

Eradicating Impoverished Beggary in Madhya Pradesh

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I. Introduction

Beggary is a complex socio-economic problem in Indian society. According to the 2011 Census, 4.13 lakh people were depending on alms-seeking activities (Census of India, 2011). The Socio-Economic Caste Census, 2011 posits that 0.52 per cent of the total households of Madhya Pradesh were depending upon begging and allied activities for their livelihood (SECC, 2011). Beggars are the most vulnerable section of society trapped in destitution, deprivation and helplessness. They lack basic livelihood opportunities and face severe forms of social exclusion. Beggary is enmeshed with the religious traditions but the majority of the beggars in contemporary situations do not belong to this category. In this age of smart cities, beggary is considered as a social evil engendering public health, decency and law and order issues in India. In a progressive nation like India, beggary should be eradicated by searching out its root causes and understanding the actors involved in this denigrating profession. A comprehensive understanding is needed to eradicate the problem from its roots. Then only a detailed plan of action may be worked out to end this social problem forever.

The evolution of beggary can be traced to the concept of social parasitism which has been manifested in different forms. Social parasitism is inspired by three motivations (i) inspired by economic necessity resulting from extreme resourcelessness and destitution, (ii) inspired by altruist spirit based on religious or traditional considerations, and (iii) hedonistic considerations designed to

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avoid the drudgery of hard work and industry (Pandey, 1986). Begging is the practice of pleading for grant of gift of money or materials with little or no intention of returning the same to the donor. Beggars adopt various tactics for appealing for such favour from the donors. M.S. Gore analysed three interdependent but analytically separate acts that are involved in 'begging'. According to him, 'begging' involves (i) begging (asking), (ii) receiving and (iii) giving (Gore, 1958). International Labour Organization (ILO) defined begging as "a range of activities whereby an individual asks a stranger for money on the basis of being poor or needing charitable donation for health or religious reasons. Beggars may also sell small items, such as dusters or flowers, in return for money that may have little to do with the value of the item for sale" (ILO, 2004). According to Groce and others, "begging is an activity which allows an individual to call upon people with whom he or she has no close ties for small donations to meet basic needs. It is a mechanism through which the community ensures that its very poorest members will not starve' (Groce et al., 2014). The above discussion posits that there are at least three players involved in the whole process of begging: (i) the beggars, who ask for alms (ii) the giver, who offer the alms and (iii) the community or society, which justifies the act of asking and giving through its tacit support. Unfortunately, legislations enacted to arrest beggary in India are intended to provide control over all those who are publicly poor (Ramanathan, 2008). Most of the plan of action revolves around punitive actions against the beggars, negating the role of the other two players, i.e. donors and community, in the whole process of arresting begging. In this paper, emphasis is laid upon the role of all the three actors, who are involved in the process of beggary and offer some policy pointers for eradication of beggary in Madhya Pradesh by putting some strategic obligation on all the three actors.

Given this brief background, this paper analyses the (i) socio-economic characteristics of beggars in Madhya Pradesh, (ii) factors that are responsible for begging activities, (iii) nature, pattern and methods of begging pursued by beggars, (iv) livelihood strategies of beggars (income and expenditure pattern), (v) vulnerabilities of beggars' life and coverage and effectiveness of institutional mechanism for prevention of begging, and (vi) prevention and rehabilitation measures for beggars to eliminate beggary from Madhya Pradesh.

II. Methodology

The policy paper is an outcome of an empirical study undertaken by S.R. Sankaran Chair (Rural Labour), NIRDPR in collaboration with Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research, in Madhya Pradesh during 2017-18. The secondary data to understand the intensity of beggary is collected from the Census of India (2011) and Socio-Economic Caste Census (2011). The primary data for the study is collected through the administration of semi-structured interview schedules to 380 beggars in two cities (Indore and Ujjain) and seven villages of Madhya Pradesh. To substantiate the survey, qualitative research tools, i.e. focussed group discussion and case studies, are also recorded during the study.

