

## Child beggars in India

<sup>1</sup>Nishtha Singla & <sup>2</sup>Shashank Tyagi

<sup>1</sup>Student, 5th year, B.A.LLB(H), Law College Dehradun/ Uttranchal University, Uttarakhand (India)

<sup>2</sup>Asst. Professor, Law College Dehradun/ Uttranchal University, Uttarakhand (India)

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### ABSTRACT

India is the most dominant nation as far as economy. The quick development in economy and population is additionally expands the poverty in the Indian nation. This expanding population is causing disc breaks to the development of economy, with problem such as supply of food and request of nourishment, begging is one of them which is influencing the Indian financial framework in a most serious way as in the human resource is getting unutilised begging is most genuine social issue in India. Begging is a problem for society is as much as great no. of beggars means not use of human resources and accessible resources in present environment. Sadly over 4 lakh children in India are trapped into this business/profession each year. Whereas in USA no child is seen begging. The social administration deals with the child and puts them in a protective home where all encompassing improvement of the child can take place. It gives a lot of emphasis on Child's rights, and an opportunity to make the most of their rights uninhibitedly, explicitly and with no dread. But in India, where rule of law is maintained, and when we as a popularity-based nation are endeavouring hard to ensure the enthusiasm of everybody, for what reason is something like child rights which has been an issue for over 10 years not ready to meet with an answer? In talking about the part of child rights and beggary, this paper shall consider the question of child beggary and the disabled child beggars in India. It also deals with causes and various problems faced by beggars, governmental help received by them and suggestion given by the people and as well as recommendation by the author for upliftment of the socio-economic standard of their life. The analysis reveals that the main cause of begging that force the people to adopt the heinous activity i.e. begging, are prevalence of poverty, illiteracy, by inheritance of caste, death of parents, disease etc. out of them, poverty is a single area towards this profession. This study demonstrates that the section of population is the poorest among the poorest who are still thriving for its need.

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### 1. Introduction

India at the existing time, has been facing various problem relating to child and one is beggary in them. According to official statistics coarsely 40000 children disappear every year in India some human rights groups estimate that the actual number is much higher than that. Many of these children are abducted and enforced to work as beggars for organised gang like criminal groups. According to UNICEF human rights watch these children are not allowed to keep their receiving or go to schools and are often starving so that they look gong and cry thereby causing most kindness and bequest from travellers and since Child beggars get more money than strong one, criminal clusters often increase their profit by cutting out child's arm, scaring his face with acid and severing a leg. Miserably, about three lakhs children across India are indulged to beg, using everything from addiction to drugs, to threats of violence and actual beating.<sup>1</sup> According to the Indian National Human Rights Commission, up to forty thousand children are kidnapped in India every year, of which at least ten thousand remain freehand. These children can be seen in every places in India. The main areas of activities are the places of pilgrimage and worship. They sit on your heels on the sides of rivers, adjoining temples and other busy places. They ramble from street to street, from one locality to another and beg for

food and money. A beggar's life is far more tragic than we can imagine. Roaming at traffic signals, begging for that indefinable rupee or rupees in exchange for a flower or any petty thing. Rather than stopping this activity in society there are people have been supposedly running training centres for child beggars.

The child beggars are part of a instinctive beggary racket. They are trained how to carry aids to appear restricted on road and later paid Rs ten or twenty as commission out of their daily earnings. There is mob dominant that include females also, who keep a check on the beggars so that they could not steal the money. If children are found doing so, they are beaten black and blue for that. It is shocking that these little beggars are just another group of distraught victims which don't actually have a choice. They just have to work regardless of any disease. Young female beggar suffer the worst. Be it a lorry-driver or the famous traffic policeman, all look at them with bad intention. And, the poor helpless cannot do much about it.

The phenomenon of begging is a result of a number of factors, such as poverty, religion, physical disability, culture, national disaster, bad habits (drug, alcohol, and gambling dependencies), family heritage.

