China. The primary data of field interviews complemented with secondary data reported that consolidating degraded land was entirely satisfactory with improvement in rural economic structure, the well-being of people, and reduced poverty through agriculture, industry, and tourism development in Dingbian county²⁶.

Human Resource Development to Reduce Poverty

The skills provision, TVET interventions for the unskilled labor force, and human resource development are some consensus-based factors to reduce poverty via the channels of income generation and employment opportunities in labor markets of both the developed and developing countries. In addition, the TVET provisions play a leading role in promoting community and national development. Human resource development via the provision of TVET to the labor force causes poverty reductions across the world's poor communities²⁷.

Specifically, TVET is the source of human resource development. It can be achieved by providing various skill trades through provincial and federal TVET institutions. Poverty reduction, employment generation, income earnings, and acquisition of other labor market outcomes are possible with the help of skilled people in Pakistan. Skills development of poor households resulted in a significant reduction of poverty and empowered the least developed and vulnerable fragments of the

²⁶ Yongsheng Wang, , and Yuheng Li. "Promotion of degraded land consolidation to rural poverty alleviation in the agro-pastoral transition zone of northern China." *Land Use Policy* Vol. 88 (2019): 104114.

²⁷ Shiba Bagale, "Technical education and vocational training for sustainable development." *Journal of Training and Development*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2015): 15-20.

society; another study has shown pieces of evidence of the socio-economic and demographic impacts of TVET provisions for poor and vulnerable women in rural and urban Balochistan. The descriptive and questionnaire-based data of 178 TVET-qualified women have shown profound positive effects on their socio-economic development, women's economic empowerment, and earnings in Balochistan.

Moreover, a study has assessed the impacts of TVET on the vulnerable youth of Afghanistan in the light of job creation and self-employment. The quantitative methodology under the observation of interpretivist philosophy found that skill development is needed to improve the livelihood of the poor youth of Afghanistan²⁸. Seeking the impacts of education on poverty alleviation have conducted a logistic regression model for Household Integrated Economic Surveys (HIES) of Fiscal Years between 1998-99 and 2001-02 showed that experience and educational achievements overcome poverty in both years. Thus, more education results in less poverty²⁹. The skills of entrepreneurship have also demonstrated poverty reduction channels via capacity building, business start-ups, small business accounting skills, and management skills acquisition among youth in Pakistan³⁰. All the studies mentioned above conclude that human resource development causes poverty reductions via abrupt labor market entry for jobs, entrepreneurship, employment, and income earnings to poor communities across the globe.

²⁸ Noor Gul, Kalimullah Khan, and Shahzad Anwar. "Development of Small and Medium Enterprises through Technical Vocational and Educational Training in Afghanistan." *Kardan Journal of Economics and Management Sciences*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (2019): 83-96.

²⁹ Masood Sarwar Awan, Nouman Malik, Haroon Sarwar, and Muhammad Waqas. "Impact of education on poverty reduction." *International Journal of Academic Research*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2011): pp. 659-664.

³⁰ Musa Umer Farouk, Mohamad A Iskandar Lee B Abdullah, and Ratnaria Wahid. "Public policies on entrepreneurship: The implication for poverty reduction: A qualitative approach." *International Journal of Management Research and Reviews*, Vol. 6, No. 10 (2016): 1393-1404.

Other Channels of Livelihood Interventions to Reduce Poverty

Economic development is the key to poverty reduction. In this context, the Republic of Korea shows examples of industrialization, trade opportunities, and good governance³¹. The Chinese case of industrialization in rural China, skills development, rural economic reforms, and other initiatives of livelihood programs over the years resulted in reducing the highest number of poor populations in human economic history³². The export-promotion strategies under the umbrella of livelihood interventions in Cambodia have also experienced poverty reductions for its beneficiaries³³.

At the provincial levels of Balochistan, the cottage-based industries have brought socioeconomic development and poverty reductions via the channels of community-based livelihood interventions of promoting Baloch and Pashtun embroidery works, its marketing, minor and medium business enterprises development, and village support programs across the province of Balochistan³⁴.

BRACE Programs Interventions in Balochistan

The Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP), the largest non-governmental organization (NGO) in Balochistan, has implemented BRACE programs for livelihood interventions to reduce poverty in eight districts of Balochistan. This program is funded by donors like the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the

³¹Huck-ju Kwon and Ilcheong Yi "Economic development and poverty reduction in Korea: Governing multifunctional institutions," *Development and Change*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (2009): 769-792.