III. Analysis and Discussion

According to the 2011 Census, Madhya Pradesh had 28,695 beggars, out of which 17506 were males and 11189 were females. Madhya Pradesh is also home to 4868 disabled and 2592 child beggars. According to the SECC, 2011 data 0.52 per cent of the total households of Madhya Pradesh depended upon begging and allied activities. The SECC data shows that there are four north-eastern districts of the state, viz. Singrauli, Sidhi, Rewa and Shahdol which have a very high concentration of households depending on begging activities. An estimation undertaken by MPSPC, Bhopal states that Singrauli and Sidhi districts combined have 68.18 per cent of its population living below poverty line. Rewa district has 64.25 per cent below poverty line population and Shahdol has a below poverty line population of 61.97 per cent during 2004-05 (Batra, Tyagi and Tyagi, ND). Keeping in view the SECC beggary data and MPSPC poverty data of these four districts, it can be assumed that incidences of beggary and level of poverty have an association with each other. In Madhya Pradesh, Rajgarh and Chhatarpur districts have high density of begging households. There are other 32 districts of Madhya Pradesh where the density of beggary dependent households is moderate. Further, there are 12 districts of Madhya Pradesh, where proportions of begging households are very low¹. Astonishingly, all these low beggary density districts lie in southern Madhya Pradesh which has high Scheduled Tribe population with a high poverty rate. If we relate our earlier assumption that poverty leads to

beggary, the beggary and poverty data related to these 12 southern districts of Madhya Pradesh refutes the hypothesis of a visible association between the level of poverty and incidences of beggary. One of the reasons for the low preponderance of beggary in these tribal districts may be fact that the tribals never sit unemployed to manage their livelihood. The fact is also reiterated by the low level of unemployment rate among Scheduled Tribes across Madhya Pradesh in comparison to other social categories. Another significant factor that may comprehend this fact is that culturally tribal are alien to the concept of begging in their tribal worldview unless they migrate to the urban areas for their livelihood. Therefore, poverty may be one of the factors that lead to dependence on beggary but every beggar may not have compelled to seek alms only due to poverty. In many cases, multiple factors coupled with poverty, viz. resourcelessness, disability, old age, disease, widowhood, etc., create ground for alms-seeking activities. However, the chances of getting alms in the form of cash and kind are based on empathy that inherent in the religious and cultural values of the donor population. The beggars' decisions for seeking alms for their livelihood also originate from their religious and cultural orientation. Pieces of empirical evidence collected from Madhya Pradesh throw light on these underlining factors.

Empirical data of the study shows that majority of the beggars in Madhya Pradesh are dominated by elderly beggars (32.2 per cent), able-bodied beggar (16.6 per cent) and physically challenged (13.6 per cent). A comparison between rural and urban Madhya Pradesh posits that elderly and able-bodied beggars are preponderant in rural areas. This indicates towards the lack of employment opportunities and adequate social security measures for the elderly and unemployed in the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh. Less number of diseased and child beggar are found in the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh. On the other hand, in urban areas of Madhya Pradesh, the majority of the beggars are elderly and physically challenged. Astonishingly, able-bodied beggars are quite less in urban areas in comparison to rural areas. This indicates that as compared to rural areas, urban areas have some opportunities available for the impoverished urban population in Madhya Pradesh. In this analysis, it is also inferred that the preponderance of child beggars and diseased beggars is more in urban areas in comparison to rural areas.