UNICEF studies have found that begging especially predominant among families in which parents are incapacities

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-300000-children-across-india-are-forced-to-beg-by-cartels-report-2218856> (visited on 10 march 2019)

in some ways, leading children to be the sole provider. However according to the world bank involuntary begging is most commonly found in areas where law barring begging are rare and substantial regulation of trafficking.

Many nations have laws, that entails temporary detainment an eventful release back onto the streets, which does little to combat the issue. There are several cultural factors that support begging i.e. the resolution of familial debts through the kidnapping and exploitation through begging is form of trafficking outlined by the united nations.

A victim centred human rights approach to combating trafficking has been internationally renowned as the best possible strategy when addressing the issue, with the recourse focusing on punishing the exploiter and rehabilitating the child. This becomes difficult with respect to victims of familial trafficking, considering this wound require changes in care placement and strict monitoring of each displaced child's welfare. many organizations affirm that prevention begin with discouraging donations and improving services so that children, and families as a whole, have greater capabilities. Many NGOs have initiated movements focusing on informing the public on the danger of donation.

Its Compulsory for any Country Government to Eradicate Begging. Before Concentrating on the GDP of the Country or its Profits, first of all we should expel the Beggars in the Country. Despite the fact that we turn into a Great Country with all Developments, on the off chance that we have a solitary beggar in our Streets, we are Still an Undeveloped Country. Everybody Must Understand it. In Many Other Countries the Govt. is giving cash for every one of the people groups from Educated to Uneducated to live their life until they Get Settled by them possess. In our Country we don't even need to Share cash for every one of the Peoples. At least we can support the poor's and underneath destitution line people groups, at least for their Basic Living needs. However, every demonstration of Charity must be in an Organized way, Else each activity would finish in Vain.

## 2. Beggars in India

Begging is defined in Indian law as soliciting or receiving alms in public place by exposing wounds, injury, deformity or disease whether of himself or of any person or animal.<sup>2</sup> It is the practice of pleading others to grant a favour, often a gift of money, with little or no expectation of reciprocation. Despite India's quick economic growth in current years poverty and begging in India are still immense problems. The poverty is real and people beg because they do not has any alternative. Elderly, crippled, patients, single mothers and children fall in this category. However, begging is quite often carried out in organized gangs. It is most prevalent at sightseeing. This includes important monuments, railway stations, religious and spiritual sites, shopping areas and traffic intersections. The beggars are also often quite determined. People are often approached by a child or woman with a baby for reliability. The baby is often hired for begging. Beggars can be very

<sup>2</sup>Tripathi, S. C. and Arora, Vibha (2010), Law Relating to Women and Children, Allahabad: Central Law Publications

professional. They guard and fight over territories. Some beggars also use religion as for common people a beggar seeking alms is an opportunity to earn God's blessings. Beggars carry photographs of various deities while asking for alms. Others promise to organize a prayer from the money collected. The transvestites apply fashionable cosmetics, wear female clothes, acquire artificial feminine postures and dance.

In spite of child begging is prohibited bylaw in India, still are country is full of beggars whom we meet, wherever we go we find beggars in street, outside railway station, at bus stands, outside temple and other religious places. These beggars may be mostly seen ingroups sometime individual male, women and children are also seen as begging and some beggars are blind and suffering from other disabilities.

Injured child beggars are scared of speaking out. They say their appendages just disappeared or were hurt in an accident. The beggar gangs make more than million a year, and this kind of money and power ensures that complaints to the police don't get anywhere as gang masters bribe their way to protection.

However, many children beg because their parents and guardians send them out to beg, or simply because they do not or cannot feed them such as single homeless mothers, parents addicted to substances or very ill or disabled or poor, or when children have no responsible adult protection. Some guardians take away all the money in exchange of food. Child beggars spent a lot of time on streets which are cruel and hazardous.<sup>3</sup>

These children face poverty, isolation, sexual and physical abuse. They lack love, fondness and security and some die while some others grow up to be social misfits and criminals. Those who come in contact with caring people or NGO's respond positively to the empathy.<sup>4</sup>

Some states in India have a larger number of beggars than others. According to the government census result (2011), West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh have the most beggar. Child begging is particularly prevalent in Uttar Pradesh, while there are more beggars with disabilities in West Bengal. the number of beggars is also relatively high in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Assam and Odisha.