³²Fang Su, Nini Song, Nannan Ma, Altynbek Sultanaliev, Jing Ma, Bing Xue, and Shah Fahad. "An assessment of poverty alleviation measures and sustainable livelihood capability of farm households in rural China: a sustainable livelihood approach," *Agriculture* Vol. 11, No. 12 (2021): 1230.

³³Tatsufumi Yamagata. "The garment industry in Cambodia: Its role in poverty reduction through export-oriented development." IDE Discussion Paper 62 (2006).

³⁴Shams Wazir, and Mumtaz A Baloch. "Poverty alleviation through home-based cottage industries in Quetta Balochistan," *New Horizons*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2019):113-132

European Union (EU) to mitigate extreme poverty in rural set-ups of Balochistan. The livelihood interventions of CIF loans IGG and TVET skills provision are based on SDGs and their livelihood models to enhance the socioeconomic lives of the poor HHs and individuals in rural Balochistan. The formula of PSC is used to make categories of the ultra-poor (0-11), the poor (12-23), and the non-poor (24-100) to distribute the HHs and BRACE beneficiaries for allocations of livelihood supports under the three categories of livelihood interventions. They are; the CIF, IGG, and TVET. This study fills the gap in the literature to analyze the impacts of CIF, IGG, and TVET interventions on the growing phenomenon of poverty in selected districts of rural Balochistan.

Research Methodology, Data and Theoretical Framework

The data on the topic and research methods applied in the study are given in the subsequent sections.

Research Methodology & Data

This study used BRACE baseline survey data conducted in 19 union councils scattered over eight rural districts of Balochistan between 2018 & 2021. The survey includes 1500 BRACE beneficiaries who targeted 950 IGG, 250 CIF, and 300 TVET, which were collected through a two-stage Random Sampling Approach. To indicate the poverty intensity, PSC are employed, which distributes the questionnaire into ten major poverty indicators (items) covering socio-economic and necessities of life. In addition, data is collected through already trained enumerators and conducted interviews of Rural Support Program (RSP) Managers, Community Resource Persons (CRPs), and Head of the Local Organizations (HLOs). Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) are conducted for in-depth analyses by including the male and female beneficiaries who have a role in livelihood intervention. Further, for the qualitative analysis, the Key Informants were identified, and the Key Informant

interviews (KIIs) were to authenticate the research in this study³⁵. Finally, for the formal data analysis, we conducted the frequency distribution and descriptive analysis of the following indicators³⁶.

The detailed analysis of the data collected for eight Balochistan districts is given in detail in the following sections.

Results and Discussion

The results are discussed with the help of descriptive analysis to show empirical evidence of livelihood interventions (CIF, IGG, and TVET) on poverty reduction of ultra-poor and poor HHs in selected districts of rural Balochistan.

Ultra-poor and Poor HHs in Rural Balochistan

While explaining the role of ultra-poor and poor households in Balochistan, the frequency distribution of the data given in Table 2 shows that the ultra-poor HHs are 16%, the poor (chronically and transitory poor) HHs are 38%, transitory vulnerable HHs are 32%. Non-poor HHs category is 15% in selected districts of Balochistan, as indicated in ³⁵. It implies that 85% of the targeted HHs are poor or vulnerable to poverty in rural areas of Balochistan's surveyed beneficiaries. Therefore, this situation supplemented to intervene the rural households to eradicate poverty in selected rural areas of Balochistan.

Table 2: Classification of HHs on PSC Balochistan

<i>PSC Score</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Percentages</i>
<i>PSC 0-11</i>	Extremely poor or ultra-poor	16%
<i>PSC 12-18</i>	The poor (chronically and transitory poor)	38%
<i>PSC 24-34</i>	Transitory vulnerable	32%

³⁵BRSP, "Annual Report 2020-2021, "2021,<https://brsp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.

³⁶ Johannes Wheeldon,. "Mapping mixed methods research: Methods, measures, and meaning." *Journal of mixed methods research*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2010): 87-102.

