

ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF BEGGARS IN AMROHA CITY: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

The present paper attempts to examine the socio-economic status of the beggars in Amroha city and find out the causes that lead to their begging life. The study is based on primary data collected through the personal interview to the respondents in Amroha city. The field survey was carried out during the month of November 2017. The study reveals that beggars are the weakest section of the society and live in poor condition. Nearly four-fifths of them are Muslim and 14 percent are literates. 79 percent beggars earn money from only begging and remaining beggars earn also from part-time works, but they earn only 100 to 300 rupees per day. They are also unaware about the government schemes for poverty alleviation. Moreover, their accessibility in the basic amenities and infrastructure facilities is also very poor.

Key Words: Beggars, Begging, Socio-economic, and Amroha City.

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Introduction:

In spite of India's rapid economic growth in recent years, poverty and begging are still among the biggest issues in India. According to Census 2011, India's beggar population is 3.72 lakh, out of these, 92,760 are Muslims which covers around 25 Percent of total beggars in India. While the population of Muslims stands at 14.23 percent of India's total population. The ratio of beggars has decreased from 61 beggars/ one lakh citizens in 2001 to 30 beggars/ one lakh citizens in 2011.

The problem of begging is a universal phenomenon that is noticeable in both rural and urban areas of the country. In urban areas, beggars are found in every public space, such as streets, stations, restaurants, banks, supermarkets, mosques, churches, etc. Immoral activities such as theft, violent and criminal behaviour are done by street beggars, and these activities are very harmful for the society (**Adedibu & Jelili, 2011; Adedibu, 1989**). The phenomenon of begging is a result of a number of factors, such as poverty, religion, physical disability, culture, national disaster civil war, bad habits (drug, alcohol, and gambling dependencies), family heritage uncontrolled rural-urban migration, and psychiatric disabilities and disorders (**Amman, 2006; Ogunkan & Fawole, 2009; Namwata et al., 2011**). Begging is a social problem that not only affects psychological consequences such as the development of dependency complex in the beggars' family members and their network of kinship, but also affect the geographical and social structure of the urban areas (**Ahmadi, 2010**). In India, beggars are the victim of an imbalanced socio-economic system. They are the poorest people in a society. This profession is an outcome of a number of causes, such as poverty (real poor or fraudulent poor), religion, physical disability, culture, national disaster, civil war, bad habits (drug, alcohol, and gambling dependencies), family heritage, uncontrolled rural to urban migration, and psychiatric disabilities and disorders, etc. (**Ogunkan & Fawole, 2009, Namwata et al.,; Adedibu and Jelili, 2011**). Beggary is a symptom of social disorganization and the widespread custom of alms-giving by individuals and institutions by which the disability, helplessness or social inadequacy of the beggars has been sought to be mitigated in India. The most frequent cause of beggary is the increasing proportions of the population by which workers displaced from the land and unable to find employment or subsistence. Besides this, blindness, handicapped, diseases etc. are also the major causes of beggary (**Mukharjee 1945**).

Begging is a global phenomenon and not found in our society alone but rather it is found everywhere, in both developed and developing countries. A large proportion of beggars are those who are unable to get normal life because of poverty, disability or other reasons. In India, Beggars are the victim of an unbalanced socioeconomic system. They are the poorest of the poor and the most disadvantageous section of the society, living in such an underprivileged condition that they are not able to fulfil their basic needs (food, shelter, health and protection) for their survival. Now, Begging has become a profession, in which physical and mental effort is not required to earn. This occupation is based on the kindly behaviour of the public towards the poor people. No doubt, beggars are the needy persons, but up to some extent majority of them has adopted this profession because only to save themselves from physical works.

Objectives:

1. To show the socio-economic condition of beggars in Amroha City.
2. To find out the causes of begging.
3. To highlight the problem faced by beggars and their remedial measure.

Study Area:

Amroha is a city in north-western Uttar Pradesh state in northern India, located at 28°54'15.95"N Latitude and 78°28'3.10"E longitude. It is the administrative headquarters of the Amroha district. The climate of the district is similar to other districts of the state situated at the base of Himalaya which becomes hot in summer and dry & cold in winter. Ganga, Baha & Krishna are the main rivers of the district. Amroha is known for its production of mangoes. Some of the cottage and small industries in Amroha include carpet manufacturing, wood handicrafts and dholak manufacturing, hand-loom weaving, and pottery making. According to data from census 2011, Amroha had a population of 198,471. The population of Children with age of 0-6 is 28323 which is 14.27 Percent of the total population of Amroha city. Female Sex Ratio is of 925 against the state average of 912. Moreover, Child Sex Ratio in Amroha is around 950 compared to Uttar Pradesh state average of 902. The literacy rate of Amroha city is 62.36 Percent lower than the state average of 67.68 Percent. In Amroha, Male literacy is around 66.73 Percent while female literacy rate is 57.61 Percent.

