



THE INTERSECTION OF DISABILITY AND RELIGIOSITY AMONG ELDERLY BEGGARS: A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY IN GALLE CITY, SRI LANKA

D.M.H.N.K Dissanayake

Department of Sociology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Email: hirunidissanayake777@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Begging persists as a marginalized survival strategy shaped by changing socio-structural systems. In Sri Lanka, the decline of traditional extended families and a rapidly aging population have pushed vulnerable older adults into severe destitution. This qualitative study explores how physical disability and religious beliefs intersect to shape the daily experiences of elderly beggars within the Galle City administrative boundaries. Utilizing a qualitative research design, primary data were gathered through structured in-depth interviews with 15 purposely sampled elderly beggars, supplemented by secondary data for literature contextualization and qualitative descriptive data analysis. The empirical findings indicate that physical disability serves a dual, paradoxical role, it completely bars older individuals from conventional labour markets while functioning as a form of visual capital that increases personal sympathy and material donations from passersby. Concurrently, internal religiosity heavily conditions the participants' psychological coping mechanisms. Entrenched cultural beliefs in past-life karma and destiny provide existential meaning to their current suffering, yet they simultaneously in still a fatalistic framework that restricts their proactive capacity to cope, dampens their courage, and limits their ability to escape chronic street dependency. This study bridges a vital literature gap by demonstrating how structural physical limitations and internal cultural-religious systems interact to reinforce and normalize chronic socioeconomic marginalization among elderly urban populations.

Keywords: Begging, Elderly Beggars, Disability, Religiosity, Social Order

01 Introduction

There is an inextricable link between begging and poverty (Weiss, 2007., Ahamdi, 2010., Gloria & Sammuel, 2012). Begging is a phenomenon based on the necessity of skill and training (Tesar, 2015). Therefore, it can also be explained by disability, disease, poverty, etc. (Khan, Menka & Shanshad, 2014). An inextricable link binds structural poverty to the social phenomenon of begging. Far from being a simple indicator of individual destitution, begging represents a complex economic practice often mediated by personal adversity, disability, and disease (Bhowmik, 2005; Kennedy & Fitzpatrick, 2001). Global macroeconomic shifts following the industrial revolution, alongside the expansion of capitalist socio-economic structures, have fundamentally transformed social stratification. The resulting inequalities in resource distribution have marginalized specific demographics, driving vulnerable sub-populations into extreme poverty and urban begging (Marx, 1867/1976; Townsend, 1979; Davis, 2006). Social exclusion, unemployment, inadequate social protection, and unequal access to economic opportunities have further contributed to the persistence of begging among disadvantaged groups (Sen, 1999; World Bank, 2001).

While developed countries often mitigate these dynamics through institutionalized welfare and targeted social security programs, developing nations face unique structural pressures. In these regions, rapid urbanization and economic shifts are gradually dismantling traditional extended family networks which historically served as primary safety nets and replacing them with nuclear family structures (United Nations, 2019; Aboderin, 2004). Consequently, elderly populations increasingly suffer from a loss of familial care, social isolation, declining intergenerational support, and heightened risks of poverty and homelessness (HelpAge International, 2015; World Health Organization (WHO), 2021). The weakening of traditional family-based care systems, combined with inadequate social protection mechanisms, has intensified the vulnerability of older persons in many developing societies (Barrientos, 2007; Apt, 2012).

1.1 Problem Statement

In Sri Lanka, the demographic transition toward an aging population is occurring at a significantly accelerated rate compared to regional peers. Enhanced educational and career access for women, delayed marriage ages, and declining fertility rates have contracted the active labor force while expanding the elderly demographic. As the traditional extended family structure shifts toward a nuclear model, a growing number of older adults are left without adequate material support or domestic care from their adult children. Although institutional elderly homes have expanded to accommodate this vulnerable population, systemic shortages, legal hurdles, and personal destitution push a substantial segment of elderly individuals onto public streets as beggars (De Silva, 2014., United Nations, 2023).

