

## Street Begging and its Socio-psychological Impacts in Sindh, Pakistan

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### Abstract

*This study is set out to examine the street begging and its socio-psychological impacts in Sindh, Province- Pakistan. For the present study, the four research questions have been utilized to explore the purpose of street begging. Furthermore, the instrument put into use for data collection like a face-to-face and self-developed questionnaire. Hence, the results relate that there are the different factors and the reasons of street begging that resort to individuals for begging in a civil society. However, the individuals who lack in education factor they are easily resorted to the street begging in Sindh – Pakistan. Such the socio-psychological impact being contributed by the individuals of the country. Meanwhile, socio-psychological impacts have been recognized through such the individuals with respect to other factors which move the persons for street begging in a civil society of the province like lack of social interaction, high level of poverty; loss of self –confidence and development of inferiority of complex among the individuals of the province. The factual items which assist to remove the street begging from Sindh- Pakistan have been recognized through the individuals of human society comprising of shelter, food, rehabilitation, monthly allowance for desirable people like disable, migrated, homeless, family problems and needy persons of society. Furthermore, focusing on the recommendation for solution of the street begging as the following factors would be used by policy planners who had better introduce the particular and specific frame work on such the perspective. Moreover, the planners should develop the innumerable tactics so as to improve the lives of street beggars for the presence of such impacts on lives of the street beggars in all four categories. Hence forth, precaution and prevention work carried out against the individuals to stop from begging on the streets of the province.*

**Keywords:** Street begging; Socio-psychological; lack of social interaction; poverty; loss of self –confidence; development of inferiority of complex; Sindh

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## 1. Introduction

Broadly, Street begging is a common socio-economic and physical issue in Sindh- Pakistan, and growing daily in the cities of the province owing to the various reasons that produced the different types of beggars in the civil society. As categorized individuals involved in begging like poverty-stricken persons and mentally –derailed people engaged in the begging at the urban regions of Sindh. The then, these individuals remained stable residents of the cities of the province. Nevertheless, the efforts were taken by the government and other institutions for improvement and rehabilitation of beggars in a proper way instead of their illegal settlement on the encroached locales. They remained stay on the streets on account of no more placement and settlement from any authority for such the individuals as the government sectors exhorted to leave such the streets and stay somewhere locations of rehabilitation in one form or another settlement (Esan, 2009).

Intensive actions of government regarding street begging indicated that she should not allow the beggars to beg on the streets in spite of being illegally settled in the streets whereas individuals resort to begging for the different factors and of the various categories and characteristics in human society they might be temporary basis or part-time jobs for a time beings. However, street begging is taking place at the most of urban regions of Sindh province- Pakistan irrespective to this, other factors like famine and drought as well and economic activities. These elements deepened the individuals into street begging at the urban areas of Sindh (Gans, 1995).

Albeit poverty is found more at the urban regions and beggars are common at every venue of urban locations. Furthermore, regions of urban

regions lacking in different things like ill-health, dearth of safe drinking water, lack of educational facilities and minimal infrastructural strategies which take the individuals to beg in a civil society (Mafimisebi, 2002). Socio-economic factors resulted the individuals for begging in a civil society (Mudanssir, 2010). However, begging is recognized as a social problem witnessing psychological effect in the form of inferiority complexities and complications and even damaging social structure of urban regions with respect to geographical settings, furthermore, the present study attempts to cover all divisions of Sindh- province comprising of Karachi, Hyderabad, Mirpurkhs, Sukkur, Larkana, Banboreand ShaheedBenazirababd. As per selection of regions of such the divisions, the study highlight a cross socio-cultural analysis. Further, it remains an obligatory for a study on account of increasing rate of population in urban areas and the diverse socio-economic factors that is why the issue of begging is multiplied in these regions, and beggars are commonly seen at road sides and other busy places of the divisions. The samples for this study selected street beggars of all divisionsof Sindh –Province, after that research questionnaire developed for examining socio-psychological impacts of being in streets for begging purpose. The research questionnaire mentioned as:

1. What are the main reasons of street begging in Sindh- Province?
2. What are the outstanding factors contributing to street begging in Sindh-Province?
3. What are the socio-psychological impacts of street begging in Sindh-Province?
4. What are the specific solutions to street begging in Sindh- Province?

