

Corona Pandemic and Poverty: the global crisis Algeria as a model

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Abstract:

The human community is facing the Corona pandemic, which has left individuals and governments unable to confront it because of its many implications for health and the economy, and one of the economic implications of this pandemic is the increase in the problem of poverty, this pandemic led to the loss of many individuals to their jobs, the closure of institutions, and the rise in poverty rates,, through this research paper we try to describe and analyze the impact of this pandemic on the increase of the poverty using statistics, which shows that the problem of poverty requires urgent solutions in light of the pandemic and also It requires actions in the future to overcoming its dangerous social, economic and political impacts.

Keywords:Poverty ; covid-19 ; world crisis

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Introduction :

Despite the technological progress and great economic development in the contemporary world. the problem of poverty is still a great challenge for societies, and poverty is considered one of the most dangerous problems that threaten the security and stability of poor and developed societies, and has manifestations in all areas of society.

Therefore, the issue of poverty has attracted the attention of many researchers in various disciplines in history, economics and sociology, and in recent years this problem has returned with vigor due to many political, economic and social factors, But in the recent period, with the emergence of the Corona pandemic and its spread across the world. Countries and governments were forced to take preventive measures to limit the spread of this epidemic, So the quarantine was and many activities and businesses stopped, this caused many individuals to leave their jobs, This has caused an increase in the number of poor people globally, It may even set back the poverty eradication efforts undertaken by many countries and international organizations for many years.

I. Problematic issue:

Despite the continuous efforts in all countries of the world to confront the problem of poverty, it is still one of the most important issues that interest the researchers and decision-makers, due to the size of its spread and the different causes and dangerous effects on society,



and despite the efforts made by international organizations to eradicate poverty by 2030, however, this problem increases with time. In light of the current circumstances with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the spread of the Corona pandemic, international bodies are concerned that this problem will exacerbate individuals and governments, so this study came to clarify the dimensions of this dangerous phenomenon for the individual and society, in an attempt to reach a diagnosis of the reality of this problem and its repercussions, which requires constant preparation to confront it and reduce its risk by appropriate means, through a set of questions that we try to answer through this article, according to the following proposition:

How can the problem of poverty be understood in light of its different causes and implications, and in light of crises?

1. How has the Corona-virus pandemic affected the increase in the problem of poverty in the world and in Algeria?
2. How did Algerian society deal with the Corona crisis and its repercussions on poverty?
3. What measures must be taken to overcome the economic and social repercussions of the Corona crisis?]
4. What are the necessary preparations to face the growing problem of poverty?]

I. Research importance:



The topic of poverty is one of the most important issues in our contemporary world, and this is due to the large number of people in the world who are suffering to survive, and it becomes more important in light of the deteriorating economic conditions due to the Corona virus pandemic, therefore, this topic requires further research to reach the most important means to confront the impact of this pandemic on the increase in poverty rates and the complexity of this global problem, especially on poor countries

Section1 : Conceptual analysis and theoretical approaches:

Poverty is one of the most different concepts that have been known among researchers, and it is a relative and extremely complex concept that differs in different intellectual schools, societies and tools for its measurement, and this is what makes defining it specifically difficult, so we try to give the definition of this concept according to what we need in this study.

The concept of poverty :

The word poverty is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in thirteen places, including the words of God Almighty:" Alms are for the poor and the needy, who work on it; for those whose hearts have been reconciled; for those in bondage and in debt; and in the way of God and; and for the wayfarer ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom". Surat Al-Hijr 36; and the Islamic concept of poverty is a comprehensive one, as it does not consider poverty in a materialistic view, nor does it view poverty as a social defect,



humiliation or a lack of dignity for the poor, so the value of a person is not in the money he possesses but rather in the faith, knowledge and work (Yuanda, 2013. p101)

