

# Begging Life of Beggars: A Case Study

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## Abstract

The present empirical study aims to analyze the types of beggars, places and methods of begging and their earnings through this profession in the Aligarh district. The study is 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 nearly, 78 per cent beggars were able bodied and they begged with the help of slogan or silent way of begging. They are mainly preferred to go to the residential areas, markets and religious places for begging purpose and their average daily income by begging is ₹ 51-100 per day.

**Keywords:** Begging, Income, Aligarh.

## Introduction

The problem of begging is a universal phenomenon but it is more pronounced in developing nations. The only difference between the begging system of the western countries and in the case of India is the way of begging. Beggars get money in developed countries by performing their arts and skills but in India they are getting money only on the basis of sympathy or on the mercy of society. They are found everywhere in public places, such as filling stations, restaurants, banks, super markets, mosques, churches, etc. Moreover, deviant behaviors such as theft, thuggery, violent and criminal behavior, and vandalism are listed as some of the vices associated with street begging (Adedibu & Jelili 2011, 17-24; Tambawal 2010 cited by Namwata et al. 2012, 133-143; Adedibu 1989, 25-40).

Najafi and his colleagues (2004, 23 & 31) conceived that since begging is a behavior in conflict with the ethical principles of the society, it should be considered as preventive/deterrent crimes. Furthermore, they believed that considering it as a crime, is not logically justifiable and its range should be limited by no criminal and preventive actions. However, begging has been a traditional profession in India as charity is considered one of the noblest of human virtues according to Hindu tradition (Dhruvasan 1963, 10-12). Beggars request food, money, clothing and other items from passersby. They have many reasons for asking for assistance and can be found in many locations worldwide. Beggars tend to present a negative image of a particular location. The presence of beggars is perceived to be indicative of larger social ills or issues and can cause others to avoid beggar-inhabited areas (Clapper 2012, 1). Begging is commonly defined as the act of stopping people on the street to ask for assistance, for example in the form of food or money (Bose and Hwang 2002, 477-479; Collins and Blomley 2003, 1).

Begging is a social ill whose implications for city economy and environment call for concern of urban planners. The negative impacts of begging on social and physical environments are obvious in the tendency of beggars to delay and obstruct free flow human and vehicular traffic and their high propensity to generate dirty materials either as waste or as parts of their belonging (Jelili 2006 cited by

Namwata et al. 2010, 53-60). Adedibu (1989, 25-40) also observed that begging also has implications for the economy of the nation as beggars depend on the already overstretched workforce.

Begging has been a serious problem confronting many urban areas across the globe. The situation becomes worse when it confronts urban areas of less developed nations. Despite the pronounced manifestation of this problem in developing countries, people still regard begging as a normal phenomenon (Adedibu 1989, 25-40; Ogunkan and Fawole 2009, 498-503; Tambawal 2010 cited by Namwata et al. 2012, 133-143; Adedibu and Jelili 2011, 17-24). According to Bromley (1987, 23-24), modern societies viewed begging and the presence of beggars on the streets as a social problem. Many of the systematic efforts to document the problem of destitution and begging have come from America. The menace of street begging as a potential threat to the environmental, economic and social survival of humanity, societal fabric is evident (Ogunkan and Fawole (2009, 498-503; CRISIS 2003, 1-9). People engaged in begging themselves also recognized begging to be a 'problem'. To them, it's harsh, humiliating, demeaning, degrading and frustrating (Lynch 2005, 521; Rowntree 2000, 1-2). The continued relevance of begging as both a political and a public policy problem is evidenced by extensive media coverage of the issue in recent years, together with governmental consideration of the regulation and governance of begging (Lynch 2005, 520; CRISIS 2003, 1-9).

The society has always had a low tolerance level for the beggars and the panhandlers. Begging, considered by many to be anti-social behaviour and it is also less tolerated in a more suburban residential community. Beggars often have criminal records, but they are nearly as likely to have been crime victims as offenders (Scott 2002, 6). As Lee and Farrell (2003, 300) convey, "...conventional wisdom regards begging as a deviant activity, engaged in by the stigmatized poor that carries significant costs and is disapproved of by a majority of citizens." Aggressive begging may create an intimidating and unsightly atmosphere, negatively impacting the quality of life of residents, while, adversely affecting businesses and tourism. The increasing visibility of people begging is generating much public discussion and debate about the causes of begging and possible ways to address it. Many view the beggars as undeserving of help and their begging activity as a result of pathological, self-induced and self-selected circumstances (Esmonde 2002, 63-86; Wilson 1991, 14-19). While, it is true that a small number of people "choose the lifestyle", the vast majority are begging because of a lack of other alternatives.