An analysis of the empirical data gathered from beggars depicts that the pivotal factors that force individual towards begging in Madhya Pradesh are impoverishment (46.3 per cent), ageing (38.3 per cent), helplessness due to accident or demise of main earning member (28.7 per cent) and physical disability (10.3 per cent). Apart from these, other minor causes of begging include widowhood (7.9 per cent), disease (2.9 per cent) and mental illness (2.1 per cent) of beggars. A comparison of the urban and rural scenes depicts that poverty is the salient cause for initiating begging activities in urban areas of the state. Apart from poverty, beggars in city areas opined that ageing and helplessness without any social support drove them to begging. A majority of rural beggars opined that impoverishment or poverty is the salient cause for initiating begging activities. Apart from poverty, rural beggars reiterated that ageing and helplessness engendered with the demise of main earning members are the major factors that forced them to resort to seeking alms. Other important factors identified by the rural beggars are widowhood, physical deformity and inability to undertake strenuous work and mental illness. Among the urban beggars, some people were identified as social parasites, who involved in begging activities and not willing to pursue alternative livelihood activities. However, such beggars are absent from the rural scene as begging by able-bodied persons are regarded as a social vice and looked down upon by the rural society. As impoverishment and old age are the major causes of beggary, this problem can be solved by arresting poverty and provisioning adequate policy measures for the aged, disabled and helpless persons in Madhya Pradesh.

In Madhya Pradesh, a majority of beggars solicit alms by sitting in busy places and asking passersby for money. In both rural and urban areas, a majority of beggars sit near the temples, bus stands and railway stations and solicit alms from the passersby. Some urban and rural beggars use to stand in the strategic points, i.e. hotels, ATM kiosks, tea stalls and seek help from the passersby. In urban areas, there are a number of places where they can sit and stand for soliciting alms but in the rural areas, beggars have to move door to door for seeking alms.

Beggary is very often seen by scholars as the result of resourcelessness, the process of impoverishment or the outcome of idleness of social parasites. In the present situation, beggary also

professed as a subsidiary livelihood strategy for the poor. Pieces of evidence gathered from studies undertaken by Bamisaiye (1974), and Messy et al., (2010) inferred that a particular section of people migrates from villages to cities to earn their livelihood from begging. During this study in Madhya Pradesh, it is also found that some beggars from nearby villages of Indore and Ujjain district migrate to the cities to earn a livelihood by seeking alms. The poor people in the village are engaged in casual labour during the agricultural season. In the lean season, they commute to urban areas for employment. When employment is not available in the cities, the aged and the children are engaged in begging activities in urban centres. We found many beggars in Kolukhedi and Hamukhedi villages who regularly commute to Ujjain city for begging.

The livelihood pattern of beggars is very uncertain and depends upon the mercy of the donors and varies across time and space. The average daily income of beggars in Madhya Pradesh is about Rs. 36.39. The actual daily income ranges between Rs.15 to Rs. 400 per day. The mean monthly income is found to be Rs.2390, with a minimum income of Rs. 50 to a maximum of Rs.9500 per month. A major proportion of the beggars' income is used for purchasing food items. The average monthly expenditure of beggars is calculated as Rs. 1556, which ranges from a minimum of Rs.160 per month to a maximum of Rs. 6000 per month. Beggars spend an average amount of Rs.1088 per month for arranging food for them. Their minimum expenditure on food ranges between Rs.100 per month to Rs.4500 per month. Analyses of non-food expenditure show that beggars of Madhya Pradesh spend an average amount of Rs. 468 per month for non-food items. The expenditure on non-food expenditure ranges from Rs. 0 to Rs.2100 per month. The wide variation in income, expenditure and saving shows a highly incoherent pattern of livelihood among beggars of Madhya Pradesh.

One of the major vulnerabilities for the beggars is highly unpredictable earning from the alms-seeking activities. The diseased and disabled beggars from rural areas face extreme challenges during the rainy and summer seasons for managing their livelihood. On the extreme days in the income scarce season, they have to manage their life by skipping meals. Another crucial vulnerability in a beggar's life is homelessness, which is more acute among urban beggars. The majority of urban beggars live in slum-like houses. They do not have any basic necessities like drinking water, drainage

and sanitation facilities in their houses. The homeless urban beggars used to spend their nights at the railway stations, bus stand, open spaces, pavements, and unoccupied parking spaces. During the rainy and winter seasons, their lives become worse due to lack of a secured resting place. Begging activities are discouraged by the municipal officials in cities and PRI authorities in villages of Madhya Pradesh. The civic body authorities have a very intolerant attitude towards beggars; the beggars are repeatedly rescued and given warning for involvement in begging activities. The beggars are also subjected to ill-treatment by the authorities for alms seeking activities in the form of abusive words and harassment. Loneliness, self-pity and lack of any social support are other crucial aspects in the beggars' life, which make their life more vulnerable.

