

## Household Size and Poverty: A Literature Review

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**Abstract:** This paper examines the relationship between household size and poverty. This is a desk-based study comprising the examination of existing literature using ‘narrative reviews’ method. This study discovered that in the existing literature some show a positive correlation, some show the opposite and some show both positive and negative correlation between household size and poverty. The correlation may vary with the definition of household and poverty, measurement techniques of poverty and different socio-economic conditions of different literature based on different countries. Measurement of poverty should be given more attention especially for the adjustment of household size and composition for equivalence scale and economies of scale while measurement of poverty has done. Without making these adjustments the relationship between household size and poverty would be distorted.

**Keywords:** *Household size, poverty, correlation, measurement techniques, equivalence scale, economies of scale.*

### 1. Introduction

There is a common view among the people that large families tend to be poor in developing countries. However, this hypothesis is under scrutiny until recently by many scholars who have paid considerable attention to this issue.

There are several theoretical bases for this common view. Firstly, sharing of the fixed cost related to residence (such as rent for housing, electricity bill, water bill etc.) may encourage people to live together and form a big household (Foster and Rosenzweig 840). Secondly, to cope with income risk more individuals would live together which may ultimately lead to big households (Foster and Rosenzweig 840). Thirdly, because of financial market imperfections, poor elderly may exclusively depend on their children which may lead to greater fertility and eventually poor as well as big household. However, there is no consensus in the empirical literature regarding the relationship between household size and poverty. Some studies show positive correlation between household size and poverty, whereas some studies show a negative correlation or even mixed correlation between household size and poverty.

A literature review on a topic is an inclusive summary of related publications, which generally published by recognised scholars and researchers. It systematically collects and synthesizes previous researches on a specific topic and tries to find out the research gap. It creates foundation for advancing knowledge. However, in the Social Science, as a broad discipline, knowledge production accelerating day by day and for keeping update on a specific topic like ‘poverty’, which has interdisciplinary

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approach, become hard for researchers on these days. This leads literature review as a separate method of study, which systematically and more importantly thoroughly discovers evidence on a meta-level and shows areas where further research is needed.

The main body of this paper is divided into six sections. In the next three sections objective, methodology and importance of the study are identified. In section 5, the theoretical consideration of the relationship between household size and poverty is pointed out. Section 6 highlights the review of related literature on the topic. In particular, this section examines the existing literature on the relationship between poverty and household size, the type of correlation between household size and poverty, the country context and explanations of the results. Section 7 analyses the source of difference in their results. This paper ends with conclusion, an indicative direction for further research and limitation of the paper.

## **2. Objective of the Study**

The broad objective of the study is to find out the linkage between household size and poverty. The specific objectives are to:

- i. find out whether the poor people have large household or the people who have large household tend to be poorer;
- ii. examine the research gaps;
- iii. explore the scope for further research; and
- iv. provide some policy recommendations for further study.

## **3. Importance and Uses of the Study**

Poverty has always been a major research theme for the development economists. There are plethora of studies that investigate the causes and correlates of poverty and different policies are formulated out of the results. However, recent slow progress in reducing poverty worldwide shows that poverty is a very complex phenomenon with multidimensional nature. This paper explores the most basic unit of society – the family and directly examines the relationship between family size and poverty.

An effective determination of the socio-economic characteristics of the poor enables policymakers to understand the interconnectedness of policies designed to achieve poverty reduction strategy and test their likely impacts before adopting them. This study, thus, is essential, because knowing the link of household size and poverty can help to device appropriate policy for poverty reduction, especially where ‘demographic targeting’ is required.

## **4. Research Methodology**

This is a desk-based study comprising the examination of existing literature on the relationship between poverty and household size. The review methodology used here called ‘Narrative reviews’ that is defined as: ‘attempts to identify what has been written on a subject or topic using methodologies, samples or populations, and findings’ (Davies 2000 and Pawson 2002 cited in Rickinson and May 13).

In particular, in this study, using the ‘narrative reviews’ technique, by examining existing literature on the relationship between poverty and household size, the type of correlation between household size and poverty, the country context, year of study

and explanations of the results are to be identified and discussed. This study, hence, gives a unique opportunity for in-depth learning on the study topic and simultaneously for in-depth learning on the methodologies used in the existing literature.