<i>PSC 35-100</i>	Non-poor and transitory non-poor	15%
<i>Total PSC 0-100</i>	All categories	100%

Source: author`s compilation/BRSP annual report 2021.³⁷

Livelihood Interventions and Target Achievements

It is clear from Table 3 that the livelihood intervention program of BRACE has improved the overall 11%, 44%, and 54% of the targeted beneficiaries through CIF, IGG, and TVET in selected eight districts of Balochistan, respectively. From the results, we notice that TVET interventions are most effective in achieving targets for poverty reduction in the study area.

Table 3: The CIF, IGG & TVET Interventions and Target Achievements at District Levels

<i>District/Interventions (Achievements % of targets)</i>	<i>Khuzdar</i>	<i>Washuk</i>	<i>Jhal Magsi</i>	<i>Pishin</i>	<i>Killa Abdullah</i>	<i>Loralai</i>	<i>Duki</i>	<i>Zhob</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>CIF loans</i>	20%	10%	0%	0%	0%	24%	9%	16%	11%
<i>IGGs</i>	49%	72%	53%	44%	18%	54%	20%	51%	44%
<i>TVET</i>	91%	130%	107%	15%	13%	121%	63%	79%	54%

Shares of Livelihood Interventions to Ultra-poor and Poor HHs

The explanation given in Table 4 shows that ultra-poor HHs in almost all the districts got a major portion of the CIF loans and IGG than the share of the poor HHs to mitigate the prevalence of poverty in rural Balochistan. The maximum percentage of ultra-poor is 23% reported in the Khuzdar district, and the minimum share is reported in the Jhal Magsi district. Similarly, the maximum percentage (21%) of IGGs is given to the poor HHs of district Pishin, and the

³⁷ BRSP, "Annual Report 2020-2021," 2021, <https://brsp.org.pk/wpcontent/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.

maximum share (21%) of CIF loans is disbursed to the poor HHs of district Pishin in rural Balochistan.

Purpose of CIF/IGG Loans to HHs for Developing Rural Economy

The data in Table 5 shows that CIF loans are being used for livestock (24%), agriculture inputs (37%), and micro-enterprises (39%), respectively, in different districts of rural Balochistan. On the other hand, the rural beneficiaries of these livelihood interventions use the highest share of 67% of IGGs for income generation in livestock.

Table 4: Shares of Livelihood Interventions to Ultra-poor and Poor HHs

<i>Districts/Share of Grants in %ages</i>	<i>Khuzdar</i>	<i>Washuk</i>	<i>Jhal Magsi</i>	<i>Pishin</i>	<i>Killa Abdullah</i>	<i>Loralai</i>	<i>Zhob</i>	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Share of Grants to Ultra-poor & Poor</i>								
<i>Share of Ultra-poor HHs (PSC 0-11)</i>	23%	6%	5%	17%	25%	12%	6%	100%
<i>Share of Poor HHs (PSC 0-23)</i>	1%	5%	1%	1%	19%	0%	1%	100%
<i>Shares of Grants to Village Organizations</i>								
<i>For IGGs</i>	20%	8%	6%	21%	6%	14%	11%	100%
<i>For CIF</i>	18%	7%	3%	21%	6%	14%	10%	100%

Author`s Compilation.

Thus, to reduce poverty, the results show that IGGs help support livestock development, and CIF contributes more to income generation through micro-enterprise establishment in rural Balochistan.

Table 5: Purpose of CIF/IGG Loans to HHs for Developing Rural Economy

<i>Interventions/Purpose</i>	<i>CIF loans (%)</i>	<i>IGG (%)</i>
<i>CIF/IGG loans Use for</i>		
<i>Livestock</i>	24%	67%
<i>Agriculture inputs</i>	37%	2%
<i>Micro-enterprises</i>	39%	31%
<i>Other activities</i>	0%	-

Authors' compilation/BRSP annual report 2021.³⁸

TVET Provision to Poor HH Beneficiaries in Rural Balochistan

The technical and vocational training of three to six months is given to 351 males and females ultra-poor and poor HHs in rural areas of selected districts of Balochistan. The TVET skills are offered in different trades to get human capital for better earning and employment opportunities across the provincial labor markets of Balochistan. The data shows that 83% of female TVET beneficiaries acquired TVET skills in sewing, cutting, and tailoring and only 1% in mobile and IT technologies. On the other hand, male TVET beneficiaries got skills in diversified trades of Auto-mechanic and auto-electrician (10%), compute (hardware and software, 29%), civil and quality surveyor (1%), general electrician (29%), welding (2%), mobile phone repairing (24%), motorcycle repairing (2%), plumbing (2%), refrigeration and air conditioning (3%) and sewing, cutting and tailoring (19%) in different districts of Balochistan³⁹.