To understand this phenomenon fully, research must move beyond broad economic metrics and examine the specific local environments and identity markers that condition street begging. This study specifically focuses on Galle City as its primary geographic site, where street begging is heavily concentrated around famous urban and religious spaces. Galle's distinct urban and commercial dynamics draw a dense concentration of transient and resident beggars.

Furthermore, within this urban matrix, disabled elderly individuals face a distinct set of compounding vulnerabilities. Physical disability completely closes off access to conventional labor markets, making street-level begging a desperate necessity for basic survival. At the same time, visible physical impairments serve as an explicit visual stimulus that triggers the conscience, empathy, and charity of passersby (Siddhisena, 2005., Aboderin, 2004).

In Sri Lanka's cultural landscape, this dynamic is strongly reinforced by prevailing religious systems. Within the dominant Sinhala-Buddhist framework, performing acts of charity (*Dana*) is viewed as a vital means to accumulate spiritual merit for personal well-being and a favorable rebirth in the afterlife. This religious orientation directly shapes how donors perceive elderly and disabled individuals, viewing them as particularly deserving recipients of alms (Gombrich, 2006).

However, a significant research gap remains regarding how these elderly beggars internalize these religious frameworks. While external religiosity sustains their daily survival through charitable donations, it is unclear how internal religious lenses such as the concepts of *karma* and destiny affect their agency, psychological stress, and capacity to escape chronic destitution. This study directly addresses this gap by analyzing the lived experiences of disabled elderly beggars in Galle City, mapping out the precise ways physical limitations and religious beliefs interact to sustain and confine them within their street-level roles.

02. Objectives

- To critically investigate the functional relationship between physical disability and street begging among elderly individuals, specifically analyzing how visible impairments alter their access to economic survival, shape their social roles, and affect their capacity to generate donor sympathy.
- To analyze how religious beliefs and cultural lenses influence the practice and psychological normalization of begging among elderly beggars, evaluating the ways internal concepts such as past karma, fate, and afterlife aspirations condition their daily coping strategies and impact their motivation to transcend their socio-economic status.

03. Beggars and Begging

Who is a beggar? There is no common definition for begging, but it can be said that it has many socio-cultural definitions. A generally accepted definition can be expressed as people who do not have enough economic progress to sustain their lives for personal or social reasons and who send or ask for some of their money or goods from people who have progressed through certain conversations. On the other hand, even if they have enough economic progress, they generate attitudes towards the conscience and feelings of the people through discourse, writing or behavior (Munzer, 1999; Kürker, 2014). Therefore, a beggar is someone who asks others for his needs (Kutlu, 2019., Çakıcıoğlu, 2015). In addition, there is no certainty about when begging, a cultural behavior, originated and it has appeared as one of the undesirable conditions throughout human history. It is defined as the unpopular group that is positioned as the lowest group in social stratification. In addition to showing the deterioration of social justice in social life, it also indicates the underdevelopment of the social structure (Tekin, 2008). Begging is an integrated socio-economic factor in a society. (Mirjath et al., 2017). Begging is a global problem that needs more attention (Ali, 2019). It can be said that beggars carry out their actions mainly through two ways (Ahamadi, 2010). First of all, beggars are beggars because they cannot reach various opportunities due to the difficulties in life created by poverty. It has been seen that these people do not resort to begging when they receive assistance from certain official institutions or civil institutions and organizations. It can be said that the rate of beggars is quite low when they receive certain economic opportunities. Therefore, these people do not consider begging as a profession and tend to abandon it as they consider it troublesome. If these people are considered poor in the poverty category, we can say that they should not even be considered beggars. Another dynamic largely shows the source of the practice of begging. Through this dynamic, it has been seen that begging has been acquired as a profession, and in many ways people's feelings are exploited through certain discourses, writings, or behaviors. The diversity of the poor defies any simple definition, and it contradicts common stereotypes about poor people. For example, in the United States, many people believe that the vast majority of the poor do not work, even though they can be counted. But while only a small proportion work full-time year-round, many poor adults work outside the home. In 2010, only 31% of poor adults worked full-time, compared with 66% of all adults. Many of the poor adults who do not work are ill or disabled, or are engaged in household chores. A significant number of the poor live in urban slums, but the majority live outside those areas (Kodikara, 2012). The beggar community can be introduced as a subculture in Sri Lankan society. They are a group that strongly influences society. The emergence of beggars has been inevitable since ancient times. The presence of beggars is a common sight in every country in the world. This situation can be seen even in capitalist and third world countries. They are not an essential part of a society, but they are not a group that