## **5. Theoretical Considerations Regarding the Relationship between Household Size and Poverty**

### **5.1 Definitions of the Concepts of Household and Poverty**

**5.1.1 Household:** Household is not defined in a unique fashion in different surveys. By and large, household means a group of individuals, typically family members, who live and cook together and share common funds. In many developing countries, the structure of living arrangements is very complex and households are perceived both as production and consumption unit. Therefore, a household could be defined in two ways and as a result, a definition, which is appropriate for one is not appropriate for others (Deaton 26).

**5.1.2 Poverty:** Poverty is a complex, multidimensional and worldwide socio-economic problem (Anyanwu 118). The World Bank (2000) defines poverty as deprivation in wellbeing. In general, wellbeing can be interpreted as the command over commodities. Here, poverty could be measured in monetary term. For example, households or individuals who have enough resources to meet their needs could be called non-poor. In contrast, People whose income falls below a defined threshold level are poor (The World Bank cited by Haughton and Khandker 2).

Another definition of wellbeing considers whether people have enough food or shelter or health care or education. Nutritional poverty can be measured by investigating whether children are stunted or wasted; educational poverty can be measured by asking about people's education level. Sen (1987) described wellbeing in a broader way. According to him, lack of key capabilities are the sources of poverty and people who have insufficient income or education, or poor health, or insecurity, or low self-confidence, or a sense of powerlessness, or the absence of rights such as freedom of speech can be considered as poor. Lined up to his thought, poverty is judged as a multidimensional phenomenon (Sen 1987 cited by Haughton and Khandker 3).

Different poverty measures may give different poverty measurements. For computing poverty measures, special emphasis on the two assumptions about equivalence scales and economies of scale in consumption should be given (Coudouel et al. 31). Without considering different consumption needs of individuals of different sex and age, and the existence of economies of scale in consumption, a wrong relationship between household size and poverty could be developed (White and Masset 125).

### **5.2 Why should Expect Larger Household Tend to be Poor?**

The household size depends on economic forces, social organizations, and cultural patterns. There are three reasons for what a relationship between household size and poverty could be expected. These three reasons are discussed briefly below.

**5.2.1 Reason 1: Sharing of Fixed Cost Related to Residence:** People living together and forming a big household resulted in four forms of benefits. First, they can share several fixed cost components such as rent for housing, electricity bill, water bill etc. Second, large households also enjoy the advantage of bulk discounts

associated with larger purchases of a given commodity (say, food) and pay less per unit. As a result, they get direct economies of scale in food consumption. Third, when more people live together, they enjoy the economies of scale in food preparation because two people can live cheaply than one (less time). Fourth, 'Larger households are better at eliminating waste through better management of storage, refrigerators, and leftovers' (Deaton and Paxson 922).

**5.2.2 Reason 2: Risk Consideration:** The size of household may also depend on the income risk faced by individual members of the households. The higher the possibility of income shock, the greater would be the size of the household. Foster and Rosenzweig (2002) (856) give the idea that people live together help one another if one faces a negative shock. To cope with income risk more people may live together which ultimately leads to a larger household. Moreover, Poor families which expect higher mortality rate may want as many children as possible to compensate for this possibility.

A related reason for the poor to want a greater number of children may be the lack of social mobility: if they expect their children to be poor themselves, one child may not be in a position to fully support his elderly parents and sharing the cost across several children would better ensure the parents' subsistence (Gupta and Dubey 2).

**5.2.3 Reason 3: Financial Market Imperfections:** If poor are excluded from savings and credit markets, poor elderly depend exclusively on their children, which may lead to greater fertility (and eventually poorer household).

In developing countries, the life insurance and social security system are not well-developed and these also explain a high fertility rate. Especially poor people think that when they become old they will get some economic support from their children. They see their children as insurance against their lack of income in their old age.

In many countries poor elderly mainly depend on their male offspring. There are three main reasons for this dependency of male children which ultimately increase household size. First, in many countries, social practice and tradition are to get old-age support from male offspring. Second, still now in some countries, especially in developing countries, female employment is undervalued and male earns much higher than female. In that case male children will be more productive future assets. Third, in some societies, there is large practice of dowry; the birth of daughter indicates the outflow of family income (Gupta and Dubey 10). For the expectation of male children, parents want more children and eventually it creates a large household.

Even poor young parents may expect support from their young children. In this situation, children are an essential part of the household's workforce to generate household income. Therefore, poor people want more children to increase their income.

## 6. Review of the Empirical Literature

An insignificant amount of literature has been published on household size and poverty. The first serious discussions and analyses of the linkage between household size and poverty emerged during the 1990s with the pioneering work from Lanjouw and Ravallion. They analysed data from Pakistan which gives a fragile relationship between household size and poverty (Lanjouw and Ravallion 1432). Since then, several studies investigating the relationship between household size and poverty

have been carried out in many developing countries, almost all in Africa and Asia. Table 1 lists the papers discussed and reviewed in this study.