³⁸ BRSP, "Annual Report 2020-2021, "2021, <https://brsp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.

³⁹Institute for Public Opinion Research, "A Public Opinion Survey on Current Political Situation of Pakistan," (Islamabad: IPOR, 2022) <https://ipor.com.pk/uploads/636a8c154af23.pdf>.

Earnings, Costs, and Net Earnings of TVET Beneficiaries in Rural Balochistan

The data shown in Table 6 portrays that TVET programs of the BRACE initiative have positive earnings accruals for the poor rural HHs in Balochistan. The male TVET beneficiaries got an average of PKR: 10,375, and females got PKR: of 4,270 per month. The difference in earnings for both might be due to a limited number of TVET trade provisions for females and fewer labor market opportunities for them in labor markets across the rural areas of Balochistan. The costs of TVET inputs/businesses are almost half for male TVET beneficiaries and one-third for female TVET beneficiaries, thus giving more net earnings in favor of female poverty reductions in rural Balochistan.

Table 6: Earnings, Costs, and Net Earnings of TVET Beneficiaries in Rural Balochistan

<i>Earning, Cost, and Net Income Line Items</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Both</i>
<i>Selected Observations (earnings are per Month)</i>	16	140	156
<i>Earnings</i>	10,375	4,270	4,896
<i>Cost of TVET Inputs/Businesses</i>	5,675	1,051	1,525
<i>Net Earnings (Earning minus Costs)</i>	4,178	3,219	3,328

Authors' compilation/BRSP annual report 2021.⁴⁰

The Relationship between PSC and Income of Rural HHs

Table 7 portrays the change in the average poverty score and income of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries between 2018 and 2021. The figures show that by comparing the PCS scores of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, it was found that CIF and TVET beneficiaries got a higher score than non-beneficiaries. In contrast, IGG (24%) and TVET (30%) respondent households moved to higher PSC bands from lower bands. Thus, 45% of IGG beneficiaries and 21 % of non-

⁴⁰ BRSP, "Annual Report 2020-2021,"2021, <https://brsp.org.pk/wpcontent/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.

beneficiaries moved from PSC 0-18 to PSC 24-100. The CIF sector did not show a rise in scorecards for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Additionally, 51 % of the TVET beneficiaries and 21% of the comparison group moved from PSC 00-18 to PSC 24-100. On the other hand, the average income of the beneficiary household was reported as PKR 16.800 per month in 2021. While breaking down the income of all beneficiaries, the IGG recipients earned PKR 13,500, CIF borrowers earned PKR 15,200, and TVET beneficiaries earned PKR 20,400, respectively. Competitively, the average income of non-beneficiaries was relatively less than the beneficiaries.

Interestingly, TVET respondents earned the most as compared to the other two interventions. Above all, analysis shows a decrease in real income between 2018 and 2021 for all groups of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (except one), an average decrease of 12 % for all beneficiaries as a group. However, TVET beneficiaries reported an increase of 8 % in real income. The reported income of female respondents was PKR 7,100 during the last 12 months. However, the 7% loss of average income for beneficiaries was due to several factors the Lockdown due to the pandemic, fluctuations in market growth, and natural hazards.

Table 7. IGG, CIF, TVET & PSC (2018 vs 2021)

<i>Panel A</i>		
<i>Mean change in Poverty score</i>	<i>IGG, CIF, and TVET Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Non-beneficiaries (PSC 0-23)</i>
<i>No. of Observations</i>	1,063	311
<i>Mean PSC 2017-18</i>	14.5	12.5
<i>Mean PSC 2021</i>	25.9	20.8
<i>Difference in PSC</i>	11.4	8.3
<i>Panel B</i>		

Improvement in PSC -0-18 to PSC 24-100	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Non-beneficiaries</i>
	IGG	45%	21%
	CIF	No rise	No rise
	TVET	51%	21%
Income (PKR)	IGG	13,500	-
	CIF	15,200	-
	TVET	20,400	-

Authors' compilation/BRSP annual report 2021⁴¹.