## **2. Characteristics of Beggars**

Ostensibly, Begging is a social problem of a human society , and beggars are such the individuals who have been engaged in begging owing to the different factors and characteristics involving the high rate of poverty, illiteracy, homeless, unemployment and other social facts and problems like ill health, drug addiction, criminal aptitude, alcoholism, mental illness, suicidal action, migration ,separation and isolation from the respective families and lack of assistance in the walks of life. Besides to it, begging is

connected with human actions with sound intention for survival in a human society (Dahrendorf, 2005).

However, begging is associated with human communication intentionally with public explicitly while bowing or sitting on specific slots having a cup for bringing an attention of the public to acquire money or any other necessary items from the people of society. Hence forth, begging is considered as unofficial way of making economy strong in a human society, and this activity is practiced on regular basis outside of home or house to support the family (World Bank, 2000). Beggars are supposed to be engaged in begging on account of semi monetary or monetary return as per receiver of gifts from the public. Thus, begging is based on intentions and way of getting benefits for beggars. There by, begging is common in public space and depend on street economic strategies and activities. As the most of the individuals present at traffic venues for begging purpose from the public as they are on motorized or pedestrian position for something from the public. Therefore, begging is taken as urban phenomenon indicating the association between the giver and the receiver is explicitly based on non-reciprocal. In the same way alms are not a part of an actual gift association as found dominant in lieu of literature as per relationship (Harris, 1945).

### **3. Types of Beggars in Sindh**

As usual, beggars can be classified into two categories: professional and non-professional. The non-professional beggars are such the individuals looking in the real sense needy ones and considered as the very poverty-stricken can hardly maintain and sustain their lives in spite of high level of expenditure in human society. Furthermore, such the individuals do not get and ask any one for charity as they have to maintain their veneration in human society. For them, generosity and religious assistance like alms, zakat, fitra, and other funds for compensating their human needs for survival strategies in human society. They are absolutely outcome of such the circumstances and positions. On the other way, professional beggars are such the persons who earn their livelihood through acquiring task while feeling easiness in beggary for looting the public with strange expression and outstanding looks for capturing the nature and mind of the individuals. Sometimes, they have baby on lap for sympathy from public as to get the charity and money. Hence forth, the beggars have created nuisance and miserable conditions for public and teasing and annoying them through

begging as the presence on the public space for demanding money on a constant appeal in every nook and cranny of the various regions. Furthermore, beggars are divided into the eight categories as mentioned below:-

**Able bodied beggars**-Physical able bodied beggars are at majority and roaming for charity owing to unemployment and poverty. The then, they gradually become professionals. However, such the beggars are fed freely because of poor being the presence at the religious places. According to Osagbemi (2001), the able bodied beggars are mostly indolent and roving around busy regions of the public. Furthermore, they lack an interest for any private or government jobs but, they cajole and harass the people of a society for the charity and human assistance as per need for maintenance of lives.

**Religious beggars**-However, religious persons support to the poor and needy persons as an assistance point of views. Such the beggars are given the benefits from the religious people; they are found at the religious places where the people visit for prayers and they get the charity from such the devotees of the religious places the then, the beggars just need charity and would pray as usual the most of devotees; they are for money and charity from the devotees as the devotees return back from such religious places, these beggars flock and peruse for charity in the form of groups. Apart from, the true religious beggars always hide themselves under a firm faith of religious instructions from the public avoid mingling with any one of a society (Jelili, 2006). They are in real sense seen at the religious places like mosques, temples and churches and other the very pious locations, but visiting such the holy places from one place to another place for understanding the reality and fact of human life and the actual journey of man here and here after the World. On the special occasion, they seemed as busy in thoughts and considerations for temporary world and understand the next one that is unknown for human beings. **Physically Handicap beggars**-Human history witnesses that the disfigured people have resorted for begging in the history throughout the world. Hence forth, they have relied on charity and money and other kind of items from the public. As from them, other categories of beggars like deaf, dumb, mute, crippled, deformed and blind and other disfigured beggars practice begging in a human society due to such the characteristics found among them in a civil society (Okoli, 1993).