Table 1: *Brief descriptions of the literature reviewed in this study*

Serial No.	Author	Title	Year of Publication	Source of Publication
1	Lanjouw, P. and Ravallion, M.	Poverty and Household Size.	1995	<b>Journal:</b> <i>Economic Journal</i> , V. 105
2	Kamuzora, C.L. and Mkanta, W.	Poverty and Household /Family Size in Tanzania: Multiple Responses to Population Pressure?	2000	<b>Research Report:</b> Publisher- Research on Poverty Alleviation
3	Kamuzora, C.L.	Poverty and Family Size Patterns: Comparison Across African Countries.	2001	<b>Research Report:</b> Publisher- Research on Poverty Alleviation
4	Gupta, N.D. and Dubey, A.	Poverty and Fertility: An Instrumental Variables Analysis on Indian Micro Data.	2003	<b>Working Paper:</b> <i>Working Papers 03-11</i> , University of Aarhus, Department of Economics.
5	White, H. and Masset, E.	The Importance of Household Size and Composition in Constructing Poverty Profiles: An Illustration from Vietnam.	2003	<b>Journal:</b> <i>Development and Change</i> , V. 34(1).
6	Orbeta, A.C. Jr.	Poverty, Vulnerability and Family Size: Evidence from the Philippines	2005	<b>Research Paper:</b> ADB Institute Research Paper Series No.68.
7	Virola, R.A. and Arturo, M. M. Jr.	Population and Poverty Nexus: Does Family Size Matter?	2007	<b>Convention Paper:</b> presented during the 10 <sup>th</sup> National Convention on Statistics, Philippines.
8	Rahman, K.M. Mostafizur	Poverty at Household Level	2012	<b>Research Paper:</b> Publisher- Unnayan Onneshan, Bangladesh
9	Anyanwu, J. C.	Marital Status, Household Size and Poverty in Nigeria: Evidence from the 2009/2010 Survey Data	2014	Journal: <i>African Development Review</i> , vol. 26, no. 1,2014

Source: Author's representation

## **6.1 Studies Arguing for a Positive Correlation between Household Size and Poverty**

### **6.1.1 Anyanwu (2014) in Nigeria**

**a) Results:** There is a positive correlation between the levels of poverty and the size of the household. Poverty is lowest among single-person households and increases with the number of members of the households. A household with seven persons and above shows the highest incidence of poverty. In particular, the incidence of national poverty with single-person households is 22.60 per cent whereas incidence of poverty is estimated at 97.61 per cent for households with more than 7 persons in 2010.

**b) Explanations:** The author attributes the positive correlation to the higher fertility rate among the poor. The author argues that the poor have a higher fertility rate in developing countries for two reasons: the lack of well-developed social security system and low savings (especially in Africa). This is often true for the poor because poor parents want some economic support from their children during their old age. If they have more children, their probability of getting support from their children increases when they are old. In addition, high infant and child mortality among poor people motivate them to increase fertility which eventually increases household size (Schultz 1981 cited by Anyanwu126).

On the other hand, in Nigeria, children are also considered as an essential factor for generating household income. When the numbers of children are large and they participate in household production, it will reduce the investment on their education and health (human capital) as well as maintain a lower level of household income which maintains a poverty-fertility trap. Finally, the empirical results suggest that especially in the area where population are large, an additional child reduces household savings, raises the monetary cost of additional children, declines mother's work prospect and wage and also reduces investment on human capital of the children.

Thus, according to the author the household fertility behaviour depends on economic forces, social organizations, and cultural arrangements. However, the author considers the impact of household size on poverty as an empirical question.

### **6.1.2 Orbeta (2005) in the Philippines**

**a) Results:** Extra children have a negative impact on the welfare of household, especially in the case of poor households. So the impacts are considered as regressive. The poverty incidence for a four-member household and for a nine or more-member household are 36.4 per cent and 59.9 per cent respectively in 1985. In 2000, the poverty scenario is almost the same. The incidence of poverty for a four-member household and for a nine or more-member household is 23.8 per cent and 57.3 per cent respectively. Whatever measure one uses, it gives the same result to bigger households poorer.

**b) Explanations:** The author cites mechanisms like savings, family labour supply, parent earnings and investment on child human capital to explain this positive

relationship between household size and poverty. For the household, savings and family labour supply work as primary engine for consumption smoothing and children are seen as the security against the future and old-age insurance for the parents.