can be removed from society either. They also have the right to live in this world. Beggars often do not have permanent residences and often live in huts. Living an innocent life by begging is their tradition. But today, that situation has completely changed and beggars have become a part of life, living by committing murder, robbery and other illegal activities.

04. Methodology

This study was executed using a systematic qualitative research design, allowing for an in-depth investigation into the subjective experiences, socio-cultural realities, and meanings constructed by the participants. Primary data collection relied on purposive sampling to select participants who possessed specific attributes directly relevant to the research questions. The inclusion criteria required participants to be at least 55 years of age, actively engaged in begging as their primary source of sustenance within the Galle City administrative boundaries, and living with an identifiable physical disability. The final sample size consisted of fifteen individuals (N=15), a number sufficient to achieve data saturation regarding the core themes of localized disability and religiosity. Secondary data were also utilized to conduct the initial literature search. The primary research tool was the structured in-depth interview. A comprehensive interview guide was developed to cover key conceptual domains, including: Socio-economic backgrounds and pathways to the street, The functional limitations of their physical disabilities and their direct impact on work capacity, Interpersonal encounters with the public and the mechanics of donor sympathy, The internal use of religious concepts to rationalize their life circumstances. The interviews were conducted in native Sinhala, field-recorded with the participants' permission, and supplemented by detailed field notes to document contextual behavioural nuances. The collected primary narrative data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive data analysis. The analytical process involved transcribing the recorded interviews verbatim, translating the text into English, and performing detailed open coding. Recurring codes were grouped into broader categories and then consolidated into two central themes: *The Dual Role of Disability in Economic Survival* and *The Fatalistic Framework of Religiosity*. These themes were interpreted alongside established sociological frameworks, including Karl Marx's critiques of religious projection and Max Weber's analyses of Eastern religious orientation.

05. Literature Review

Begging has increased significantly in Sri Lanka, especially in major urban areas, and is widespread in areas such as the Colombo Fort railway station, famous religious places, and major urban areas such as Kandy and Galle. Some beggars live in various forms of begging, such as old age, disability, child beggars, and commercial beggars. South Asia, especially India, as well as countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Nepal, have the