**Mentally handicap beggars-** such the beggars are of the feeble-minded in human structure and suffering from mental deficiency. Hence, these beggars are classified into two ways – the first like micro cephalic (having small skull and abnormally nature), the second as hydrocephalic (possessing a largerskull, and having water on the brain) the traumatic and the paralytic. However, these beggars are seen moving on the streets for charity from the public, but sometimes, they create nuisance for public owing to mental illness throwing stones and using abusive language with them. They are unconscious in their nature and failed to realize the nature and timing of urinating and location for call of the nature within a due time due to mental disorders (Okoli, 1993). They are seen sitting at one place for a long time and having filthy conditions covered with lice, mosquitoes germs, flies and other vermin that being attached on body and making them more dirty and uneasy among other members of human society. A part from this, that there is no any persons in society who goes to take care of such filthy persons and save a blessed life of them.

**Diseased beggars-** In addition to discussing mentally and physical feeble persons involved in begging, but the many under shadow of chronically diseased bodily persons resorted to begging having the different distorted bodily structures showing weakness and troubles inside the human organs for sympathetic appeal from the public. Such the beggars victimized of the different diseases like epilepsy, leprosy, tuberculosis and various skin as well facial diseases.

**Weak beggars-** Generally, these kinds of beggars suffer from for the time being feebleness as resulted of starvation and malnutrition while beggars reply on one time a day for food, but sometimes, two times food as they take for survival in a human society meanwhile nothing other items related to a supplementary like fruits or milk utilized as they lack physical strength for any sort of work in a society, therefore, they resort to begging among others in a civil society.

**Old beggars -** Old people are considered as a burden on human society while the most of joint family where the old people are suffering and not given proper care from their respective families as they are the aged and feeble in physical structure. The youths are mostly sentimental in nature so as they avoid assisting such the feeble people of a society, ignorance, unsocial attitude and unethical behavior of the family resorting them to begand

depending on the charity from others. In real sense, they are ignored from their children and left on pity and sympathy of the public (Cuff, 1990).

**Child beggars-** The children are recognized as an unpaid or paid supportive figure to the seasonal beggars. Children are main sources for beggars and making profitable business as to attract the public for charity. These children are real assets for beggars in getting other kind of items, but sometimes for acquiring more money; they are mortgaged, sold and bartered in this way (Kennedy, 2001). These children slowly learn the tactics of begging and inclined to profession and become professional beggars. Besides to it most of separated family children rely on begging in a civil society.

**Eunuch beggars:** (locally recognized as ‘hijras’) these beggars reside on the very low status in social milieu of human society. These beggars are provided less employment opportunities in a civil society. The most of beggars earn money through performance on the different functional and ceremonies, they sometimes involve in sexual attachment like prostitution work in a civil society. They often present at the busy location like parks, functions and other public space, they are seen on streets, hotels, buses, trains and other venues for demanding money from the public. As they use the different gestures on denial of charity from the public and using profane language and obscene gestures as well sexual advances for sake of charity from the public.

**Addicted beggars** –Addicted beggars are generally resorted to begging for funds so as to get narcotics and other chewing items for survival in a human society.

#### **4. Methods of Begging in Sindh**

Broadly, Beggars apply enormous methods so as to get the attention of the public. Meanwhile these beggars move to such places where the people are at majority and they stop showing them their cup or hand in front of them for charity. It indicates that such the methods for begging being resulted of the different factors like touching passersby, taunting and threatening the persons on denial of charity and tries to coerce so as to give money to them. Mostly begging takes place in a passive manner. However, begging may be stood for intimation on the one way while on the other side, beggars having



the different behavior for begging towards the public (Oladepo, 2006). Hence, beggars use the specific tricks and methods successfully for sake of attention of the public so as to get charity and other kind of items from them. Simply nature people are easily enticed by these beggars on account of apparent nature and habit as per routine in the walks of life.