In the Philippines, there is a preference of parents for a balance in the sex of children. Sometimes balanced sex children demand to increase the household size. The author shows an interesting fact that 67.4 per cent families having their first two children with opposite sex like to have another issue, while 71.8 per cent families having their first two children with same-sex like to have another issue. Hence, it could be said that families likelihood of having both sex children could be a reason for a bigger family. But author does not provide any explanation for this.

Another reason for the positive correlation is that for poor household, mothers of young children have to stop working leading to the decrease in income. Mother labour force participation declines by -1.68 per cent for one additional child. But the magnitude of this effect becomes lower for lower-middle and middle-income group and the effect is seen positive for upper middle and richest group. This indicates that higher-income group may be able to pay for child care, so mothers' incomes are not affected by the additional children.

Overall, cross-tabulation shows that as household size increases, families become unable to maintain per capita income, savings and expenditure on human capital and also reduce school attendance of the children and increase child labour. But the debate for causality among household size and poverty has still remained largely unresolved.

### **6.1.3 Virola and Martinez (2007) in the Philippines**

**a) Results:** Authors have found a strong positive correlation between household size and poverty. 53 percent households with more than 10 members are poor, whereas less than 25 per cent households having less than 5 members are poor.

**b) Explanations:** To explain the link between household size and poverty, Virola and Martinez, use some intermediate measures such as per capita income, per capita expenditures and per capita savings (8). They show that per capita income is not affected by household size for the highest income group. They also show that poor families with larger household size have lower per capita income than poor families with smaller household. They find a direct relationship between family size and poverty by using the Foster-Greer-Thorbecke (FGT) measures.

The authors show that per capita income, per capita expenditure and per capita savings decrease when family size increases. It indicates that additional children increase the risk of income shortfall among large households. Additionally, larger households spend most of their income on food and a small amount on other necessities like education and health care which leads to a vulnerable socio-economic future for them. The authors also show that as family size increases, poverty situation worsens and vulnerability to poverty also increases.

#### **6.1.4 Gupta and Dubey (2003) in Rural India's Nuclear Household**

**a) Results:** In the case of rural nucleus households in India, the authors find that household's poverty increases significantly when they have more than two children and fertility rate is higher among poor household than average. The authors show that fertility has a significant positive effect on poverty even after taking into account the endogeneity of fertility.

**b) Explanations:** In rural India, the life insurance and social security system is not well-developed and this explains a high fertility rate. Especially poor people think their children as insurance against their old age. Poor families also want more children because most of the time they live in poor region and the probability of earnings of one child is not enough in adulthood to support his parents. Poor elderly mainly depend on their male offspring because male children have better future income earning ability than female children. This expectation of male child increases the size of the household. For example, among rural Indian nucleus family, 74 per cent families in which the first two children are girls have a third child, whereas 64 per cent of families who have either a boy and a girl have a third child and in case of 2 boys, 62 per cent families have a third child. Thus, if first two children are girls it certainly increases the family's fertility.

### **6.2 Studies Arguing for a Weak Correlation between Household Size and Poverty**

#### **6.2.1 White and Masset (2003) in Vietnam**

**a) Results:** The authors find a much weaker correlation between poverty and household size than previous study. They also find that large families are not necessarily poorer, and a larger number of poor are found among single-person households.

**b) Explanations:** Authors argue that the positive relationship between household size and poverty is mainly depended on the methodology which is used to measure poverty. For example, without allowing any adjustment (household size and composition), authors find a strong positive relationship between household size and poverty, the largest households are about four times as poor than households consisting of two people. On the other hand, when adjustments are allowed this relationship almost disappears.

In case of Vietnam, authors adjust the expenditure data of the Vietnamese Living Standard Survey of 1997-98 in order to take into account different consumption needs of individuals of different sex and age, and the existence of economies of scale in consumption. Additionally, the authors make some adjustments in order to get some of the real pictures. They find that much common poverty correlates are themselves correlated with household size. They also find that in rural area most of the less educated and female-headed households are poorer.



### **6.3 Studies Arguing for a Mixed Correlation between Household Size and poverty**

#### **6.3.1 Rahman (2012) in Bangladesh**

**a) Results:** The author found that large households are poorer in Bangladesh. He observed that the incidence of poverty is lower among the households having 1-2 members at national, rural and urban level. Although, as compared to others, the annual rate of reduction in the incidence of poverty is higher (6.3 per cent) among the households having more than 10 members in the urban area.