Biswas has rightly remarked that '*The status of a place can best be judged by the number of its beggars*' (cited by Cama 1945, 1). Mukharjee (1945) pointed out that "*Beggary is a symptom of social disorganization*". The major factors making for its prevalence are to be found in the breakdown of the socio-economic structure of the country. Beggars in India are the victims of an unbalanced socio-economic system. They are amongst the most vulnerable people in our society and show the low economic condition of that group. These are the human degradation to the lowest extent, and a menace to the healthy society. Most of them are the product of economic deprivation, destitution and neglect. Thus, 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.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The main thrust of this paper is to analyse the begging life of beggars. The main objectives of the study are;

1. to examine the various types of beggars found in the study area,

2. to find out the various methods of begging adopted by beggars,
3. to observe the various places of begging frequently visited by the beggars for begging,
4. to analyse the average daily income of beggars through begging activity.

### Study Area

The Aligarh district, a medium sized district, is spreading over an area of 3700.4 square kilometers in the Western part of Uttar Pradesh. It occupies the north-western part of the Uttar Pradesh, which is a fertile region of Ganga and Yamuna Doab. The district lies between the parallels of 27°29' and 28°11' north latitudes and meridians of 77°29' and 78°38' east longitudes. Its boundary touches the boundaries of five other districts (Bulandshahr, Badaun, Mathura, Hathras and Etah) of the Uttar Pradesh and one state (Haryana) of India. At present, the district is divided into five tahsils namely, Kol, Khair, Gabhana, Atrauli and Iglas for the purpose of land record keeping, land revenue collection, judicial administration, etc. These tahsils are further sub-divided into 12 development blocks namely: Atrauli, Gangiri, Bijauli, Jawan, Chandus, Khair, Tappal, Dhanipur, Lodha, Akrabad, Iglas and Gonda.

According to 2001 Census, the district accommodates a residential population of 29, 92, 286 of which 29 per cent was classified as urban and 71 per cent as rural. The general density of population in the district was 820 persons per sq. km. However, it was 607 persons per sq. km. in the rural sector and 5,949 persons per sq. km. in the urban sector. The general sex ratio that is the number of females per thousand males was 862 in the district, whereas, the figures for the rural and urban areas were 856 and 876 respectively. The literacy rate in the district is 58.5 per cent and the male literacy rate is 71.7 per cent and females are 43.0 per cent literate while, the percentage of literacy in rural and urban population was 56.5 and 63.2 respectively.

### Data Base and Methodology

This study is based on primary source of data that have been collected through field survey in the Aligarh district. The survey was carried out during 2009. The villages have been selected on the basis of stratified random sampling. According to 2001 Census, the district had 1210 revenue villages of which 1180 were inhabited. The inhabited villages were stratified into three categories based on the size of population, so that, all types of population and villages may get reasonable representation in the samples randomly drawn for the survey. Keeping in view the constraints of time and cost, it was decided to collect data for this enquiry from 6 per cent villages of each category. Six per cent villages (70) were selected out of the 1180 inhabited villages and for the selection of households, 25 per cent beggars' households were randomly selected from each selected village of the district. All the 13 towns of the district were selected for the survey. Six per cent wards from each town and 25 per cent households of beggars from each ward were randomly selected for the study. Altogether, 892 households were selected for the present study, in which the rural survey consisted of 496 households and the urban survey comprised 396 households for collection of information about the begging life of beggars. After the field work was over, the data collected by using individual slips were scrutinized and were processed in tabular forms in percentages according to the requirements of the various facets of the study.