**1) Silence-** This method is broadly focused on exposure of physical and mental deformities for sake of soliciting charity by explicit of their damaged as well diseased parts of body, and extending out an open palm, causing disorders and injuries on self and so on.

**2) Slogan-** this method indicates that beggars chant a slogan whenever they feel hunger and other needs for charity as a weapon in the name of Allah and pray for blessings.

**3) Showing their deformity or handicap-** The method is associated with such the category of beggars who are disfigured in physical structure and such abnormality is tool for getting charity from the public. On the basis of deformities; they get sympathy from the passersby and ask them for charity. These beggars are present at most of commercial and public busy centers, religious venues and other places of the people there is a great movement of the public; they have been roaming for charity.

**4) Using infants** – this method is based on using children for sake of charity from the public. Meanwhile female beggars take a child on lap asking for charity and sharing strange stories related to child that is hungry since night or morning or have bandage on body showing that child is suffering from the strange diseases, and unable to walk and eat properly so therefore, money be given on the name of child. These female beggars are found at the various venues like at the gate of temple, mosque, church, bazaar, hotels, railway station and residential regions of the public.

#### **5) Other Methods-**

- *Long stories technique-* Beggars mostly start telling long and strange stories to the public for obtaining a huge money from them and saying that we have no money to reach at home or someone has picked our pocket on the bus or vehicle; they try to befool the public for charity and other kind of items.
- *A direct Personal Request-* this method is directly related with communicative style without any hindrance, and they openly ask for

charity and money for medicines and food for family members showing sympathetic expression to such the individuals of the human society.

- *Torture method*-Beggars torture themselves while sitting the whole time on sunlight or dirty place during hot summer and winter days.
- *Stagnant position*-Beggars are at stagnant position and seated at on specific location like traffic venues the whole time for charity from passengers and public soliciting the charity and getting donations , but sometimes, for more money , they leave place rush to vehicle for charity not caring of getting an accident of the vehicles.
- *Collective method*-Beggars with specific lamp or chadar/clothe on hand for collecting money in groups singing songs or knocking pot or steel pot for making public attentive as to get charity. Sometimes, they use money for their pilgrimage purpose.

#### **4. Causes of Begging in Sindh**

There are the various causes that lead the individuals to beg for survival facts in human society (Kennedy, 2001). Meanwhile some causes of begging are given as below:-

**Poverty:** Poverty is related with the measurement of particular incomes per capital to the expenditure of an individual or group at the mentioned time (Federal Office of Statistics, 1996). The main obvious clues of poverty indicated like lack of shelter, death of food, the presence of malnutrition and poverty-stricken structure of the individuals. As mostly the mother of children left on the streets for survival factors and depending on begging from the public(Akinbola, 2002).

**Homelessness:** UNICEF reportedly emphasized that 100 million children worldwide are homeless. As per the statisticssurvey, 43% of beggars were homeless, of which, 71% of them barely go for sleep(Hoyt, 1939).

**Break down of the family system:** As the children escaped from their family because of ill-treatment from the step –parents resulting that they beg on the streets for survival strategies(Adedibu, 1989).

**Mental illness and drugs:** As sometimes, these beggars are associated with drug dependency/alcohol because of addictive disorders. These beggars beg for acquiring money and buy items for their children, but they go to get

addictive items like tobacco, drugs, alcohol and chewing items (Egeonu, 1988).

**Unemployment:** Beggars are mostly without a job, with 82% being jobless for a long time (Okunmadewa, 2001). The most of them beg for children and for survival of family; they develop their economic slot in a civil society.

#### **4. Consequences of Street Begging in Sindh**

Begging has brought negative impact on personality and health of the persons in a civil society. Meanwhile some factors are given as:-

**Sexual abuse:** Moreover, Female beggars are generally abused sexually by men who seem to tempt them to bed with the assurance of money; some of them have been recognized as victims of HIV/AIDS (Ogunkan, 2009).

**Kidnapping:** As children are kidnapped for cause of begging in a civil society that is an illegal activity in a human society (Burgess, 2005).

**Crime:** Beggars are involved in criminal activities; they may have on secret work and begging is their hidden job in a civil society (Ogunkan, 2010).