**b) Explanations:** During the last 10 years, on an average, the annual rate of decrease in the incidence of poverty among the households having 1-2 members is 4.7 per cent, which is higher compared to the other households having more than two members. The author found similar results for rural area. Again, the annual rate of reduction in the incidence of poverty is higher (6.3 per cent) among the households having more than 10 members in the urban area. According to the author, this type of result may come because in urban area the families have more members earn more than those families have fewer members.

#### **6.3.2 Kamuzora (2001) in African Countries**

**a) Results:** The author finds a wide variation of poverty levels among all regions. The author divides all the countries into three groups. For the first group which includes six out of ten countries in Eastern-Southern Africa, and nine out of eleven countries in Western Africa, he finds less poverty among larger household. In particular, in the Eastern-Southern Africa region, a one-member household is nearly three times poorer, two-member household 2.3 times, three members household 1.7 times poorer and so on compared to largest households of eight members and above; the pattern is similar in Western Africa. This pattern is for both urban and rural areas in each region.

For the second group, this pattern is not statistically significant but shows the same negative correlation between poverty and household size. For the third group, for Ghana and Togo, he finds that smaller households are less poor.

As Tanzania is a big country and has wide discrepancies in development levels or modernisation, the author gives special emphasis to find out the relationship between household size and poverty patterns in Tanzania. He divides Tanzania into four regions according to the pattern of poverty by household size. In the first group there is less poverty among larger household which is the common pattern of rural areas of most of the regions. In the fourth group located in rural areas of some regions; there is lower poverty among smaller household. The second and third groups are in urban areas. For the second group, the pattern of less poverty with higher household size is not statistically significant. Finally, third group shows lower poverty with smaller household size. Moreover, there is another group in Dodoma and Singida which does not represent any relationship whatever factors being considered.

**b) Explanations:** The author does not give any explanation for positive relationship between household size and poverty and the converse. He leaves it for further research.

#### **6.4 Studies Arguing for a Negative Correlation between Household Size and Poverty**

##### **6.4.1 Kamuzora and Mkanta (2000) in Tanzania**

**a) Results:** For Tanzania, authors find that larger household tend to be less poor and this result is highly statistically significant. According to the Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) in 1996, for 1 or 2 person household, the percentage of poor is 66.7 whereas for 7 and above household, the percentage of poor is 59.4. The results show a negative correlation between household size and poverty. Moreover it is evident that small household size consisting up to 4 members nearly 2 and over 2.5 times poorer than the biggest family consisting of 7 and 9 persons and over.

The authors compare two regions: Kilimanjaro and Lindi/Mtwara regions. In Kilimanjaro, the economy was modern and sources of income are diversified that have gone through these responses, compared to Lindi/Mtwara regions, the less poverty pattern no longer holds.

**b) Explanations:** The main reason for this result is that Tanzania is a labour intensive country. Thus households that have more labour could produce more and become less poor. Authors compare two regions: Kilimanjaro and Lindi/Mtwara regions. One of the explanations of this difference would be for Lindi/Mtwara regions that they are mainly agriculture-based economy. So these economies are labour intensive and the families which have more labour can produce more. Therefore, households that have more labour are less poor. But for Kilimanjaro region the situation is different because the economic condition is different. In this region, the economy is diversified and has both farm and non-farm activities, thus individuals do not need to depend only on their traditional family agricultural production. They also argue that household/family size would be increased because of a life cycle process of accumulation of wealth whereas in Kilimanjaro region accommodation changed due to modernisation.

They also argue in favour of less poverty in bigger families because some member of the large households may live and work outside home and send remittances in either cash or kind which make the larger households better off. This pattern also holds in the rural area. They provide that larger household does not mean that an individual household would be poor although still 41 per cent of larger households are poor. They leave this part for further study.

#### **6.5 Studies Arguing for a Fragile Correlation between Household Size And Poverty**

##### **6.5.1 Lanjouw and Ravallion (1995) in Pakistan**

**a) Results:** Authors test the robustness of the stylized fact that the larger household tends to be poor in developing countries. The basis for the stylized facts is questionable. They find a fragile relationship between household size and poverty.

**b) Explanations:** In this paper, Lanjouw and Ravallion did not give theoretical argument for the relationship between household size and poverty. Actually they put it as a question of empirical fact.

