

SOCIO ECONOMIC FEATURES OF BEGGARS: A BRIEF REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts a literature survey on the deprived section (Beggars) in India and Africa. In this paper we have reviewed several papers from India and outside India to understand the pattern of the research on this topic. We have tried to sketch a descriptive picture of literatures on this important issue. We have tried to address the problems of beggars from these studies. This paper also attempts to give suggestions for the further research.

Keywords: Poverty, Deprivation, Depraved Class, Beggars.

Introduction

Economists have a definition of the socio legal boundary of economic production (Thomas,2021) . The entire circular flow of the macro economy is analyzed within the boundary. Economists sometimes make a foray into the journey of the boundary. Boundaries are always a dangerous place where the established notions are redefined and re prescribed (Suchitra Vijayan 2021). Classical economist like Smith described this as 'Unproductive labour'. In the sense that they are not contributing anything to the GDP. Marx has been more vociferous; He distinguished between unproductive labor and the class of lumpen proletariat. Many labors may be unproductive but are within the social legal boundary. Modern economists tend to call them disguised unemployment. However, the activities of lumpen proletariat fall outside the boundary of legal and social definition. Many modern economists such as (Becker,1968) have defined them as extorting activity

This section may be defined as deprived distinguishing them from deprived. Deprived labor act within the legal ethical boundary and fail to get their remuneration and or face many undue discrimination (gender, caste). These people are not only deprived but there activities are not accepted by the society. Hence they doubly discriminated first directly, second they use their owner as a productive agent. According to Sen (1979) recognition is the crucial part of laboring activity this is simply denied to them. They include the lass of beggars, vagabond, prostitutes and other.

Long ago in his "wealth of nation" (1776) Adam smith gave the concept of 'unproductive' labour. It seems economic activity do not directly add value to the social output. Most of the classical thinkers are very keen in making this distinction in their understanding of the process of capital accumulation and economic growth. Later Marx also used the concept of unlabour. In modern mainstream economics the distinction between productive and unproductive labour is not crucial.

Later Karl Marx and Fredrick Engles(1848) in their famous book "communist Manifesto" Coined a term "Lumpen Proletariat". However they add another aspect the class of poor deals with various unethical activity such as Beggary, Prostitution, and Criminal activity. This category has been recognized to be the important and study of the modern economy. This category has not participated in the labour force. That had a negative effect in production process. This extortion affects the society in many ways (Savran and Tonak 1999)

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First they detract a sizeable portion of the labour force out of the production activity. That Deduces production and add inefficiency. It can put the pressure on demand leading to situation of stagflation. They create a type of veil or invisible demand' that often go beyond purview of the fiscal authority creating and added constrained effect to the efficiency of the economy.

This category has a strong relation with another Marxian term i.e 'Reserve Army of labour'. According to Karl Marx at the time of industrial revolution industries created Slums for storing the labour force. The slums acted like godown of labours. When the labour demand increased the reserve army got employment into the industries. Whenever the labour demand decreased they are stored in the slums.

Now the problem is that when a labour lost his job. He or she has to find another job to fulfill his basic need. But the lack of skill is the main barrier for them to find another work. This pathetic situation forces them to enter into the black economy.

In India where condition of living Moorish and highly socially orchestrated many people are force to take their livelihood in this deprived section such as(laid out labour , unskilled woman force, infant and so on). They however play a significant role in the path wave of mainstream economics. They create demand for goods indulging monetize activities and distort earning from the so called productive sector. As noted Basu and Van(1998) institution of child labour is closely related with the sector. In fact the realm of informal sector the legal ethical boundary become flexible and pulp arable often vanishing. Without a proper analyzing of this sector is grossly inadequate. In this Paper we have made a modest attempt to study this section of the Indian populate. Many of these works are sample based in the form of case study. While these studies are vital they lose macro perspectives. In this paper. We have tried to review the studies related with the beggars in India and also outside India. There are three sections in this paper first section is introduction, second is associated with the studies on beggars, third is the conclusion part.