largest number of beggars, reflecting a large percentage of the population living below the poverty line. Some beggars live in the sprawling slums of New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, or Kolkata (Kundu, 2003). While helping a person who is truly in need and cannot earn a living is considered an act of kindness, begging as a job is considered a sin, because 'the beggar deceives and exploits others to support himself rather than using his own physical and spiritual strength' (crestinortodox.ro, 2013). In many urban areas, street beggars are found everywhere in public places such as gas stations, restaurants, banks, supermarkets, mosques, etc. Deviant behaviors such as theft, hooliganism (violent and criminal behavior), and vandalism are listed as some of the vices associated with street begging (Adedibu & Jelili, 2011; Tambawal, 2010; Adedibu, Ogunkan & Fawole, 2009). The phenomenon of street begging is a result of a number of factors such as poverty, religion, physical disability, culture, civil war, bad habits (drug, alcohol, and gambling addiction), family heritage, uncontrolled rural-urban migration, and mental disorders and disorders (Amman, 2006; Ogunkan., Fawole, 2009; Namwata et al., 2011). It describes the "gangs or organizations of beggars" in urban India, which train others in begging as an art form. India created an international conversation with the 2008 film "Slumdog Millionaire", which depicts a gang leader who trains children to beg and makes a profit (Mukerjee, 1945., Hammadi & Burke, 2011). In Asia, there have been extensive studies of beggars in China and Japan, but few studies have been conducted on beggar organizations in Europe and the Middle East, and the analysis is sparse. The study also attempts to analyze the extensive historical evidence of hierarchically structured beggar organizations established at the urban or sub-urban level to protect the interests of beggars, regulate their activities, and mediate their relationship to the wider society (Lu, 2005., Ehlers, 2019). Rather than viewing beggars through the lens of "organized crime," beggars have been identified as organized laborers, artisans, and other professional groups in the context of their work. Historically, two broad forms of organization have been identified among beggars: guilds and mutual aid associations. References to beggar guilds have been found in cities such as Istanbul and Aleppo, Spain and Russia, and China and Japan (Ehlers 2011, 2019). A study on beggars was conducted in Kano, Ibadan and Enugu states. The study focused on the physical, socio-cultural and other characteristics of beggars. The correlations between urbanization, land use and socio-cultural factors and begging were identified. The study focused on various aspects, covering issues such as physical planning, socio-economic, religious, legal and other management measures, and identified new trends in beggars under each of the above categories (Adedibu, 2011). According to the 2001 census in India, about 7.3 million men, women and children with an income of 180 crore rupees are engaged in begging. Despite the rapid economic growth in India in recent years, poverty and begging are still major problems in India. Due to increasing poverty, people become beggars because they have no other option. The elderly, disabled, sick, single mothers and children fall into this category (Ghosh, 2013., Thripathi & Arora, 2010). Traditionally, the word 'beggar' has been imbued with various religious, cultural or social connotations in local society.

However, today, governments in many countries prohibit the practice of 'begging'. Although this government policy does not reach rural areas, the Bangladeshi government is also trying to eradicate the problem of 'begging' and some NGOs are providing self-reliance programs for 'beggars'. This study examines the real conditions of 'beggars' in rural Bangladesh and based on data collected in a village and some markets in Tangail, 70 km northwest of Dhaka, it is found that the local people in this village usually give alms to 'beggars' but there is little personal information about them. 'Beggars' tend to avoid the profession of 'begging' in their own villages to protect their place as members of society, and 'beggars' are mainly elderly, disabled and women without male support. In Bangladesh, religious and social rules have gendered space and therefore women tend to avoid going to markets. Most female 'beggars' walk from house to house in villages, but some go to local markets far from the highway to 'beg'. 'Beggars' choose places to 'beg' not only based on their gender, but also on the type of disability they have. 'Beggars' with disabilities tend to walk to the highway to the market, even if it is a considerable distance from their homes, while some are allowed to travel on free buses. Thus, the local population supports the practice of 'begging' and 'beggars' with disabilities are considered particularly deserving of help. Although the practice of 'begging' is embedded in local rural society in Bangladesh, the government and NGOs consider this practice to be an economically and socially marginal activity and are trying to eradicate it (Sugie,2013).

06. Discussion

6.1 Begging and Disability,

Begging can be seen as a response to poverty, social exclusion, and economic inequality. Sociologists analyze begging as a social problem that arises from structural constraints that limit individuals' opportunities, resources, and mobility. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are approximately 500 million people with disabilities worldwide, with about 75% living in developing countries. There is certainly a strong link between poverty, disability, and begging. If a person is born with a disability or becomes disabled, it is often assumed that other options are closed and that begging is the only choice left to meet basic needs. People with disabilities are often viewed as more profitable than non-disabled beggars because they evoke sympathy or pity (Ather & Tripathi, 2024).

There is a complex relationship between disability and begging. Poverty and lack of opportunities lead people with disabilities to resort to begging as a means of survival.

Poverty and disability, a significant proportion of people with disabilities, especially in developing countries, live in poverty. Poverty and disability create a vicious cycle in which people struggle to access basic needs, education and employment opportunities. Limited opportunities mean that people with disabilities face discrimination and barriers to employment, making it difficult for them to earn a living and support themselves.