## **7. Reasons for Mixed Empirical Results**

In section 6, the main body of this study has been discussed and analysed from nine papers whose main aim is to establish a linkage between household size and poverty. However, all the previously mentioned empirical results are not conclusive. There are several reasons that may explain the inconclusiveness of the result. They are discussed afterwards.

### **7.1 Definition Issues**

**7.1.1 Definition of Household:** The definition of a household could be different across studies. There are only two of the nine papers reviewed where the authors explicitly defined household. In other studies, they are not clear; they just take household component from other survey data.

Different household definitions may have potentially significant implications for the household composition and household poverty statistics. When different household definitions are used to address different economic units of interest, it may affect the empirical analysis based on different surveys. Further if alternative household definitions were used to collect the data comparisons within countries over time or across countries may be biased. Different definitions of household may give different household composition as well as assets and consumption statistics. These changes in household size and structure may have consequences on household welfare (Beaman and Dillon 3).

**7.1.2 Concept of Poverty:** The concept of poverty is different for different authors. For example, to define poverty, authors use multidimensional approach or officially defined poverty line or wealth level. Use of different definition of poverty is a problem because depending on the definition of poverty that authors use, their measurements will be radically different. Thus, different poverty definitions may result in different estimates of the extent of poverty.

### **7.2 Measurement Issues**

Poverty measurements can be different because of different measurement methods. Even with an identical definition of poverty, measurements may be different because of different measurement methods. Different authors use different measurement techniques to estimate poverty and to find out the relationship between household size and poverty. For example, headcounts index, Foster-Greer-Thorbecke Measures, possession index, Atkinson additive poverty measures. As a result, different poverty measures may give different poverty measurements.

The assumptions about equivalence scales and about economies of scale in consumption play a vital role to compute poverty measures. If the assumption is that there are no economies of scale it means that the per capita cost of reaching a specific

welfare level does not fall as household size increases. Likewise, per capita does not allow for different needs arising from differences in family composition. Relaxation of these assumptions could affect compositions of poverty between large and small household (Lanjouw et al 5). Nevertheless, in most of the paper there is no clear indication about the use of these two assumptions.

To construct a poverty profile, White and Masset give special emphasis on the consideration of household size and composition (116). According to them, without considering household size and composition, misleading poverty profile could be constructed. They argue that the positive relationship between household size and poverty is very sensitive to the methodology used for measuring poverty. They show different results for different methodologies. For example, without allowing any adjustment for household composition and economies of scale they find a strong positive relationship between household size and poverty. By contrast, when adjustments are allowed this relationship almost disappeared. Hence, methodological choices can have strong influence on the relationship between household size and poverty.

### **7.3 Socio-economic Conditions**

Different empirical literature is based on different countries, so the socio-economic conditions are different. These different socio-economic conditions would be the reasons to get different results. Even within the same country, for rural and urban area, different empirical results are due to different socio-economic condition; for example, in Tanzania authors find two types of result for two regions within the country. The explanations of this difference have already discussed in section 6.4.1 (b).

### **8. Conclusion**

Are larger household poorer? This is an unresolved question. In this paper, the answer to this question has tried to be solved mainly by reviewing some literature. It has been discovered that some of them show positive correlation between household size and poverty and some show the opposite and others show both positive and negative correlation. Overall, determination of the correlation between household size and poverty is a complex phenomenon.

The correlation between household size and poverty mainly depend on the methodology used to measure poverty, the assumptions about equivalence scales and economies of scale in consumption on those papers. But in many studies, there is no clear indication of the assumptions. Therefore, special attention needs to be given to the measurement of poverty.

Again, the papers do not give any emphasis on the multigenerational households, for which more people live together and form a larger household. There are some other reasons which also help to increase family size that is absent in most of the papers. There are some unanticipated circumstances, such as, the loss of a job, a deliberating

injury, a divorce, an emerging disease, or a death in the family may also help to increase household size which could affect poverty.

Another important thing is that much common poverty correlates are themselves correlated with household size and without considering these correlates misleading results may be found for the relationship between household size and poverty. Finally, there is lack of theoretical arguments between wealth and household size in nearly every paper. One of the limitations of this literature review is the complete reliance on previously published research. Wide-range information on household size and poverty is difficult to obtain from the available secondary sources. Limited literatures are available regarding household size and poverty prevailing indifferent countries.

Clearly, more research needs to be done to identify the correlation between household size and poverty and also to solve the debate on which is the cause and which is the effect of this correlation. Further research is also needed because if the relationship between household size and poverty is understood, then it has important implications for policy development, and program planning in the area of population and family planning, poverty reduction, as well as education and social research.

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