**Accident risks:** The most of Beggars feel risk or hit by vehicles when they involve in begging at busy regions.

#### **5. Socio-Psychological Impacts on Street Begging in Sindh**

The participants identified the relative psycho-social effects towards the begging in Sindh, Pakistan. We observed the relationship and impact of psycho-social variables on street begging in Sindh, Pakistan. The weights of correlation and multiple regression show that the predictors such as development of inferiority complex, lack of social interaction, loss of self-respect and dignity, increased mind set of poverty and loss of self-confidence are positively and significantly associated with begging in Sindh (Table 1).

*Table 1. Impact of psycho-social factors on street begging in Sindh*

Variables	Begging	Development of inferiority complex	Lack of social interaction	Loss of self-respect and dignity	Increased mind set of poverty	Loss of self-confidence
Begging	---					
Development of inferiority complex	0.459** ( $\beta=0.395^{**}$ )	---				
Lack of social interaction	0.320** ( $\beta=0.429^{**}$ )	0.501** ( $\beta=0.295^{**}$ )	---			
Loss of self-respect and dignity	0.289** ( $\beta=0.376^{**}$ )	0.130* ( $\beta=0.095$ )	0.534** ( $\beta=0.404^{**}$ )	---		
Increased mind set of poverty	0.330** ( $\beta=0.298^{**}$ )	0.287** ( $\beta=0.490^{**}$ )	0.320** ( $\beta=0.245^{**}$ )	0.367** ( $\beta=0.318^{**}$ )	---	
Loss of self-confidence	0.425** ( $\beta=0.411^{**}$ )	0.431** ( $\beta=0.366^{**}$ )	0.120* ( $\beta=0.115^*$ )	0.356** ( $\beta=0.289^{**}$ )	0.480** ( $\beta=0.426^{**}$ )	---

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).  
\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).  $\beta = *p < 0.10; **p < 0.05$

## 6. Suggested Solutions to Street Begging

Meanwhile, many strategies have been employed by the government, NGOs, organizations and public spirited individuals in Sindh - Pakistan and abroad for combating over such a situation.

- **Rehabilitation center**

It is stated that the present rehabilitation for beggars remained as mockery and insulting the dignity of the individuals as lacking the basic amenities of life that is why it is not valid strategy so as to stop begging in a civil society (Okunmadewa, 2001). Moreover, suitable strategies can be applied for maintaining rehabilitation slot and providing all facilities for survival strategies.

- **Provision of food for children involved in begging**

However, the most of children engaged in begging in a civil society; they are not cared by their respective family for that they move for begging, and state of government impose job of feeding such children properly as per direction of Islamic teachings and fact of humanity (Adedibu, 1989). Hence, these children are stopped to beg further in a society.

- **Counseling implications**

In this manner, counselors can utilize their strategies for vocational educational-social counseling that would assist beggars to find out substitutive ways for the application of strategies.

## **7. Conclusion**

As the factual knowledge and results of the study illustrated such the factors and reasons which resort the individuals to become the street beggars as per having multifaceted, diverse nature and other qualities form begging in a civil society. The most factors are social problems of human beings that lead the individuals for beggary. Hence, children can be given a proper care, love, kindness and other necessary items for survival while lacking of love and respect from parents' side brings them for begging in a civil society. Government should take a step to control the individuals from street begging.

## **8. Recommendations**

To address the problem of street beggars and begging activities, the recommendations given below:

- Policy planners must bring into usages of various approaches impacting on lives of the beggars as per structure and need of the individual in the walk of life.
- More efforts should be practiced on altering the begging nature of community involved in begging and their children imparted with education.
- Governments and other stakeholders should produce such the strategies for opportunities of street beggars rather than depending on others' income.
- Rehabilitation centers should be smoothly retained with primary resources like water, gas and others for pleasure of others.
- The Federal Government should support the state Government (where there are Islamic schools) in providing food for students, in the hope that they will not take to the streets.
- The Diverted Giving Scheme should be launched with collaboration of social welfare agencies allocating funds for the underprivileged or less advantaged individuals.

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