## 3. Causes of child begging

The problem of beggary is not due to the operation of a single cause. It is the outcome of a number of factors: Economic Social Biological Religious

### Economic Causes:

- **POVERTY:** one of the main factors behind begging is poverty as there are various families who don't even have money to fulfil their basic needs like food and shelter and because of poverty children ted to beg for their families or work as child labour to earn some money.

<sup>3</sup>Pachauri, S. K. (1999), Children and Human Rights, New Delhi: A P H Publishing Corporation.

<sup>4</sup>Dabir, Neela and Athale, Naina (2011), From Street to Hope, New Delhi: Sage

- **LACK OF EMPLOYMENT/ UNDER EMPLOYMENT:** unemployment is another cause of beggary. Present economy has not been able to provide adequate employment. Agricultural employment is limited and those migrating to urban areas also do not get jobs. According to various reports majority of children begging in the streets come from the socially vulnerable families where parents do not work and do not have permanent jobs or they are themselves engaged in begging. These are largely the families who do not have regulated residence, citizenship and legal status
- **BEGGARY AS A PROFITABLE BUSINESS:** beggary has been made a profession as it is easy gain. In India begging is a profitable and easy means of earning daily bread.
- **SOCIAL CAUSES:**
- **FAMILY DISORGANISATION:** due to family disturbances like death of parents, death of breadwinner, desertion by husband. those Helpless family members forced to beg.
- **LACK OF PARENTAL CONTROL:** because of hard living conditions poor parents have no time to spend with their children, these neglected children get associated with anti-socials and often resort to begging and to committing petty crimes.
- **COMMUNITY DISORGANISATION AND BREAK UP OF JOINT FAMILY:** previously the poor, needy and disabled people were given protection and security by dharmshalas, temples, joint families, village panchayats, caste councils etc. these institutions have become either weak or defunct or disorganised and all those helpless people resort to begging

#### Biological Causes:

- **SICKNESS OR DISEASE:** beggars suffering from incurable diseases suffer a life of agony.
- **PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEFICIENCY:** physical defects either acquired or inherited leave people helpless and disabled. Some people suffer from mental illness. These types of deficiency also leads to child beggars as it is the only resort to them as they cannot earn a living.

#### Religious Causes:

- **RELIGIOUS MENDICANCY:** some religious mendicants beg as part of their religion while some others just pretend to be mendicants.
- **INDISCRIMINATE ALMS-GIVING:** in India people give alms to beggars comprehensively either because of their religious beliefs or belief in customs. Most of the beggars persist in that profession as they earn quite an amount begging. Temples mosques or dharmshalas also give alms to beggars encouraged beggary.

#### 4. Constitutional and legal provision (India) for children begging:

- **Indian constitution**

The constitution of India stated concern for childhood in safe, secure, and healthy manner through various provision in the constitution. Accordingly, Article 15(3) enables the state to make special provisions for children.

Article 24 explicitly prohibits child labour and hazardous employment of children.

Article 39(f) further directs the state in its policy towards the well-being of the children.

Article 39 (c) provides that children of tender age should not be subject to abuse and should be given opportunities to develop in a healthy manner.<sup>5</sup>

Article 45 makes provision for free and compulsory education for children.

Article 47 states that it is the duty of the state to raise the level of nutrition and standard of living and to improve public health.

- **Provision under Indian penal code**

The courts in India have stated that a child cannot be treated as an inert object or like a property by the parents. Several laws have been made for well-being of children as well as for prevention of crime and abuse. Infanticide is a crime under section 315 of IPC and foeticide is a crime under section 315 and 316 of IPC. Abetment of suicide is a crime under section 305 of IPC and exposure and under section 317 of IPC, abandonment of children by parents or others is a crime. Kidnapping is a crime under sections 360, 361, 363, 363 A (kidnapping for begging), 366, 367, 369, 384 of IPC. Procuring of minor girls is a crime under section 366 A of IPC and selling of girls for prostitution is a crime under section 372 of IPC. Buying of girls for prostitution is a crime under section 373 of IP. Rape and unnatural offences against children are also crimes under IPC.