The *Madhya Pradesh Bhiksha Vritti Nivaran Adhiniyam*, 1973, is an Act relating to the prevention and detention of beggars in certified institutions. The Act has detailed provisions for arrest, trial and punishment of beggars in Madhya Pradesh. According to the Act, any police officer or authorised person in accordance with rules made by the State government may arrest without a warrant any person who is found begging. In passing any order under the provisions of this Act, the Court shall have regard to the following considerations: (i) the age and character of the beggar; (ii) the circumstances and conditions in which the beggar was living; (iii) reports made by the Probation Officer; and (iv) such other matters as may in the opinion of the Court require to be taken into consideration in the interest of the beggar. Under this Act, if the person involved in begging is a child, the Court shall forward him to a Juvenile Court and shall not make any order under sub-section (5). The Juvenile Court shall deal with the child under the provisions of the *Madhya Pradesh Bal Adhiniyam*, 1970 (No. 15 of 1970).

In Madhya Pradesh, two departments (Department of Social Justice and Department of Women and Child Development) are directly looking into the eradication of beggary in the state. The Department of Social Justice works for the eradication and rehabilitation of male adult beggars, while the Department of Women and Child Development deals with the operations related to child and women beggars in Madhya Pradesh. From time to time, the officials of the Social Justice Department rescue adult beggars from the cities and villages of Madhya Pradesh and produce them before the

court under the Section 4 (1) of *Madhya Pradesh Bhiksha Vritti Nivaran Adhiniyam* and send them to receiving centres. The Women and Child Development Department also works on a mission mode to eradicate child beggary in the state through rescue and rehabilitation of children involved in begging activities.

The Women and Child Development Department of Madhya Pradesh initiated a mission to eliminate child begging in the state through the Integrated Children Protection Scheme (ICPS). In these integrated activities, 13 departments of the government are being involved in the eradication of child beggary. In the year 2016-17, 104 and 78 child beggars were rescued under this mission in Indore and Ujjain districts, respectively. They have been given counselling to give up begging activities. In September 2017, 34 child beggars were again identified for begging activities and they have been produced before the Child Welfare Committee for necessary rehabilitation.

In Madhya Pradesh, the only functional Beggar Home is located in Indore city. The Beggar Home located in Indore is identified as the 'receiving center'² as well as 'certified institution'³ for the beggars rescued by the Department of Social Justice since 1981. The beggars rescued by the authorities are detained in the beggar home and produced before the court within 24 hours of their arrest. After their conviction under the *Madhya Pradesh Bhiksha Vritti Nivaran Adhiniyam* 1973, the beggars are placed in this beggar home for their rehabilitation. In this Beggar Home, there were training facilities for the inmates relating to screen printing, construction of artefacts and horticultural activities. From 2002 to 2010, there were around 25 to 45 inmates in this beggar home convicted under the anti-begging Act. During this period, beggars were engaged in printing-related activities like binding of books. Some of the inmates were trained in making idols and they rehabilitated themselves from the begging activities. At present, the Beggar Home in Indore is in a bad condition with shortage of staff and lack of rehabilitation activities and is only providing shelter, food and medicine facilities to the inmates. In the five years from 2014 to 2018, the number of inmates rehabilitated through this Beggar Home has declined from 34 to 5. In the study year 2017-18, only five beggars were referred to the Beggar Home at Indore by the court whereas nine beggars were handed over to their relatives after signing bond against the condition that they would not be

involved in begging activities in the future.