Begging as a last resort is a common occurrence among people with disabilities, and when other options for survival are limited or non-existent, people with disabilities resort to begging as a desperate measure to meet their basic needs.

Exploitation and vulnerability unfortunately lead to some people with disabilities being exploited, and there are also cases where they are forced to beg by others who may use their perceived vulnerability to gain financial gain.

Based on the basic concepts of empathy and compassion, people with disabilities are sometimes considered to be more "profitable" beggars because they evoke sympathy or pity, and because they are more likely to be drawn to donations from others.

Neglect and lack of support are also common, and despite the strong links between disability and poverty, the global development community and disability advocacy groups have often neglected the needs of people with disabilities who beg.

The way the human mind works is quite complex, and the human mind, which deals with human emotions, understands the feelings and discomfort of another person, and thus creates feelings of compassion and empathy in the minds of people. However, through such emotional chains, it is possible to identify how the human mind, which is aware of the needs, feelings and weaknesses of others, is always sensitive to others. Individuals have different types of roles, and the activity theory of aging suggests that older adults are happier when they are active and maintain social interactions. However, it is a situation where individuals are exposed to various psychological distress due to the lack of social support that they need with aging. However, disability is simply another role that can occur in an individual's life. In this role, the nature of the individual is based on the sympathy of others and sometimes the ability to obtain privileges. When the two conditions of old age and disability come together, a somewhat negative image is created regarding the form of that person's role in society. According to the prevailing attitudes towards the condition of an elderly disabled person in the social phenomenon, they have been assigned the role of dependents in society. Because of this dependent mentality, they are often interested in the attention, sympathy, and privileges that others do not have.

However, it is worth noting that due to the dependency mentality attributed to elderly and disabled people by society, these people often face situations of being ignored and even ostracized in society. Due to such situations, elderly disabled people resort to begging as beggars in order to ensure their existence.

However, it is worth highlighting that it has a positive effect on beggars in gaining social attention and more privileges by using the two phenomena of old age and disability. In begging, individuals have the ability to gain privileges and benefits compared to others through personal sympathy in order to escape the social stigma and stigma that they experience in the social context.

“This inability to see is something that comes from birth. That is why we live very hard. There are no people who help people like us.” (Female, age 55).

6.2 Begging and Religiosity

The institution of religion functions as a primary mechanism of social control, instilling clear mental images regarding what should and should not be done within the individual conscience. In the South Asian social order, religious frameworks deeply influence daily human interactions, social values, and emotional responses. As Max Weber observed, Eastern societies frequently look at broader social and material phenomena through a deeply religious perspective. Similarly, Karl Marx highlights how religion intersects directly with the stratification and division of society. In Sri Lanka, the dominant Sinhala-Buddhist cultural heritage shapes public interactions with marginalized individuals. Passersby are often driven by religious motivations to offer material charity (Dana) to secure spiritual merit for their well-being in this life or to ensure a favorable rebirth in the afterlife. This personal behavior and thought pattern created in the religious context directly grants an institutionalized advantage and privilege to elderly disabled beggars, shielding them from absolute starvation.

“There are people who sell food for a living. I don’t like that kind of thing. Someone gives something for charity.” (Female, 55 years old).

The main point that can be highlighted here is the impact that the personal behavior created by religion in Sri Lanka has on the existence of a minority group of people who are considered to be elderly and disabled beggars, who are considered to be marginalized in society due to their age and disability. Especially due to the Sinhala Buddhist origin in the Sri Lankan social order, people often resort to situations where they are willing to help others for their afterlife or for their well-being in this life, and in this case, it can be shown how the personal behavior and thoughts created in the religious context have a positive impact on elderly and disabled beggars.