- **Provision under special and local laws**

There are certain crimes against children which are punishable under special and local laws such as immoral traffic prevention act, child marriage act and child labour act. The child labour act banned child labour in hotels, restaurants and as domestic servants. The Government of India passed the Children Act 1960 to introduce consistency and to establish separate child welfare boards to handle cases relating to neglected children. In 1974 the government adopted a National Policy for Children. The Indian legislature has enacted several legislations to improve and protect lives of children. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000 and its amendment in 2006, and Right to Education Act 2009 are significant in this regard.

- **Laws governing begging in India**

In India, there is no central law which penalizes begging. Although, 22 states (including few Union Territories) have their anti-begging laws. The Act which functions as the derivative figure for all the state anti-begging law is Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959.

The Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959 criminalizes begging. Its aim is to remove beggars from their current illegal profession so that they may be detained, trained and eventually employed elsewhere. The act was implemented by

<sup>5</sup>Shastry, T. S. N.(2005), India and Human Rights- Reflections, New Delhi: Concept.

the Union Territory of Delhi in 1960. It is considered a violation of rights amongst activists and advocates of homeless people.<sup>6</sup>

### 5. Current situation in India:

India has over four lakh beggars with West Bengal eighty-one thousand being the maximum among the states, the government remarked. There are 4,13,570 beggars –out of which 1.9 lakh females and 2.2 lakh males in the country, in Rajya Sabha Minister of State for Social Justice Vijay Samplastated West Bengal with 81,234 beggars topped the list followed by 65,836 in Uttar Pradesh, 30,217 in Andhra Pradesh, 29,723 in Bihar and 28,695 in Madhya Pradesh. However, in Assam, Manipur, and West Bengal female beggars outstripped their male foils. However, the UTs noted the least number of beggars. Where as the archipelago of Lakshadweep island has only two beggars as per the government record, followed by Dadra Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands with 19, 22 and 56 respectively. Of all the Union Territories, Delhi recorded the highest number of beggars - 2,187 followed by Chandigarh with 121. Among the north eastern states Assam ranked number one in the list with 22,116 beggars while Mizoram with 53 was ranked lowest. According to minister view round 22 states/UTs<sup>7</sup> have brought into action legislation relating to begging preventing.

### 6. NGOs relating to child beggars:

There is various organisation in India to help child from being exploited by others these organisations provide food and shelter to child and also encourages them to study for future. These non-government organization plays a vital role in helping child beggars by way of rehabilitation centre. these organization works from day to night for the welfare of child and betterment of the society. Many organizations is run by donation or charity and few are partially funded by governments.

Some of the organization that works for the protection of child and rehabilitation of child are as follows:

**Generation Yuvaa**, a social service organisation for rehabilitation of child beggars it has been working day or night to achieve their ultimate goal to eradicate child beggars from the city of Visakhapatnam and removing begging bowls with books in their hands. 8 years after it was founded by a team of socially conscious youngsters, Generation Yuvaa took the following step towards their mission by initiating its second rehabilitation home for child beggars at MVP Colony. The new centre will give shelter and education to 50 boys hailing from families of beggars in the city.<sup>8</sup>

Generation Yuvaa's first rehabilitation home at Marripalem is a home for 93 children. Some 43 of them are sent for schooling to Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and the rest are undergoing counselling process at the home.