### Result and Analysis

Table 1 provides the information about the types of beggars. The data shows that all the blocks of the district contributed more than 70 per cent of able bodied beggars except Lodha block (57.6 per cent) and

the highest of it is recorded in the Akrabad block (93.8 per cent) and lowest in Lodha block (57.6 per cent). The diseased or weak types of beggars were observed highest in Chandaus block (17.6 per cent), while, Akrabad block did not found any beggar of this type. Khair block have the highest percentage (13.3) of old age beggars, on the contrary, four blocks of the district (Iglas, Tappal, Chandaus and Jawan) did not record this type of beggars. About 8 per cent beggars of the three blocks (Atrauli, Lodha and Jawan) were handicapped (mentally or physically). Atrauli block contributed the highest percentage (6 per cent) of child beggars, followed by Lodha (5.7 per cent), Dhanipur (4.9 per cent), Gonda (4.8 per cent), and Khair (3.3 per cent). The remaining seven blocks (Akrabad, Iglas, Tappal, Chandaus, Jawan, Bijauli and Gangiri) of the district did not record any child beggar during the survey. Only three blocks namely, Iglas (7.1 per cent), Dhanipur (6.2 per cent) and Lodha (3.5 per cent) recorded the religious beggars.

**Table 1: Block-Wise Percentage Distribution of Types of Beggar in Aligarh District, 2009**

Name of Block	Type of Beggars					
	Able	Diseased & Weak	Old	Handicap	Child	Religious
Lodha	57.6	15.2	10.1	7.9	5.7	3.5
Dhanipur	70.4	7.4	7.4	3.7	4.9	6.2
Akrabad	93.8	-	1.6	4.7	-	-
Gonda	76.2	14.3	4.8	-	4.8	-
Iglas	85.7	5.4	-	1.8	-	7.1
Khair	73.3	6.7	13.3	3.3	3.3	-
Tappal	86.4	11.4	-	2.3	-	-
Chandaus	81.2	17.6	-	1.2	-	-
Jawan	82.1	10.7	-	7.1	-	-
Atrauli	72.0	8.0	6.0	8.0	6.0	-
Bijauli	92.4	1.1	5.4	1.1	-	-
Gangiri	89.7	7.4	2.9	-	-	-
<b>Aligarh</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.1</b>

**Source:** Calculation is based on sample survey.

Table 2 provides the information about the distribution of various methods of begging. The data depicts that in all the blocks of the district, slogan method was mainly used by beggars for begging purpose excluding Dhanipur (34 per cent), Khair (35.4 per cent) Akrabad (36 per cent) and Atrauli (44.6 per cent) blocks. These four blocks (Dhanipur, Khair, Akrabad, and Atrauli) adopted the method of showing their own art at the first priority rather than slogan method because most of the beggars of these blocks belong to the Nat, Banjara, Sopera, etc. The highest percentage of slogan method was recorded in the Tappal block (98.8 per cent) and lowest in Dhanipur block (34 per cent). The silent way of begging was recorded highest in Lodha (39.1 per cent) and Jawan (38.2 per cent) blocks and few beggars of the blocks of Gonda, Dhanipur and Akrabad also used silent way of asking for begging. Khair block have the highest percentage (60.4) of begging by showing their art, followed by Akrabad (58.3 per cent) and Atrauli (55.4 per cent). Six blocks (Lodha, Dhanipur, Akrabad, Khair, Jawan and Bijauli) of the district recorded some beggars who usually used the exhibition of their deformity for begging and it is recorded

highest in the Lodha block (4.3 per cent). The beggars of six blocks namely, Dhanipur (12 per cent), Bijauli (8.3 per cent), Lodha (4.7 per cent), Akrabad (2.3

**Table 2: Block-Wise Percentage Distribution of Methods of Begging opted by Beggars in Aligarh District, 2009**

Name of Block	Methods of Begging					
	Slogan	Silent	By Showing Art	Showing Inability	Using Animals	Others
Lodha	42.3	39.1	0.7	4.3	4.7	9.0
Dhanipur	34.0	3.0	40.0	3.0	12.0	8.0
Akrabad	36.0	1.1	58.3	1.1	2.3	1.1
Gonda	48.6	8.3	43.1	-	-	-
Iglas	64.0	-	36.0	-	-	-
Khair	35.4	-	60.4	2.1	2.1	-
Tappal	98.8	-	-	-	1.2	-
Chandaus	85.3	-	14.7	-	-	-
Jawan	60.0	38.2	-	1.8	-	-
Atrauli	44.6	-	55.4	-	-	-
Bijauli	54.8	-	34.6	0.9	8.3	1.4
Gangiri	78.7	-	21.3	-	-	-
<b>Aligarh</b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>

**Source:** Calculation is based on sample survey.

per cent), Khair (2.1 per cent) and Tappal (1.2 per cent) have recorded some beggars using their pet animals i.e. monkey, snake, etc. for begging activity and it was highest in the Dhanipur block (12 per cent). The beggars of four blocks namely, Lodha (9 per cent), Dhanipur (8 per cent), Bijauli (1.4 per cent) and Akrabad (1.1 per cent) used others methods of begging. Lodha, Dhanipur and Akrabad were the only three blocks in which beggars have adopted all the methods of begging and get more alms as compared to rural areas because these blocks are located at the peri-urban area of Aligarh city.