According to Emile Durkheim, religion is an integrated system of beliefs and practices associated with sacred temples. As cultural commonalities, religion plays a major role in the visible and intangible social functions. Among its tangible functions, religion determines the spiritual world and gives meaning to the divine. Religion provides an explanation for events that seem difficult to understand, such as what lies beyond death. In contrast, the intangible functions of religion are unexpected or hidden (Kodikara, 2012).

When a person is deprived of his faith in his spiritual strength and this strength is taken away by external cultural forces, he becomes spiritually paralyzed. Man has spiritual energy and due to this being taken away by the existing socio-cultural forces, the capitalist social system shows that man ultimately loses his spiritual energy, which is explained by Karl Marx with the concept of spiritual projection. According to Marx, everyone has spiritual energy, but the existing socio-cultural forces deprive man of these

energies. This is spiritual projection, and invisible forces that are invisible to man are implanted in people, and then people turn to that force for help. This is when problems arise within themselves. By analyzing it and identifying the causes and conditions for resolving it, spiritual projection is formed. It is a phenomenon that is strong in capitalist society. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed. Religion is a heart for a heartless world and a light for a dark world. Religion intoxicates man like opium. The majority of the oppressed class is suffering because people spiritually reflect that this is my fate or destiny, the life I have received according to the will of God (Marx's Theory of Alienation, ND).

The religious diversity in the South Asian countries determines the diversity of social processes. Also, religiosity directly or indirectly affects not only the emotional aspect of an individual's life but also every aspect of an individual's life. The determination of a person's status is mainly based on both factors and attributes, and the capabilities of the individual such as interest and commitment influence the situations created by the individual. However, sometimes religion has a significant impact on the quality of life of individuals when it comes to the causes and causes of the situation. This is because of the influence it has on every aspect of an individual's life. There are times when an individual tends to give interpretations based on religiosity to the various dynamics that occur in an individual's life.

"Sometimes it is very frustrating. I don't know if I have to live on the streets like this or because of the sins I committed in my previous life. I never thought that I would have to beg from people like this." (Female, age 54).

"We should eat, drink and be happy for today. We don't know if we will die tomorrow." (Male, age 63).

Here, due to the precarious nature of their lives and the precarious nature of their existence, it can be highlighted that they interpret that instability through a religious face and, as Marx suggests, undergo spiritual transformation as a situation that can be identified here.

Thus, there have been minimal studies directly on old age begging and disability, but other studies that have been conducted in parallel can be identified.

Many children become beggars because their parents and guardians send them to beg, or because they do not feed them or cannot. For example, single homeless mothers, drug-addicted parents, or children who are very sick or disabled or poor or do not have responsible adult protection for their children become beggars. Some guardians take all the money that the beggar children earn for food. Child beggars spend a lot of time on the streets, which are cruel and dangerous, and these children face poverty, loneliness, sexual and physical abuse. They lack love, affection and protection, and some die, while others become socially undesirable and criminals. (Pachauri, 1999., Dabir & Athale, 2011).

Many children become beggars because their parents and guardians send them to beg, or because they do not feed them or cannot. For example, single homeless mothers, drug-addicted parents, or very sick or disabled or poor or children become beggars when they do not have a responsible adult to protect them. Some guardians take all the money the beggar children earn for food. Child beggars spend a lot of time on the streets, which are cruel and dangerous, and these children face poverty, loneliness, sexual and physical abuse. They lack love, affection and security and some die while others become socially undesirable and criminals (Pachauri, 1999., Dabir & Athale, 2011).

This qualitative study explores the experiences of elderly beggars who transitioned from homelessness to a life of hope through rehabilitation programs. The study aimed to gain an understanding of their lived experiences, the challenges they faced during their homeless life, and the transformative impact of rehabilitation interventions. The study findings revealed that homelessness is characterized by extreme poverty, social exclusion, health problems, and lack of basic needs. Elderly beggars face many challenges, including stigma, discrimination, and a sense of hopelessness. The study highlights the transformative journey of elderly beggars, highlighting the positive changes they experience after rehabilitation, and further explores these changes in terms of improved physical and mental well-being, restored self-esteem, regained social connections, and acquired new skills. The study highlights the importance of destigmatization efforts and community engagement for the successful reintegration of older beggars into society, as they experience a new sense of hope, dignity, and empowerment as they move from vulnerability to independence and self-sufficiency. This study seeks to further focus on the potential for positive change among this vulnerable population and the transition from homelessness to a life of hope (Srinivas, 2024).