It is inferred from the field data that government rehabilitation institutions are failing to deal with the beggars empathetically. The only Beggar Home in Madhya Pradesh located at Indore has only a few inmates but the *Sewadham Ashram* located near Ujjain city is giving shelters to 488 inmates, and nearly one-fourth of them have a history of begging. *Sewadham* is registered with the Social Justice Department and Women and Child Welfare Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh for providing rehabilitation services to physically challenged inmates. *Sewadham* has been rescuing, treating, counselling and rehabilitating beggars for a better life. The Ashram is also inculcating skill-building activities by imparting training for making clay artefacts, welding work and decorative arts. Scores of beggars have been rehabilitated and handed over to their relatives after counselling through *Sewadham* volunteers.

The above discussion posits that beggary is a complex socio-economic phenomenon, which cannot be arrested by only punitive action against beggars. As the begging processes have three actors, viz. beggars, donors and society, it can be eradicated through proper planning by giving responsibilities to all these actors in a comprehensive manner. During this study, detailed discussions were undertaken with the Department of Social Justice, Department of Women and Child Development, and functionaries of civil society organisations involved in rehabilitations of beggars in Madhya Pradesh. Through this discussion and inferences from field observations, it is observed that impoverished beggary in Madhya Pradesh can be eradicated with a comprehensive bundle of actions.

IV. Policy Recommendations

A comprehensive approach is necessary for addressing the beggary in Madhya Pradesh. The method can be a culmination of three components: (i) preventive approach, (ii) rehabilitation approach, and (iii) community sensitisation approach.

Preventive Approach

The preventive approach is meant for restraining the impoverished section of society from alms-seeking activity. The foremost preventive action would be eradication of poverty from the

masses. In the rural areas, they can be covered under income-generating schemes like MGNREGS, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana, etc. Those who are physically capable should be given counselling and training to adopt alternative occupations. For the disabled children, the preventive action could be early detection of disabilities and mental illness, which can cause them full-fledged disability in future and subsequently push them towards beggary. These kinds of physical and mental child disabilities should be eradicated with the collaboration of the Social Justice and Health departments in Madhya Pradesh.

The impoverished households very often engage their child to manage their livelihood earned by petty hands through begging. To hold back this vicious cycle, the parents of the child beggars can be compensated for sending their children to school financially. These extremely poverty-stricken families can be issued special identity card through which they can avail some extra facilities from flagship schemes like Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS), MGNREGS, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana, Public Distribution System and Prime Minister Awas Yojana. This kind of extremely poor households should be identified at the Panchayat level in villages and ward level in urban areas. These vulnerable households should be given extra quantity of food items under the Public Distribution System (PDS). Able-bodied members from beggars' households should be given priority while providing employment under the MGNREGS and Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana. The women members of beggars' households should be given training to enhance the income of their families under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana.

Rehabilitation Approach

A significant proportion of beggars are able-bodied and they are begging for their livelihood for not having adequate human capital/skill for alternative occupations. These kinds of beggars can be counselled for regaining their self-confidence. Proper skill development training can enable them to start income-generating activities on their own. During the study, it is found that the women inmates of *Sewadham* have been making artefacts and decorative beads for markets after receiving training. The young members of beggars' households in Kolukhedi have acquired the skill of driving

and their families have been transformed from the denigrating work of seeking alms. Therefore, skill development among beggars, according to their physical capabilities and mental skills, can be imparted for their sustenance. Many of the able-bodied beggars have demanded pushcart (*thela gadi*) to initiate economic activities like selling vegetables as a start-up asset to give up begging activities. This kind of beggar can be provided initial financial support for procuring a start-up kit and initial investment for purchasing raw materials for pretty entrepreneurship. Women beggars can be trained and engaged with SHG to initiate income-generating activities. As these activities are to be undertaken by rehabilitated beggars, the professionals engaged for their training should be empathetic to their situation and training can be imparted according to their capabilities and need. Beggars need emotional and psychological support during their rehabilitation. For this purpose, rehabilitation centres should be set up with multiple service facilities including counselling, skill training, personality development and soft skills development, etc., to transform beggars into productive human resources of our society.