The Relationship Between PSC and IGG Interventions for Rural HHs

IGGs intend to finance household activities, including HH head, spouse, and kids, including the decision and labor. In this context, the data in the Table shows that 70% of female beneficiaries contributed labor to IGG activities. However, fewer women were found in the decision-making category compared to men. While implementing the IGG initiative, the Implementing Partners (IPs) have given an average of 38,700 to each beneficiary. In response, 65% of beneficiaries utilized the amount in livestock to increase their stock. The reasons behind investment in livestock were; previous experience, encouragement by the spouse, and availability of space in the house. In the context of income generation, 50% of the respondents have earned more than their expectations. Factors behind their profit were the availability of a market, the usefulness of the Enterprise Development Training (EDT), and time contributed by household members. Others who did not materialize expected income blamed the market, insufficient balance, and the death of livestock. Thus, the IGG beneficiaries' monthly average income is Rs.3,100, i.e., 23% of their average monthly household

⁴¹ BRSP, "Annual Report 2020-2021," 2021, <https://brsp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.

income. Though the beneficiaries did not blame the COVID-19 pandemic as a hurdle in their earnings, it may affect market growth for beneficiaries with less income. In addition, beneficiaries have invested their income in food, clothes, health care, and children's education. This helped improve food consumption, healthcare access, and children's education³⁹.

Table 8: IGG Impacts on Poverty Reduction

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>			
<i>Net earnings (Amount after cost)</i>	2844	4518	4262			
<i>Income</i>	The income of 50% of the beneficiaries is increased.					
<i>Change in Poverty Score</i>	No. of Obs.	Mean PSC (2018)	Mean PSC (2017-2021)	Mean PSC (2021)		Difference
	351	16.4		28.5		12.1

Authors' compilation/BRSP annual report 2021⁴².

The Relationship between PSC and CIF Loans for Rural HHs

CIF-financed activities are also based on the participation of household members. During the survey, 398 beneficiaries, including 58 males and 340 females, were taken on board to assess the impacts of CIF loans on their livelihood. The data in Table 9 reveals that in most cases, males play a dominant role in deciding to join CIF activities with their spouses. In addition, 58% of females contribute their labor in CIF-related activities. The beneficiaries of the CIF provision got an average loan of PKR 21,300; males got PKR 16,440, and females got PKR 22,089. 34% invested the given

⁴² BRSP, "Annual Report 2020-2021," 2021, <https://brsp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.

amount in livestock (goat, sheep) due to previous experience, encouragement by the spouse and other family members, and availability of space in the house. Their income was increased according to and more than their expectations. For them, the reason for their rise in profit was the availability of a good market for the products/services of the activity. Those who did not profit from their investment blamed the slow market, insufficient balance, and death of their livestock. In terms of income, the beneficiaries' monthly average monthly income was PKR 1,600, equivalent to 11% of their average monthly household income. The income was mainly spent on food, clothes, healthcare, and children's education, thus, improving food security, health, and education issues.

Table 9: Change in poverty score of CIF beneficiaries and Income Generation

<i>Inputs</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Both</i>
<i>No. of Respondents</i>	58	340	398
<i>Earning per month</i>	5,526	5,824	5,781
<i>Net amount earned (Earning minus cost)</i>	2,214	1,497	1,602
<i>Change in poverty score</i>	Mean PSC 2017-18	14.4	
	Mean PSC 2021	24.8	
	Difference	10.4	

Authors' compilation/BRSP annual report 2021⁴³.

The Relationship Between PSC and TVET Provision for Rural HHs

Unlike the CIF and IGG regarding the decision power to join the initiative, female is not reported to be dependent on their spouse to enter the livelihood initiative. In this context, the facts in Table 10

⁴³ BRSP, "Annual Report 2020-2021," 2021, <https://brsp.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.

present a picture where most TVET female beneficiaries decided to become CO members, participate in the training, and choose the trade/skill for their training without reference to their husbands. In the context of earnings, 46% of beneficiaries (29% male, 71% female) said they are earning in their expertise. In the fields of sewing, cutting, and tailoring, 82% got the training. 84% of beneficiaries contribute their labor to their activities. After achieving the technical skills, beneficiaries have invested an average amount of PKR 4,400 in their business. Their average monthly income reached PKR 3,300 per month (equivalent to 16% of the average monthly household income). The reasons behind acquiring TVET were the beneficiary's previous experience in the trade and the example of someone known to him who did the same. While discussing the estimated income by TVET beneficiaries, 58% believed that they earned as per their expectations and even more. They supported the usefulness of TVET in a rise in income. Those who did not make more than expected blamed the market's condition and lack of capital on their business. The income was mainly spent on buying clothes, food, health care, and children's education. Thus, improving access to quality food and health facilities and raising literacy.