But capitalism sees poverty as one of the evils of life, And responsible for him the poor himself or bad luck or destiny, and not the state or the rich who are responsible. Every individual is responsible for himself, is free to act and free in his money, he collected alone with intelligence, and that the money owner has his money and the freedom to act as what he sees and wants. If the rich give the poor something of his money, he must be honored, and according to the capitalist society, everyone is free to gain power. and who did not seek to gain it, society is not responsible for it, and the rich are responsible for spending it only. (Al-Qaradawi, 1985, p.7[^])

This special view dominated Europe at the beginning of the modern era, as there is no right and no help for the poor, which forced women and young people to work in factories with the minimum income. But this capitalist position did not remain unchanged under political, economic and social conditions that were a threat to the survival of the capitalist system and the stability of Western societies. Capitalism recognized the poor with some right of state intervention and organization laws which are now called social insurance, where in the citizen has to spend an amount of his income in return for securing him at permanent or temporary incapacity (Qaradawi, 1985, p.10)



So, governments that adopt Neoliberalism deal with poverty; it is a natural phenomenon, consistent with a free economy, based on private ownership and an unlimited competition for profit, hence, the exclusion of others, but poverty has become a threat to social order and to the owners in particular. The government has also been seeking measures to eliminate the disruption of society by the poor, and religious considerations are not enough to confront poverty, the social welfare function has emerged (Gabash 2019, p.100). As for the Marxist tendency, it is seen that poverty reduction can only be achieved by eliminating the rich class and confiscating their property, and fighting the principle of private property, which is the source of all injustice by the conflict and revolution between the proletariat and the bourgeois class. This trend calls for the elimination of individual ownership in society and considers that the poor live in a situation made by the bourgeois, who have a luxurious life. Poor people are described as ignorant, unmotivated. The poor are also described as ignorance and lack of motivation towards creativity. Poverty is an inevitable consequence of the control of capital, because the poor will continue to suffer poverty in this system (Uanda 2013: P. 141), but Marx had not in mind that the Bourgeois may work to improve the status of workers and reduce poverty through specific measures and actions, this is in order to achieve higher productivity and capitalist system is maintained. Thus, the proletariat can not escape poverty (Gabash 2019, p. 85)



While there is no class in Islam, poverty and rich are not a constant thing, but they change according to circumstances. Islam makes the rich a blessing from God on people, and makes poverty as a problem. Prophetic discourse considers the scourge of poverty that has consequences for the individual and society. Islam came to liberate man from poverty and need, and the individual had the right to a decent life. He also called for social solidarity, to help the poor with charity and waqf. The poor had a right in the rich's money, but the individual had to work and not rely on others and beg (Al-Qaradawi 1985, pp. 19-20).

This is, the concept of poverty for various intellectual trends. Social definition of the poor is for those who receive social assistance; and the absolute minimum poverty is the official minimum income that is the individual gets, and also when individuals depend on social assistance in their lives. One concept related to poverty is the poverty limit concept. It is the minimum income needed to meet the needs of the individual ; so that this level of income or expenditure is the limit dividing the poor from the non-poor. When they are at the level of poverty or below poverty line, they are described as poor; those above the poverty line are non-poor (toward knowledge Society 1427, p. 20).

For countries, it is poor countries that have low levels of education, healthcare, drinking water, sanitation and food standards, health of all members of society, both quantitatively and qualitatively,



as well as the continuous depletion of natural resources, with the low level of the circle of poverty (toward knowledge Society 1427, p.21).

Social and economic studies have not only defined poverty, but have established objective measures to determine the level of poverty. Techniques have been developed to determine the poverty line; however, it is noted that the measures established differ from one society to another (Gabash 2019, p. 85).

But the most common is the economic situation in which an individual lacks sufficient income to obtain the minimum levels of health care, food, clothing and education. At the general level, poverty is the result of the low level of economic development and unemployment. Individuals who cannot get income for any reason are the poor (toward the knowledge society 1427 p. 19). But when poverty is concerned with crises, researchers interested in poverty differentiate between Conjunctural poverty and Structural poverty.