**I-India** an NGO mission is to provide care, love and development for children living on the streets of Jaipur. They strive to help as many children as possible and focus on those in most urgent need. They assist children with their immediate challenges, such as homelessness, malnutrition and illness, while also developing their attitudes and skills so they can make a better future for themselves.<sup>9</sup> The program started by this NGO are

- Child Line: a help line for children needing assistance or information.
- Ganga & Preeti-Prabha: permanent homes for 50 orphaned and homeless girls.
- Child Inn & Snehanchal: permanent homes for 50 orphaned and homeless boys.
- Temporary Homes (Open Shelter): two temporary homes for 50 boys and girls.
- Ladli: vocational centres for girls and boys
- School on Wheels: mobile school providing education, nutrition and medical care to street children where they live.
- Shwetaark: child development & education program operated at street points.
- Annapurna: a kitchen project for street and working children.

**Dnyanadevi** an NGO started Childline, a 24-hour helpline for children in distress, along with a few activists and voluntary agencies (NGOs), has launched a preventive campaign. Under the campaign, informal schools and day care centres are being opened for child beggars, and picketing and poster campaigns will be carried out at main traffic squares in the city to stop people from giving alms to child beggars.<sup>10</sup>

There are many more NGO that work for the protection of child but sadly than also these children are not free from this social evil. one of the main reason behind this social issue is that a lot of people don't know about such NGO or government policies and people who knew about such they didn't come to them as they are happy with their condition. According to various NGO it has been found that families of these little one doesn't want their child to get educated or study and live in good condition.

### 7. Suggestion to eradicate child begging

1. **Elimination of beggar mafia groups**-to combat the menace of begging mafia in capital city the police need to launch an immediate crackdown against profession beggar and their handlers in city by way of handling case themselves and if a person found involving in these group should immediately be arrested by police without warrant.
2. **Provision for proper rehabilitation of beggars**-the government of each state shall make provision for proper rehabilitation of beggar, as there are beggars who are involved in criminal activities.

<sup>6</sup> The Bombay prevention of begging Act, 1959

<sup>7</sup> <https://publicadministrationtheone.blogspot.com/2015/09/child-begging-in-india-causes-current.html> (visited on 11 march 2019)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Visakhapatnam/ngo-takes-a-step-forward-in-rehabilitating-child-beggars/article7412421.ece>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.i-indiaonline.com/abt\\_ii\\_overview.htm](http://www.i-indiaonline.com/abt_ii_overview.htm) (visited on 10 march 2019)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.dnyanadevi.org/childline.html> (visited on 10 march 2019).

3. **Giving them kind not money:** while passing through child beggar people usually give them money but they don't know that the money given by them is used for illicit purposes so rather than giving money we should give them food and books.
4. **Improve the literacy level of beggars:** the government should make them aware about the various government poverty alleviation programmes i.e. right to education, mid-day meal etc.
5. **Strick law with quick judgement and punishment to defaulters:** the government should make strict law against people who kidnapped and abduction children or who is indulged in child beggar racket.
6. **Create awareness and counsel poor parents:** there should be awareness campaign for poor parents who send their children out to work for money.
7. **Donation to NGOs:** if possible, to donate to organisation which educate poor children; not just by means of money but by providing books, clothes, food and your time by visiting and interacting with kids.
8. **Employment or financial help to poor family:** the government should start various scheme relating to employment in rural areas so the poor families can do work and their child can concentrate on his/her studies rather than working as a child labour. They

work because their family need money to survive and they might be the only one to work.

## 8. Conclusion

The overall analysis of this article states that the main reason behind the cause i.e. child beggars in India is poverty and unemployment. Around 3 lakh child work as beggars in India. These panhandler or rag picker doesn't go to school, and are not allowed to get education. Mostly children that work as beggars is due to forced begging and compulsion. Many non-government organisations have also remarked that the family of these children forced them to beg, and in case of girl child the family to get rid of her sold them to mafia gang for few money. According to reports sadly 60 thousand each year trapped into this business whereas in USA no child is seen begging. The social services take care of the children and puts them in a protective home where holistic development of the child can take place.

This study demonstrates that this section of population is the poorest among the poorest who are still thriving for one of the traditional basic needs, that is food and shelter. It is not only shameful but pitiable that the standards of human being are going to dogs. Hence a conclusive solution and implementation of it is required as the child is the foundation of the human society and it has right to dream all.