Section II

Dr. Malarvizhi V & Dr. K.T. Geetha (2016) examines the socio economic condition of beggars in Coimbatore city. They examined 51 beggars by adopting purposive sampling technique during May to June 2015 and techniques like Chi-square test; Garrett's rating scale; Likert's summated scale and Factor analysis were used. The study revealed that the main cause for begging was illiteracy, no source of food and illness and also they faced problems like harassment from municipal officers and police, fellow beggars, sexual abuse and health hazards. The study concludes that as they are also humans who have the right to live with dignity and respect, help them to get job in productive works according to their potentialities and skill rather than giving them kind and cash to get rid of them.

Namwata and Mgabo (2014) examined consequences of begging and future aspirations of beggars to stop begging life in Central Tanzania. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 220 respondents composed of 130 beggars, non-beggars; 60 members of the focus group discussions and 30 key informants. Mixed methods and tools of data collection involving quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for data collection. Simple descriptive statistics were used for analyzing the data. The realized consequences of street begging were abusive languages from the public, harassments from municipal officials and police, harassment from fellow beggars; sun burn and cold during the nights, and sexual abuse were reported. Future aspirations of beggars in order to get rid of begging were getting capital to start small businesses, getting care giver for themselves and their children, getting employment and getting accommodation. Counseling approach was recommended to help street beggars so as they may become assertive and hence become assets instead of liabilities to their families and society at large.

Khan et., al (2013) analyse the socio-economic problems faced by beggars and governmental helps received by them as well as recommended by the authors for upliftment of the socio-economic standard of their life in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. The study based on primary source of data, collected through the field survey in the Aligarh district carried out during 2009. The analysis reveals that poverty, unemployment, lack of electricity, sanitation, potable water and proper housing, non availability of ration card, lack of money for marriage of their daughters, various diseases, etc. are the main problems faced by the beggars. The help received from the government by the beggars merely are voter identity cards and ration cards. The study demonstrates that this section of population is the most poor among the poorest who are still thriving for one of the traditional basic need, that is food, what may be predicted about the status of the other remaining needs (Clothing and shelter). The new additive modern needs (health, education and recreation) are the heavenly dreams to them.

Sarapet., al (2013) studied the begging activities of beggars in Aligarh district. The study was based on primary source of data, collected through the field survey and direct questionnaire to the respondents in the Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh during 2009. study reveals that the majority of the beggars involved in this activity by their birth and the preferred time for begging is from morning to evening because at this time they receive higher response of the donors. Almost all the beggars ask both cash and kind as alms. A large section of beggars used direct method of begging. Nearly, half of the beggars visited the places of begging by their foot and remaining half also used bus, cart, cycle, etc. as sources of mode of transportation.

Namwata et., al (2012) examined categories of street beggars and factors influencing begging activities in Central Tanzania using Dodoma and Singida Municipalities as case studies. A cross-sectional research design was employed and structured questionnaires were administered to 130 street beggars, who were selected from various public spaces using a convenience sampling technique. Focus-group discussions, key-informant interviews, and observations were also used to collect primary data. The study found that street beggars fell into four categories namely beggars on the streets, beggars of the streets, beggars in the streets, and beggars of street families, based on where they slept after begging hours and contacts with their families. Furthermore, the phenomenon of street begging is an outcome of many factors, including poverty, unemployment, physical challenges, death of parents, and family disintegration. The study recommends that to address the phenomenon of street begging, policy planners and local government authorities must adopt multi-faceted, multi-targeted, and multi-tiered approaches in the form of preventative and responsive interventions.

Adugna (2006) held the view that street beggars have generally been categorized in terms of their abilities and disabilities based on how they make their living from the streets. There were also individuals who did not show any externally observable deformities or disabilities. The study, however, attempted to categorize street beggars in Central Tanzania into four groups based on where they slept after begging hours, contact with or ties to their families, i.e., whether they had abandoned or were abandoned by their families either permanently or temporarily, and whether they were born or raised in the streets.