07. Conclusion

While population aging is a well-documented demographic trend in developed countries, it presents severe structural challenges for developing third-world nations like Sri Lanka. The gradual decline of the traditional extended family system, combined with modern economic pressures and expanding generation gaps, has eroded historical safety nets for older adults. Left without family care and suffering from severe physical limitations, many vulnerable older adults face absolute exclusion, leaving them with few options besides institutional homes or street begging.

This study demonstrates that for elderly beggars, living with a physical disability has a highly dual effect: it completely bars them from traditional labor markets while serving as a visual asset that evokes public sympathy and secures immediate alms. Conversely,

the surrounding religious landscape provides a vital means of daily survival through public charity, but implants a deeply fatalistic framework within the beggars themselves.

By attributing their current poverty to past karma and focusing their hopes on afterlife rewards, these individuals find existential meaning, but their motivation to proactively change their material circumstances is heavily diminished. Ultimately, these religious interpretations act as a psychological buffer against stress while reinforcing their marginalized social status, directly validating classic sociological arguments regarding how religion can soothe psychological distress while anchoring individuals within unequal structural hierarchies.

Reference

- Aboderin, I. (2004). Modernisation and ageing theory revisited: Current explanations of recent developing world and historical western shifts in material family support for older people. *Ageing & Society*, 24(1), 29–50. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X03001521>
- Aboderin, I. (2004). Modernisation and ageing theory revisited: Current explanations of recent developing world and historical western shifts in material family support for older people. *Ageing & Society*, 24(1), 29–50. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X03001521>
- Adedibu, A. A. (2011). The spatial pattern of begging in Ogbomoso, Nigeria. *Journal of Geography and Regional Planning*, 4(4), 215-222.
- Adedibu, A. A., & Jelili, M. O. (2011). Package for controlling street begging in Nigerian cities. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, 11(5), 17-24.
- Adedibu, A. A., Ogunkan, D. V., & Fawole, O. A. (2009). Socio-economic characteristics of beggars in Ilorin Central Area, Nigeria. *International NGO Journal*, 4(7), 312-320.
- Ali, M. (2019). Street begging as a global problem: A review. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 11(2), 12-19.
- Amman, A. A. (2006). Street begging: A symptom of social neglect. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(1), 34-41.
- Apt, N. A. (2012). *Aging in Africa: Past experiences and strategic directions*. Ageing International, 37(1), 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12126-011-9128-8>
- Ather, M., & Tripathi, R. (2024). Economic returns of disability in urban begging subcultures. *Asian Social Work Journal*, 9(1), 45-58.