Shreds of field evidence posit that most of the beggars are excluded from various flagship schemes as they do not have proper address and identity proof like Aadhaar card/ration card. A new enrolment scheme should be introduced to cater to the need of these extremely excluded individuals. They should be issued a smart multipurpose card through which they can be given priority while offering fellowship, employment, PDS, health services, different types of equipment, credit facilities and skill development initiatives under various flagship schemes.

Community Sensitisation Approach

In the contemporary situation, community action is missing to eradicate beggary from our society. In the majority of cases, beggars are influencing the moral sentiments of the donors. On the other hand, donors themselves are not restraining themselves from offering gifts due to religious reasons, which lead to the perpetuation of the begging activities in our society.

In this study, it is analysed that only government agencies are bothered about the eradication of beggary from society. The members of our society as stakeholders are not at all concerned with this complex social problem. Involvement of community, NGO and even corporate sectors are very

much necessary to wipe out this problem. Sensitisation of the beggars about the schemes and programmes available for them can be undertaken through active involvement of the community. In this context, the community can also be educated on various facets of beggary through sensitisation programmes. At present, there is no campaigning in TV, radio and other media aimed at restraining donations to beggars. It is realised during the study that the community members are also equally responsible for the proliferation of the beggars for their rampant donation at religious places. It should be checked with campaigns and awareness activities, and institutionalisation of religious donations.

Beggary has a long historical root in our religious traditions. In this 21st century, the background for religious giving/begging has now become irrelevant. However, with the urge for cleansing sin and acquiring supernatural blessings, superstitious people are involved in indiscriminate religious charity, which posits as a deterrent against the abolition of beggary. These individual donations should be transformed into an institutionalisation process through donations to the registered institutions that are offering services to the destitute. In every district, some civil society organisation can be roped into generating awareness against the ill-effects of irrational donations. In Indore, AAS (Aim for the Awareness of Society) is doing good work by role-playing beggars at important traffic lights at Indore. The volunteers of this organisation are making people aware that indiscriminate donation is not going to help rehabilitation of beggars in the long run. In the Mahakal temple of Ujjain, it is observed that special donation boxes are placed for cleaning of Shipra river. Such donation boxes can be placed in other strategic places for rehabilitation of beggars and funds can be allocated to their training and capacity building by certified institutions like *Sewadham*. Towards this end, the government should encourage more civil society organisations in order to create a beggar-free society on a mission mode.

V. Summing Up

The most important policy constraint for the eradication of beggary is the unavailability of micro-level data for policy implementation. During the study, it is noticed that there is a mismatch

between the Census 2011 and SECC 2011 data. Information related to the socio-economic status of the begging households and the nature of their vulnerabilities is a prerequisite to understanding regional dimensions of beggary. After the collection of micro-level information, a comprehensive district-level planning can be undertaken to facilitate the beggars.

The comprehensive approach for eradication of beggary can be undertaken through the following steps:

- (a) Survey and identification of different kind of beggars and undertaking a census of beggars at the village, block and district level. The village-level data can be gathered by Gram Panchayats and urban level data can be collected by urban bodies.
- (b) After a baseline survey, different kind of beggars can be facilitated according to their need. They may be helped with old-age pension, disabled pension, education, skill-building, health services and insurance and supply of mobility aids.
- (c) The children of the begging households can be facilitated with financial incentives for their education through fellowships at various levels. Their parents should be counselled and offered facilities related to different social inclusion schemes meant for poor households.
- (d) The able-bodied beggars can be counselled and facilitated with livelihood support initiatives through skill development, financial assistance for self-employment and income-generating activities through the formation of self-help groups.
- (e) Establishment of a chain of counselling centres, referral units and outreach organisations for rehabilitation activities can be done through the participation of NGOs and educational institutions.
- (f) Strengthening of rehabilitation centres for beggars are needed at the earliest (beggars home, *Rain Baseras*, shelter home and old-age homes).
- (g) Organisation of sensitisation programme against rampant religious donations, schemes for rehabilitation of beggars, community awareness on the problem of social repercussion of superstition against leprosy, HIV, tuberculosis and disability.
- (h) Organisation of a campaign against beggary as a social vice and building awareness for the

institutionalisation of religious donations.