Menka et.,al (2014) analyzed the economic life of beggars. The study was based on primary source of data, collected through the field survey and direct questionnaire to the respondents in the Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh during 2009. The study reveals that beggars are the most deprived section of the society who begged for sustaining their livelihood, living in abject poverty and on the mercy of people, without access to standard housing and household amenities. The study reveals that majority of the population of beggars' households involves in the begging activity and followed by other economic activities. On an average, there were 2-4 earning hands and dependent in each household. Average daily income of the beggars by begging is 51-100 per day. With aim to know prevalence of psychiatry morbidity among the beggars, the study socio-demographic variables and assessed the psychiatric morbidity and distress among the inmates of 'Beggar Home'. The Subjects were 49 inmates of Beggar Home situated in Vadodara (Gujarat), India and a semi-structured questionnaire of socio-demographic details, General Health Questionnaire-28 and also interviewed them personally to diagnose the psychiatric illness and to know their begging patterns. The study found that 38.8 per cent of inmates were suffering from one or other types of psychiatric disorders. The study also revealed the high scores on GHQ among the beggars suffering from the psychiatric illness.

Studies on Africa

Salami and Olugbayo (2013) have focused exclusively on the social course of indigenous begging activities in Nigerian cities. There exists dearth of knowledge about international migrant beggars and their health-seeking behavior in Ibadan South-western Nigeria. A cross sectional survey data were collected through purposive sampling technique among a total of 250 international migrant beggars in six locations in Ibadan. Results showed that 56% of respondents were female, few had formal education, 85.6% were married, and 94.8% were Muslim. Respondents migrated from Niger (83.6%), Chad (11.2%), Mali (4.0%) and Benin (1.2%). None had a legal residence permit. Respondents' mean residence duration in Nigeria was 8.5 years. Malaria was common to beggars both in their home country and in Nigeria. Treatment was received from patent medicine vendors by 51.2% respondents. Advice for appropriate treatment for illness was received from family members by 44.4% migrant beggars. Sex and country of beggars have a direct relationship with the treatment seeking ($P < 0.05$). Financial and legal status of migrant beggars dynamically limited their healthcare choices. Routine health education on hygiene practice and appropriate treatment-seeking should be taken to beggars at their different locations by health workers as means of prevention of the spread of diseases.

Namwata and Mgabo (2012) conducted a study with the objective of examining street beggars and begging life in Dodoma and Singida Municipalities in Central Tanzania. The study examined the feelings of street beggars on begging life and their survival livelihoods in urban areas of central Tanzania. The study employed a cross-sectional research design. The population of the study consisted of street beggars and non-street beggars, municipal officials, councilors, business people and community members. This was done for triangulating and enriching data that were collected from street beggars. The study found that most of sampled beggars felt very bad towards begging life and saw begging activity as an immoral conduct. Street beggars obtained their basic necessities from different sources. Furthermore, it was found that begging flourishes because community tends to be generous to beggars. The study recommends that awareness programmes need to be conducted for the poor so as to help them realize how shameful begging is. Step towards banning, or discourage begging should be welcome. Families where beggars come from should be made aware of taking responsibility of taking care of their family members who are beggar.

Conclusion

We have seen that there are many studies in India. These studies cover wide arena of issues that are essential problem of the socially deprived class. The most important question appears to be why people engage in deprived activities. There may be many reasons for this poverty, non-availability of meaningful livelihood opportunities, social obstruction, religious obstruction, social and political discrimination and other factors. The Researchers should emphasize to unravel the factor that are responsible for taking this decision. In this exercise they can also try to understand socioeconomic behavior of socially deprived class. especially not human development attainment for this sector. Large sample Analysis is needed to understand the socio economic features of the deprived classes. Future researchers should look into the reason behind choosing this activity, also explicit analysis is needed on their human development attainment for understanding the socio economic features of the most vulnerable section of our society.

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