1- Types of poverty

2-1- Conjunctural poverty:

This type of poverty is caused by natural factors that are beyond human will, such as wars, natural disasters, epidemics, and climate and environmental change, such as drought, desertification, floods, poverty here occurs quickly. These disasters are changing the lives of individuals; It makes them abandon many things about their way of life or to continue them normally.



2-2- Structural poverty:

Poverty that affects some groups of society as a result of their personal circumstances or their social status , or because of the negative consequences of the state's economic strategies, such as fiscal policies by some developing countries' governments, or to achieve a a rapid economic growth, without paying attention to balanced development among the country's regions or to balanced development among the country's regions and the achievements equal in living standards , and weak infrastructure is also a direct factor in this kind of poverty.

Voluntary poverty :

There are those who choose to be poor by their own will, not because they do not have means of production or have had difficult circumstances. But they wanted to do nothing and escape the reality by being addictive to drugs, alcohol or to begging. (Mustafa Mohammed, and Abdul Wahab BoB ,2003, p. 14)

2- COVID-19 virus, concept and dimensions

The concept of sustainable development has been one of the most important concepts of our time, and one of the main topics in which all the world's scientific communities have discussed in most disciplines. Sustainable development is defined as a comprehensive development strategy that seeks to basic needsby balancing the environmental, economic and social system , and work to ensure the



needs of current and future generations.” (Tamimi, 2008, p. 54) as one of the priorities and objectives of sustainable development, since the beginning of the 1990s, is poverty reduction.

World Bank reports confirmed the world's sustainable development has made remarkable progress in accordance to the latest estimates, the poverty rate) is less than \$1.90 per day (from about 36% (1.9 billion people) in 1990, 10% of the world's population, or (734 million people) in 2015. The COVID-19 crisis and the decrease in oil prices could therefore affect the achievement of sustainable development goals. The COVID-19 crisis will have an impact on the poor, through job losses, high prices, and disruptions to education and health care.

A new research published by the UNU-WIDER that the economic consequences of the global epidemic could increase the global poverty by up to half a billion people. This will be the first time that poverty has increased worldwide in 30 years, since 1990. The number of people living in poverty can increase by (420-580) million, compared to the most recent figures. (Daniel , and others,2020)

In the Arab world, COVID-19 will be spread and the consequences from a quarantine and deeper impact on the poor, this is because of higher prices, job losses, and a loss of remittances and difficulties in benefiting from basic services, such as education and health care. Reports indicate that the Arab region will lose 1.7 million



jobs at least in 2020 ; this will increase the difficulties of the poor and the vulnerable groups in society.(UNU-WIDER,2020)

The world wide spread of the Corona epidemic and the difficulty of finding a vaccine will have economic and social repercussions, and many of the damage to the states of the conflict and poor countries, especially with the continuous drop in oil prices. These repercussions have disrupted economic and social policies due to the high number of deaths and injuries, which affects the health system as a whole, with the lack of health services in most of these countries which were not prepared to deal with this pandemic. If quarantine continues, production and financial exchanges will be reduced and prices will rise; this increases the poverty rate as a result of the bankruptcy of enterprises and the dismissal of workers. According to the latest ILO statistics, the closure of institutions is working around the world to confront COVID-19. The number of working hours declined by 10.7 per cent in the world in the second quarter of this year. It resulted in the loss of 305 million jobs calculated on a 48-million-dollar basis working hour per week.(International Labour Organization, 2020)

The epidemic has led to financial difficulties of the Arab countries that are adopting the tourism sector in its economy, such as Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco. Due to the closure of air transport and maritime transport, and also the borders, the return of tourists and the suspension of services ,Saudi Arabia also cancelled



the visa to perform the Umrah and Hajdj, except for its people and to those who committed to their conditions and measures. There were also popular protests in Lebanon over the banking crisis and depreciation of the currency. Iraq also knew demonstrations calling for change under the low oil price. All these economic and social repercussions have shown that governments are unable to contain the crisis because of mistakes left by previous governments, that could not rationalize expenses to build infrastructure that took account of the needs of their people.