Table 10. Change in poverty score of TVET beneficiaries and Income

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Earning per month in PKR (April 2020- March 2021)</i>	2,844	4,518	4262
<i>The net amount earned in PKR (the amount left after paying for costs)</i>	2,292	3,227	3,084
<i>Income Earnings</i>	50% of beneficiaries increased their earnings		

<i>Change in poverty score.</i>	<i>No. of Observations</i>	<i>Mean PSC 2017-18</i>	<i>Mean PSC 2021</i>	<i>Difference</i>
	351	16.4	28.5	12.1

Authors' compilation/BRSP annual report 2021⁴⁴.

Conclusions and Policy Implications

Balochistan is the poorest and most vulnerable province in terms of multidimensional poverty in Pakistan. To eradicate poverty, BRSP has initiated the BRACE program with the financial support of the European Union in 19 rural union councils in selected eight districts in Balochistan. The livelihood interventions include IGG, CIF, and TVET. The study employed the primary data of BRACE livelihood interventions to describe the socioeconomic benefits to rural households in Balochistan between 2018 & 2021. The poverty scorecards of three categories of ultra-poor, the poor, and non-poor HHs are used to select the three mentioned livelihood interventions in rural Balochistan. The empirical results obtained from descriptive and frequency analysis showed that 25% of the targeted poor women in rural areas experienced income raises. The ultra-poor HHs experienced graduation to the higher categories of poor and non-poor status after getting the livelihood support of CIF, IGG, and TVET and generating income through employment, livestock endowments, agriculture production, and small business set-ups. The CIF and IGG have positively contributed to mitigating extreme poverty and taking people to higher categories of well-being in rural Balochistan. In terms of PSC, the livelihood interventions of CIF and IGG have collectively contributed by promoting living standards with the help of establishing enterprise and livestock sectors. The IGG intervention shows a 30% reduction in poverty for ultra-poor HHs in rural Balochistan. The CIF loans offer 48% of

⁴⁴ BRSP, "Annual Report 2020-2021," 2021, <https://brsp.org.pk/wpcontent/uploads/2023/02/Annual-Report-2020-2021.pdf>.

ultra-poor HHs to eliminate poverty via small enterprise development and agriculture productivity increases in rural Balochistan. The TVET provisions to ultra-poor and poor HH beneficiaries have increased monthly income to 39%. The results have also highlighted positive changes in women's economic empowerment through all the livelihood interventions in rural Balochistan.

After a thorough analysis of the data, we provide several policy implications that devise policies for socio-economic development in rural Balochistan that may be adhered to. Similarly, we feel that this study would serve as a baseline for future studies to be conducted on the topic to attract the attention of theorists and practitioners:

- The development programs should include policy interventions for raising the economic well-being of ultra-poor and poor communities in rural areas.
- The development programs should follow PSC-based assessment to categorize poverty and specify the livelihood interventions to reduce poverty in rural areas.
- The implementation mechanism of applying development programs should include individual and community-based mixed approaches for successful implementations in poverty-concentrated rural regions.
- To mitigate rural poverty, the women segment priorities must be integral to every livelihood support intervention.
- The national and international donors working for poverty reduction in rural areas must realize and include community-based assessments, assimilated to rural community models, and rural need-based fund distributions on different categories of poverty phenomena. Also, integrated inclusive approaches to develop initiatives to reduce widespread inequality and mass poverty in rural areas.

- Across the globe, poverty majorly lies in the rural areas; therefore, a significant focus of the policymakers is required to supplement donor agencies to eradicate rural poverty, thus making a better and safer earth for all.

Acknowledgment

The authors acknowledge Balochistan Think Thank Network (BTTN), Quetta, and our directors for their supervisory contributions to this paper. The authors especially acknowledge the support of the Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP) for providing BRACE program data regarding livelihood programs of CIF loans, IGG, and TVET interventions.