- Barrientos, A. (2007). *Ageing, poverty and public policy in developing countries: New survey evidence*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bhowmik, S. K. (2005). Street vendors in Asia: A review. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 40(22/23), 2256–2264.
- Çakıcıoğlu, M. (2015). The sociology of poverty and the phenomenon of begging. *Journal of Sociological Research*, 18(2), 78-95.
- crestinortodox.ro. (2013). *The theological and social perspective on charity and begging*. available at: <https://www.crestinortodox.ro/morala/cersetoria-sin-or-necesity>.
- Dabir, N., & Athale, N. (2011). *From street to hope: Faith-based interventions for street children*. Sage Publications.
- Davis, M. (2006). *Planet of slums*. Verso.
- De Silva, W. I. (2014). *Population ageing in Sri Lanka: Emerging issues, needs and policy implications*. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Sri Lanka.
- Ehlers, M. (2011). *Poor relief and the negotiation of local order in early modern Japan* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Princeton University.
- Ehlers, M. (2019). Outcastes and Ie: The case of two beggar boss associations. In M. Berry & M. Yonemoto (Eds.), *What is family? Answers from early modern Japan* (pp. 126–146). University of California Press.
- Ghosh, S. (2013). Poverty, exclusions, and the act of begging in urban India. *Human Rights Review*, 14(3), 201-215.
- Gombrich, R. (2006). *Theravada Buddhism: A social history from ancient Benares to modern Colombo* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- HelpAge International. (2015). *Ageing and urbanisation: Can cities be designed to foster active ageing?* HelpAge International.
- Kennedy, C., & Fitzpatrick, S. (2001). Begging, rough sleeping and social exclusion: Implications for social policy. *Urban Studies*, 38(11), 2001–2016.
- Kodikara, C. (2012). *The foundational functions of religious institutions in Sri Lanka*. Saffron Publishers.
- Kodikara, C. (2012). *The foundational functions of religious institutions in Sri Lanka*. Saffron Publishers.

- Kundu, N. (2003). Kolkata, India. In UN-Habitat (Ed.), *Global report on human settlements 2003: The challenge of slums* (pp. 195-228). Earthscan.
- Kürker, A. (2014). Conscience manipulation and discourse strategies in contemporary begging. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 33(4), 412-426.
- Kutlu, R. (2019). The economic definitions of marginal survival behaviors. *International Journal of Social Economics*, 46(1), 99-112.
- Lu, H. (2005). *Street criers: A cultural history of Chinese beggars*. Stanford University Press.
- Marx, K. (1976). *Capital: A critique of political economy* (Vol. 1). Penguin Books. (Original work published 1867)
- Mirjath, S., et al. (2017). Socio-economic integration of marginal communities in South Asia. *Contemporary South Asia*, 25(1), 67-82.
- Mukerjee, R. (1945). *Problems of pauperism and begging in urban India*. Longmans, Green & Co.
- Hammadi, S., & Burke, J. (2011). Organized begging networks in South Asia. *The Guardian Context Report*.
- Munzer, S. R. (1999). Begging and the property rights of the community. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 11(3), 295-317.
- Namwata, B. M. L., Maseke, R. R., & Mgabo, M. R. (2011). Extent and dimensions of street begging in urban areas of central Tanzania. *African Study Monographs*, 32(4), 161-174.
- Ogunkan, D. V., & Fawole, O. A. (2009). Incidence and socio-economic dimensions of begging in Nigerian cities: The case of Ogbomosho. *International NGO Journal*, 4(12), 513-519.
- Pachauri, S. (1999). *Children in difficult circumstances: Vulnerability and exploitation*. Utpal Publications.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Siddhisena, K. A. P. (2005). Socio-economic implications of ageing in Sri Lanka: An overview. *Oxford Institute of Ageing Working Papers*.
- Srinivasa, R. (2024). From streets to rehabilitation: Lived experiences of elderly beggars in transitioning programs. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 67(2), 112-130.
- Sugie, A. (2013). The practice of begging in rural Bangladesh: Moral economy and local support networks. *South Asia Research*, 33(2), 145-162.

- Tambawal, M. U. (2010). The socio-psychological effects of street begging on the urban environment. *Sokoto Journal of the Social Sciences*, 2(1), 89-104.
- Thripathi, L., & Arora, S. (2010). Elderly populations, vulnerability, and structural exclusions. *Indian Journal of Gerontology*, 24(2), 180-195.
- Townsend, P. (1979). *Poverty in the United Kingdom: A survey of household resources and standards of living*. Penguin Books.
- United Nations. (2019). *World population ageing 2019: Highlights*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
- United Nations. (2023). *World social report 2023: Leaving no one behind in an ageing world*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
- World Bank. (2001). *World development report 2000/2001: Attacking poverty*. Oxford University Press.
- World Health Organization. (2021). *Decade of healthy ageing: Baseline report*. World Health Organization.