Since there is a change in the global order that seeks to address the crisis Covid-19 Pandemic. It is an opportunity to achieve inclusive development and eliminate dependence on rich countries. For decades, the values of development, modernization and poverty eradication have spread, making developing countries demand humanitarian aid and loans that are indispensable for their development ; this made them fall into the dependency of the developed countries which was not only on the economic side. Foreign aid allowed intervention in the internal affairs of poor countries and control their destiny, its political decisions and the influence on its identity as well as its intellectual and cultural roots, and imposed its values through cultural globalization (Mostafa Mohammad Saleh and Abdul Wahab Bob 2003, p. 6).

The spread and persistence of the epidemic have caused a high number of deaths and damage to societies. In the face of the health system's inability to ensure the care of patients, unemployment and



layoffs have also increased, prices, too, have increased and the continuation of the quarantine. All of them will increase the degree of tension and popular protests. This threatens the stability and socio-economic security of the Arab world and requires finding ways to resolve inter-state conflicts and encourage them to debate in order to find collaborative-cooperative solutions that serve the interests of the peoples; they gather common factors to confront the crises of epidemic and poverty, especially as all countries in the world, even the rich suffer from the same crisis.

Section 2 : The Corona virus pandemic and preventive measures in Algeria:

Like all the countries of the world, Algeria was hit by the Corona epidemic. To control the situation, a number of preventive measures have been taken: The issue of Executive Decree No. 20-69 of 21 was the issue March 2020 ; it concerns preventive measures against the spread of the Coronavirus epidemic (COVID-19) and combating it. Article 3 states: "The activities of the transport of persons, such as air services for public transport of passengers, shall cease ; land transport in all directions: Urban, semi-urban, inter-municipal transport; And between states. Rail passenger transport. Guided transportation: Metro, Tramway; Transportation by air lifts, taxi transportation, excluding transport activity. Article 05 stipulates that: "In major cities, shops for drinks, entertainment and entertainment establishments and spaces are closed. (Official Gazette, 2020)



This is why Algeria has resorted to the spread of the new COVID-19 virus to a range of measures, to maintain employment positions ; to avoid layoffs and closing down enterprises .This is done through a range of mechanisms, including tele-working, premium paid holiday system, and *part-time work*. In this context, article 09 of the same Act stipulates that Above:" Public institutions and departments can encourage tele-working while respecting applicable laws and regulations"

Executive Decree No. 20-70 of 24 March 2020 identifies complementary measures to prevent the spread of the virus .The measures are designed to establish quarantine regulations; restricting mobility, framing business activities, citizen supply, and rules of divergence Social And mobilizing citizens to contribute to the national effort to prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19. (Official Gazette , 2020)

These preventive measures, announced by Governments, were the closure of shops, shopping, entertainment; other activities have led to the disruption of many workers. Workers in these sectors are mostly free and temporary. The impact of this pandemic has, therefore, been felt in the labor market. They result in layoffs of temporary workers who are paid little, the reduction in the working hours, which lead to a decrease in the income of temporary workers (Ahmad Talha, 2020, pp. 13-14).



This has led to income outages for a large number of people and has made vulnerable groups in society fall below the poverty line, adding to the proportion of the unemployed. The statistics estimated the unemployment rate in Algeria in the course of the years (2016, 2017), respectively, is 10.5% and 11.7% (ONS, 2018, p.13).

The poor in society will therefore face difficult situations as this epidemic spreads. That changed the lives of many individuals and made them unemployed, whose end is not known. Although the state makes subsidies to the poor, first, this is not enough and these subsidies have made individuals gather in front of the aid centers not quarantined, and social exclusion; second, hunger and poverty may make individuals in the risk unconcerned about the effects of this pandemic. Poverty itself is a serious epidemic, which makes matters even more complex.