Table 3 provides the information about the major areas of begging frequently visited by the beggars. The data shows that beggars of all the blocks of the district selected residential areas and the markets at the first priority for begging purpose. All the blocks of the district have more than 35 per cent beggars those have chosen residential areas for begging activity excluding Lodha (31.7 per cent), Gonda (32.3 per cent) and Khair (33.5 per cent) blocks and highest of it is recorded in the Iglas block (54.2 per cent) and lowest was found in Lodha block (31.7 per cent).

**Plate 1 Types of Beggars in Aligarh District**







Markets were at the second place, opted by the beggars for begging activity and highest of it is recorded in Tappal block (47.5 per cent) and lowest in Gonda block (19.4 per cent). The third most frequently visited place of begging was religious places which was recorded highest in Gonda block (45.2 per cent), followed by Lodha (30.5 per cent), Khair (27.4 per cent), Gangiri (22.7 per cent), Jawan (20 per cent) and Akrabad (17.2 per cent) blocks. Lodha block have recorded higher number of beggars who visited religious places because most of the famous religious places (Jama Masjid, Baba Barchi Bahadur Dargah, Achleshwar Dham, Chamunda Devi mandir, etc.) of both the religions (either Hindu or Muslim) are situated in the same block where these people get positive responses from the donors side. The beggars of Habura caste in the blocks of Gonda,

**Table 3: Block-Wise Percentage Distribution of Major Areas of Begging frequently visited by the Beggars in Aligarh District, 2009**

Name of Block	Places					
	Residential Areas	Markets	Religious Places	Functions	Railway Station	Others
Lodha	31.7	26.7	30.5	0.8	5.7	4.6
Dhanipur	43.6	43.6	8.5	4.2	-	-
Akrabad	37.9	32.5	17.2	12.4	-	-
Gonda	32.3	19.4	45.2	-	3.2	-
Iglas	54.2	42.7	1.0	2.1	-	-
Khair	33.5	29.9	27.4	-	-	-
Tappal	47.5	47.5	5.0	-	-	-
Chandaus	43.1	36.5	14.7	5.6	-	-

Jawan	40.0	40.0	20.0	-	-	-
Atrauli	44.2	43.3	9.6	2.9	-	-
Bijauli	43.0	41.6	6.5	7.5	1.4	-
Gangiri	38.7	38.7	22.7	-	-	-
<b>Aligarh</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1.6</b>

Source: Calculation is based on sample survey.

Khair, Jawan, Chandaus, Dhanipur, Atrauli and Bijauli used to go to the religious places of Delhi, Kurukshetra, Gudgaun, Agra, Mathura, etc. for begging purpose. Few beggars also preferred to go for begging on certain days especially Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday because in these days these people get more alms from the religious minded donors. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday are famous in Hindus because of the Lord Shiva, Hanuman, Vishnu and Shani dev respectively in the form of *Prashad* and the day of Friday has an immense religious significance for Muslims because they used to offer Jumma’s Namaz compulsory once a week by purifying themselves and they pay some amount of money to beggars in the form of Zakat or Sadka and Thursday is also famous for Shrines (e.g. Baba Barchi Bahadur Dargah). Functional places i.e. marriage or death ceremonies, male child birth, religious (*Jagran, Keertan, etc.*), etc. take

**Plate 2 Places of Begging Visited by Beggars in Aligarh District**



the fourth rank in the begging places, recorded in the seven blocks (Akraabad, Bijauli, Chandaus, Dhanipur, Atrauli, Iglas and Lodha) of the district, and, the highest share (12.4 per cent) of it is found in Akraabad block. Only three blocks (Lodha, Gonda and Bijauli) of the district recorded the railway station as a place of begging out of which Lodha block contributed the highest percentage (5.7 per cent). Other type of places includes university area, bus stands, medicals, banks, etc. and these places were opted by beggars in Lodha block because it is near to the city.