These comprehensive activities can be initiated with a baseline survey with the involvement of civil society associations working in the field of social welfare for the marginalised population groups. At the village level, anganwadi workers, ASHA and PRI functionaries can be roped into these activities.

Towards the end, it can be said that beggary in Madhya Pradesh can be eradicated through arresting of impoverishment and building of capabilities among beggars, awareness of donors towards institutionalisation of religious donations and inculcating rational believes among the community members.

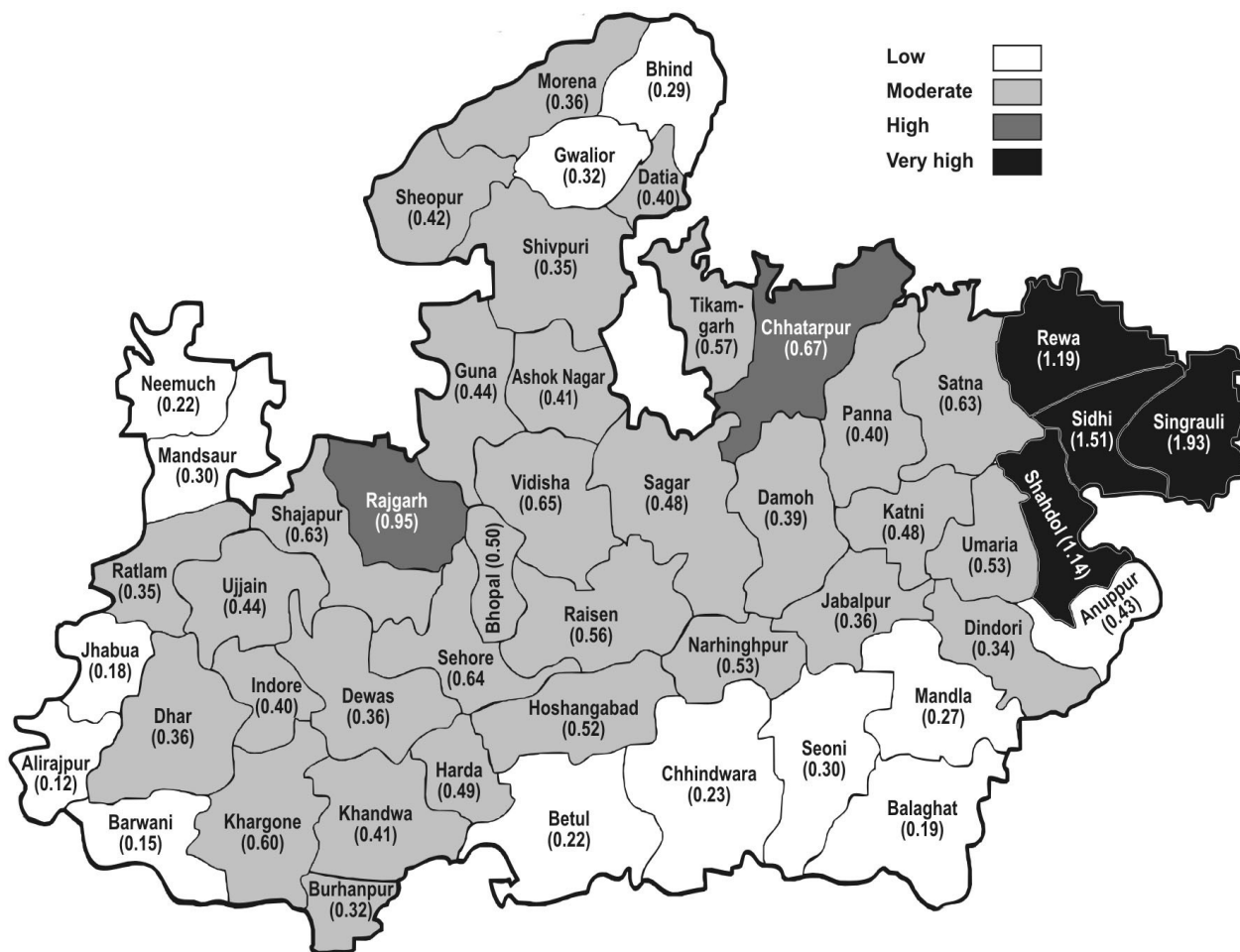
Endnote:

1. The author has grouped 50 districts of Madhya Pradesh into four categories according to the percentage of households depending upon begging and alms-seeking activities (SECC, 2011). Low begging density district: 0.01 -0.33 per cent of total households dependent upon begging, moderate density begging districts: 0.34 -0.66 per cent of total households dependent upon begging and high density begging districts: 0.67 -1.00 per cent of total households depended upon begging and very high begging districts: above 1.00 per cent of total households dependent upon begging for their livelihood. See Map.1 in the Appendix.
2. Receiving Centre means an institution for the reception and temporary detention of beggars provided by the State government or certified to be such under sub-section (1) of Section 12 of the *Madhya Pradesh Bhiksha Vritti Nivaran Adhiniyam, 1973*.
3. Certified Institution means any institution which the State Government provides and maintains for the detention, training and employment of beggars and their dependents and includes an institution certified to be such under sub-section (1) of Section 13 of the *Madhya Pradesh Bhiksha Vritti Nivaran Adhiniyam, 1973*.

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Appendix



Map 1: Density of Beggar Households in the Districts of Madhya Pradesh (SECC, 2011)

Shri S.R. Sankaran

S.R. Sankaran, a distinguished Civil Servant, is known for his commitments and actions for the upliftment of the poor and the marginalized. The seamless integrity between his life, ideas and work was the unique dimension of his personality. As a civil servant he took Constitution as a mandate and made every opportunity to put in practice the fundamental principles of equality, non-discrimination, justice and affirmative action in favour of the economically backward sections of the Indian society. He believed that his true vocation as a civil servant was to serve the people where the poor occupied the primacy of position. Within the poor his concern was about SCs and STs as they have been at the lowest rung of the social hierarchy, wallowing in chronic misery and deprivation and subjected to daily acts of injustice and indignity.

The transformative role that Sankaran as a civil servant played in the lives of the poor is exemplary to date. His deep understanding of the social environment of the poor is remarkable. In his view, the poor are typically unorganized, hard to reach, inarticulate and often visible by residing in periphery. Along with lack of access to land and other natural resources, lack of access to education makes them vulnerable to manipulation by adversaries leading them to internalize the ideology of dependence and submission. The conditions of poor can be compressed into five disabilities: (i) lack of access to land and employment, (ii) unfree labour, (iii) low wages, (iv) institutionalised discrimination, and (v) deprivation in social services. His work during his career and after retirement devoted to uplifting the poor by relieving them from such adversaries and organizing them. While working for the poor he had not only used his professional skills but also brought to bear on the problem of human touch and his impeccable moral values.

Sankaran was legendary civil servant, a crusader for social justice, a civil rights activist, a perceptive critic of development and public policy with extraordinary sensitivity, clarity, and above all, an epitome of compassion. A single social goal of his entire life's work was the reduction of contradiction between political and socio-economic inequality.

S.R.Sankaran Chair (Rural Labour)

S.R. Sankaran Chair (Rural Labour) is instituted at the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), Hyderabad by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India with the objective of promoting research and constructive debates on issues that would enhance understanding and help in improving the world of work and the lives of rural labour. Collaborative research, seminars, workshops and policy dialogues involving institutions, organizations, policy makers and other stakeholders with similar objectives, and placing the results in the larger public domain through working papers, articles in learned journals, books and policy briefs are part of the activities set out for the Chair.



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