This is a great pandemic for the simple people who were forced to close completely. This epidemic is frightening of its rapid transmission and its impact on people who have been prevented from being weak. But poverty is more frightening, and this has led many individuals to challenge difficulties. Some shops are now operating, even with a small return. Because a little is better than nothing, and some are secretly opening up. This is not a recklessness in their lives, but poverty and hunger push to adventure and, because they believe that if they do not die of the disease, they will die as a result of hunger.



Algeria is always trying to take many measures to alleviate the severity of poverty through the system of social protection and security; this idea which has been developed and is called for by religions, but in the twentieth century, industrial countries appeared in form social insurance for workers. It then evolved under the so-called welfare state that includes health and unemployment insurance until it reached the so-called comprehensive social protection. The main theme of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, social protection has become the focus of sustainable development strategies: social protection has become the focus of development strategies, representing the Social dimension. (Hashem, 2018, p29)

social protection is one of the most important tools for protection against risk and reduction of poverty. it is emphasized by the United Nations, and is a set of general actions that are taken levels of violence, the risks and deprivation that are socially unacceptable within a society; it also refers to initiatives by the public and private sectors which would provide sources of income, protecting vulnerable groups from the dangers of unemployment, as well as improving the situation of poor people, it focuses on prevention and poverty reduction, and on assistance to the poor, addressing the causes of poverty, not its consequences (Hashem 2018, p. 21).

Algeria has also worked to apply the principle of social protection through The Basic Law of the National Unemployment



Insurance Fund. It also supports investment in the form of small and medium-sized enterprises, reliance on agricultural development and social support such as housing and vocational training. But there are many difficulties and obstacles that prevent reaching the goals that are under control. The objectives are still partial and require the creation of ways to achieve recovery and financial resources allow for a reduction of financial pressure on the national economy. Investment in the field of agriculture and endowments may be a source of financial returns for sustainable development.

Following the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic, Algeria has been continuing since March to apply preventive actions following the continuation of the COVID-19 epidemic, the application of partial home quarantine in many states of the country; this was accompanied by the extension of the duration of the home partial quarantine according to the epidemic's focus that has put pressure on the health system which showed that it was unable to ensure for those infected whose number exceeds the capacity of absorption, also the closure which affected the trade sector, free occupations, services and public and urban transport and cutting business hours. Although quarantine measures have been eased recently, and some commercial activities have been allowed to return, home quarantine measures are still in place in most of the nation's states ; perhaps the return to normal life will remain related to the extent to which the preventive measures are respected until a vaccine for Covid-19 is reached



Continuing this situation will increase further poverty rate in Algeria, especially in case the state is unable to provide aids to all those in need with the price of oil falling and the decline in financial, and trade exchanges after the closure of borders across the world. If the situation continues, it may lead to an increase in labor protests in some sectors, fragile work under the continuation of the partial home quarantine period. In some sectors, As a result of the discontent of those with informal professions and simple activities in light of the long period of partial home quarantine, And it increases the severity of poverty among a wide range of workers and the unemployed .We know that the economic and social repercussions of the Korona pandemic and the expansion of the circle of poverty necessitate us thinking about the food security of the people, otherwise it will have effects that threaten their stability. This requires mechanisms that reduce poverty and social inequality.