Table 4 envisages the daily income of beggars through begging practice. An analysis of the table explains that beggars of all the blocks of the district received average daily income ₹ 51-100 except Lodha and Akraabad blocks and the highest percentage of it is recorded in the Iglas and Tappal (76.9 per cent) blocks. Five blocks (Iglas, Tappal, Chandaus, Jawan and Khair) of the district have more than 70 per cent and four blocks

**Table 4: Block-Wise Percentage Distribution of Average Daily Income of Beggars in Aligarh District, 2009**

Name of Block	Daily Income				
	<20	20-50	51-100	101-200	>200
Lodha	5.5	53.6	34.5	5.8	0.6
Dhanipur	6.6	16.5	54.5	22.3	-
Akraabad	14.4	44.7	31.2	9.8	-
Gonda	18.4	33.3	35.1	13.2	-
Iglas	-	3.4	76.9	19.7	-
Khair	1.5	6.1	69.7	13.6	9.1
Tappal	-	3.8	76.9	19.2	-
Chandaus	-	3.6	71.9	24.0	0.5
Jawan	1.4	12.9	70.0	15.7	-
Atrauli	9.1	34.1	44.7	12.1	-
Bijauli	8.9	21.5	53.6	14.3	1.7
Gangiri	1.2	11.6	65.9	21.4	-
<b>Aligarh</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>50.4</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>0.7</b>

**Source:** Calculation is based on sample survey.

(Dhanipur, Khair, Bijauli and Gangiri) of the district have more than 50 per cent daily income under the ₹ 51- 100 category. Average daily income of ₹ 20-50 was recorded highest in Lodha block (53.6 per cent) and lowest (3.4 per cent) in Iglas block, while, the average daily income of ₹ 101-200 witnessed highest in Chandaus block (24 per cent) and lowest in Lodha block (5.8 per cent). Average daily income less than ₹ 20 recorded highest in Gonda block (18.4 per cent) and lowest in Gangiri block (1.2 per cent). Four blocks of the district namely, Khair (9.1 per cent), Bijauli (1.7 per cent), Lodha (0.6 per cent) and Chandaus (0.5 per cent) have earned above ₹ 200 as daily income by begging.

**Conclusion**

It may be concluded from the above analysis that the majority of beggars was able-bodied in all the blocks of the district except Lodha block, while, rest of them were diseased or weak, aged, handicap, religious, and child type. The diseased or weak types of beggars were observed highest in Chandaus



block. A large section of beggars in the study area used direct method of begging in all the blocks of the district and some of them were begging by showing their arts, silent way, using animals, showing inability, etc. The beggars of Dhanipur, Khair Akraabad and Atrauli blocks adopted the method of showing their own art at the first priority rather than slogan method because most of the beggars of these blocks belong to the Nat, Banjara, Sapera, etc.

Most of the beggars in all the blocks of the district mainly preferred to move to the residential and market areas at the first priority for begging purpose. Lodha block have recorded the highest number of beggars who visited religious places for begging because most of the famous religious places of both the religions (either Hindu or Muslim) are situated in their native block where these people get positive responses from the donors side. However, beggars of Habura caste in the few blocks of district is generally used to go to the religious places of Delhi, Kurukshetra, Gudgaun, Agra, Mathura, etc. for begging purpose. In addition, the average daily income of the beggars in all the blocks of the district except Lodha and Akraabad blocks was only ₹ 51-100 per day and the highest percentage of it was recorded in the Iglas and Tappal blocks.

The following suggestions may be put forward to improve the socio-economic status of beggar population in the study area:

1. Slum clearance and better housing facilities should be provided to these people through various housing yojanas like Indira Awas Yojana (1985-86) in the rural areas and Rajiv Awas Yojana (2009) and VAMBAY (2001) in the urban areas to make *slum free India*.
2. Beggars of Habura caste of usually visited the religious places of Delhi, Kurukshetra, Gurgaun, Mthura, Agra and Meerut for begging purpose. Therefore, government should develop agro-based and agro-allied industries in rural areas so that the poor people can get employment at their places of origin and it will also help to stop the movement of the poor people towards urban areas.
3. There should be provision for proper rehabilitation of migrant beggars.
4. Improve the literacy level of beggars and make them aware about the various government poverty alleviation programmes (Right to Education, Mid Day Meal, and MGNREGA etc.).
5. The adult able-bodied male and female beggars should be detained in the existing poor houses. They are to be kept busy in the institutions through vocational education and some kind of productive activity. The programmes of vocational training like tailoring, sewing, spinning, mat weaving, book binding, gardening, mid-wifery, incense-stick making, cooking, catering, doll making, poultry and bee-keeping, carpentry etc.
6. A special provision (pensions- National Old Age Pension Scheme) may be made for the cares of the aged beggars, who are not able to do any productive work.
7. Suitable institutional care, with a view to achieve ultimate rehabilitation, should be provided to the dependent, homeless and destitute children who have turned to this profession of begging. Employment should be provided for widowed and separated destitute women (Aligarh city).
8. Neither imprisonment fine nor legislation can solve the problem by themselves. It needs to be tackled in a humanistic, sympathetic, rational and scientific way. Effective legislation may be enacted to check begging among able-bodied persons.
9. Give them kind and work, not money. Unorganized charity has to be channelized through the institutions of Beggar Homes for the effective rehabilitation of beggars.
10. The government must include the help of NGOs, Social Workers and also the civic bodies, so that the cancerous growth of beggary can be eliminated. Academic researches on the issue should be

encouraged from time to time to check and enhance the curbing of beggary problem.

11. Media can play a big role for solving this problem because it takes very short time to reach everybody's mind and heart i.e. Slum dog Millionaire Movie.

### **Limitations of the study**

The main limitations of the present study are:

A multi-stage stratified random sampling is used to capture information from the respondents. Although, care is taken to enquire the respondents from all the designated sites, it may be possible that some areas may be under-represented. The survey covers the whole of the Aligarh district but some inner parts of the few blocks are inaccessible because of the lack of connectivity. There were few sampled remote villages or villages away from the main road, where no transportation facility was available, which have been visited for the collection of data by the researcher through walk on foot upto 4-6 kilometers.

Because of lack of knowledge about the particular age of the beggars on behalf of the parents/guardians in most of the cases, as a result, age of many beggars has been estimated through observation and cross questioning by the respondents. Some beggars were not ready or interested to provide information about their socio-economic condition and also feel shy. During 12:00 noon to 4:00 PM beggars are usually take rest because of scorching heat, therefore, this particular time has been also taken into consideration during survey. They are the most mobile people; therefore it was very difficult for the surveyor to catch them and to check their replications at the time of survey.

At the time of cross questioning, researcher faced great problems to get information because most of the beggars were illiterate and not able to understand what was asked. In the urban areas, at the time of surveying, some time drunken and aged beggars created problems in surveying. Some beggars were reluctant to answer due to their apprehension that the researcher may be from police department. Sometime beggars do not provide accurate information because they thought that this survey is useless and they will not get any advantage from it. However, despite of all these problems, all effort has been done to make the survey, a comprehensive one.

### **Scope & Importance of the Study**

In the present work an attempt has been made to study the begging life of beggars in Aligarh district. It is expected that this research will be a contribution to the grooving geographical literature on studying the culture of the poverty-stricken people. This study may be fruitfully compared with the studies of the other categories of the people who occupy the lower economic rank in the society like the slum and squatter settlement dwellers, rag pickers, scavengers and homeless population etc.

The present study of Aligarh district will be useful in studying all beggars' community, residing in any region of the country in terms of social status, economic condition, changing attitudes towards beliefs in religion, old traditions and social customs. The block level data are extremely important for understanding the regional dimension of demographic situation and its implication in the contemporary society.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it enables the people to understand the local resource base, local needs and demands. Availability of the data at block and district level is the most suitable for planning purpose as most of the assessment and implementative decisions have been taken by the administrative authorities at these levels. The present study evaluates the various indicators related with beggars in Aligarh district. It further encourages that the condition of beggars should be examined at

state and national level. It is evident from the review of literature that there is a dearth of research oriented literature on beggars' social, economic and educational marginalization. Hence, in such a situation, need of the hour is to plan and do some systematic and comprehensive geographical studies. This will help to generate empirical data related to the socio-economic problems of beggars at the district, state and country level.

It is hoped that this research would show the way in understanding the contemporary society in a better perspective. The main purpose of the present research is to generate interest among the readers to know the begging life of beggars at the micro and macro level. The present study provides a base for planning to solve the socio-economic problems of beggars who are the poorest of the poor and the lowest rung of the society; surely, it will also help in the formulation of policies for uprooting the menace of begging from the society.

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