Section 3 : Ways to face the repercussions of the Corona pandemic and poverty:

Reports issued by international organizations confirmed that economic social repercussions of Covid-19 pandemic crisis will have severe damages on rich and poor countries. therefore, we can say that, regardless of its repercussions, it remains a difficult experience that has shown the inability of countries, including Algeria, to confront or deal with this crisis ; all this was embodied in the confusion of the successive decisions that called for containing the crisis , which has



continued to increase complexity, especially with partial home quarantine continuing, as well as the spread of the epidemic, also the need and poverty among a large segment of people. Inevitably, this is a result of the fragile economic and social situation that requires hardworking strategies and plans to improve the economic and social level of individuals, and building a solid development base capable for facing internal and external challenges. therefore, we will try to present a set of suggestions that would support the preventive measures to confront the epidemic, As well as a call to reactivate a set of social solidarity values that characterize the Algerian personality. As the role of civil society institutions, especially associations. Therefore, we can provide some measures or procedures, including some in the short term for the period of the Corona pandemic, and others at the long level, given that this problem already exists and did not appear due to this crisis, but rather increased its severity.

In the short term:

- ❖ Promote social solidarity among families to help the poor and needy, while including the values of cooperation and solidarity in accordance with the teachings of Islam in the educational curricula.
- ❖ Intensification targeted messages through the media, social networks, places of worship, and various social upbringing institutions that call for cooperation, brotherhood, charity, love



- for others, and individual assistance to each other, especially in exceptional circumstances.
- ❖ Enhancing the role of sociologist and social workers to spread awareness around the importance of social solidarity, and put a national strategy that guarantees social protection for citizens in dangers and crises times.
 - ❖ Creating innovative professions that take into account the requirements of the current stage that requires providing of medical protective devices, for example, this requires encouraging creativity and innovation, and attracting efficiency and quality.
 - ❖ Expanding the digitization of management and remote work and encouraging electronic commerce as well providing legal texts that organize the process and protect against information crime.

In the long term:

- ❖ Updating university majors and encouraging scientific research, especially in the field of medicine and biology, while ensuring the accompaniment and support for any innovation or patent that would support society and the economy.
- ❖ Consideration of the infrastructure in the health sector, taking into account the proportionality between health services and the number of the population.



- ❖ Providing and updating the information and statistics bank necessitates the availability of information about the working class of wage earners and the unemployed and the rate of poverty in Algeria.
- ❖ Serious thinking about advancing the economy by diversifying exports and interesting of agricultural and tourism sector to achieve a level of self-sufficiency that guarantees food and human security in such crises.
- ❖ Developing *zakat* and *waqf* institutions in the field of economic investment and implementing projects that contribute to creating jobs and contributing to sustainable development.
- ❖ Creating appropriate social protection systems at the national level.
- ❖ Activating the role of civil society through popular and governmental support by opening the way for community participation and empowering youth to volunteer work within the transparency and good governance.

Conclusion:

The problem of poverty is a global problem ; Algeria is among the countries that always seek to avoid its exacerbation through many measures , but the acuteness of this problem will return significantly with the repercussions of the Corona pandemic, which began to show its economic and social effects on society and its members, where the



number of affected people increases due to the suspension and disruption of many activities and businesses. Therefore, confronting this problem with urgent measures in accordance with the requirements of this stage to mitigate the effects of this problem on individuals is to avoid the harm it may cause to the individual and society. But this problem also requires planning and put strategies, not only in the short term, but also in the long term, as it is a global problem that contemporary societies have not been able to overcome.

There is no doubt that the repercussions of this pandemic on poverty constitute defect in the endeavors of the Algerian state to achieve sustainable development and its attempts to combat poverty, especially what can be caused by the aggravation of this problem: the Algerian society is an Islamic society and it has many ingredients that make individuals ready for solidarity and work, but that requires an organized framework, government and populist support. We could have benefited of the Zakat and Waqf institutions as a strategy based on vision and self-capabilities without relying on solving the problem of poverty in accordance with the requirements of the system, as previously mentioned, because the successful strategy is in accordance with the requirements and privacy of society.

Finally, despite all the measures taken by contemporary societies, including Algeria, concerning the problem of poverty, these measures are still not completely capable of eliminating this problem, the most important thing to achieve success and protect individuals



from poverty is to continue construction of the individuals' capabilities and providing them with appropriate options to benefit from their capabilities in the various productive sectors with a fair distribution of wealth.



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