Database and Research Method:

The present study is based on the Primary data collected through the personal interview to the respondents (age group 20-50) with the help of well-structured questionnaire on beggar's socio-economic condition, carried out during the month of November 2017. Firstly, a pilot survey was made to identify begging sites in Amroha city, i.e. Shavilat Shab Mazar, Bhoore Khan Mazar, Railway Station, Kust Ashram, Vasudev Temple, Jama Masjid, Bazar Gujri, and Aanar Ki Zarat (table:1). From the selected areas, 100 beggars were interviewed (see table 1) for the collection of information about their socio-economic conditions, causes behind their involvement in begging and the problems faced by them. After the survey was over, each of the individual slips was scrutinized and the data were processed in the tabular form according to the requirement of the various facets of the study.

Table 1: Distribution of places of interview and number of beggars interviewed at these places in Amroha City

S. No.	Areas	Respondent
1	Shavilat Shab Mazar	16
2	Bhoore Khan Mazar	10
3	Railway Station	8
4	KustAashram	20
5	Vasudev Temple	12
6	Jama Masjid	8
7	Bazar Gujri	14
8	Aanar Ki Zarat	12
	Total	100

Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Result and Discussion:**A. Socio-economic Condition****1. Demographic Condition**

Age and Sex Composition:Table-2 shows age and sex composition of beggars in Amroha city. Out of 100 beggars interviewed in Amroha city, three-fifth of them is male while 40 percent are

female. It is clear from the table that 2 percent beggars belong to the age group of 20-30 years, 10 percent to the age group of 31-40 years, while the highest proportion of begging has been recorded in the age group of above 40 years but in this age group mostly (either male or female) thrown out by their sons from own houses due to family disintegration. In some cases found that most of the female are begging to nourish their children because of divorce or husband death.

TABLE 2: Age and Sex Composition of Beggars in Amroha city.

AGE GROUP	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	NO.	PERCENT	NO.	PERCENT	NO.	PERCENT
21-30	13	21.67	10	25	23	23
31-40	22	36.67	12	30	34	34
Above 40	25	41.67	18	45	43	43
TOTAL	60	100	40	100	100	100

Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Caste and Religion:Table 3 shows religion and caste-wise distribution of beggars in Amroha city. Out of sampled beggars, most of them are Muslims (82 percent) and 9 percent were Hindu. Among Muslim 51.22 percent beggars belong to mirasi caste, 34.15 percent to fakeer, 14.63 percent Ansari. While among Hindus, 61.11 percent beggars belong to tomar caste and 38.89 percent to Nat kanjar.

TABLE 3: Caste and Religion Wise Distribution of Beggars in Amroha City.

CASTE	HINDU		MUSLIM	
	NO.	PERCENT	NO.	PERCENT
Mirasi	0	0	42	51.22
Fakeer	0	0	28	34.15
Ansari	0	0	12	14.63
Tomar	11	61.11	0	0

Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Marital Status: Table 4 depicts the marital status of beggars in Amroha city. Among the male, nearly two-third are married, 20 percent are unmarried and 4 percent have been found widower. Out of total female, 35 percent are married, 15 percent are unmarried, and 40 percent are widowed and only 10 percent belong to divorced. Most of the female beggars are found widowed during survey, they are those who begging to nourish their family due to husband divorce and death.

TABLE4: Percentage Distribution of Marital Status of Beggars

MARITAL STATUS	MALE		FEMALE		Total	
	NO.	PERCENTAGE	NO.	PERCENTAGE	No.	PERCENTAGE
Married	38	63.33	14	35.00	42	42
Unmarried	12	20.00	6	15.00	18	18
Widowed	6	10.00	16	40.00	22	22
Divorced	4	6.67	4	10.00	8	8
TOTAL	60	100	40	100	100	100

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Educational Level: Percentage distribution of educational level of beggars in Amroha city is given under table 5. It is clear from the table that there is mass illiteracy among the beggars (86 percent) because they do not get register in school due to mass poverty, migratory character, started begging from childhood and so on. Further analysis, among the male beggars, about 13 percent are educated up to primary level, 3 percent up to secondary level, only 1 percent up to senior secondary level. While there is not a single beggar found those who are educated up to graduate level. Moreover, only 7.5 percent female beggars are educated up to primary level.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
	NO.	PERCENT	NO.	PERCENT	NO.	PERCENT
ILLITERATE	49	81.67	37	92.5	86	86
LITERATE	11	18.33	3	7.5	14	14
PRIMARY	8	13.33	3	7.5	11	11
SECONDARY	2	3.333	0	0	2	2

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SECONDARY	1	1.667	0	0	1	1
GRADUATE	0	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE 5: EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF BEGGARS IN AMROHA CITY

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Place of Origin: Table 6 exhibits percentage distribution of migratory character of beggars in Amroha city. It was observed during the survey that most of them are migrated from different cities and state to Amroha city for surviving their livelihood. They migrated from those areas where there is lack of employment and resources. But here also they do not get employment. so they started begging to fulfil their basic needs. In some cases found that some people started begging without any reason or problem, because begging becomes a habit of the lazy people. The highest proportion of beggars were migrated from West Bengal followed by Bihar, Moradabad (U.P), and Bijnor (U.P).

DISTRICT/STATE	PERCENT
AMROHA	23
MORADABAD (U.P)	11
BIJNOR (U.P)	9
WEST BENGAL	39
BIHAR	18
TOTAL	100

Table 6: Percentage Distribution of Beggars by Their Place of Origin.

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017.

2. Income:

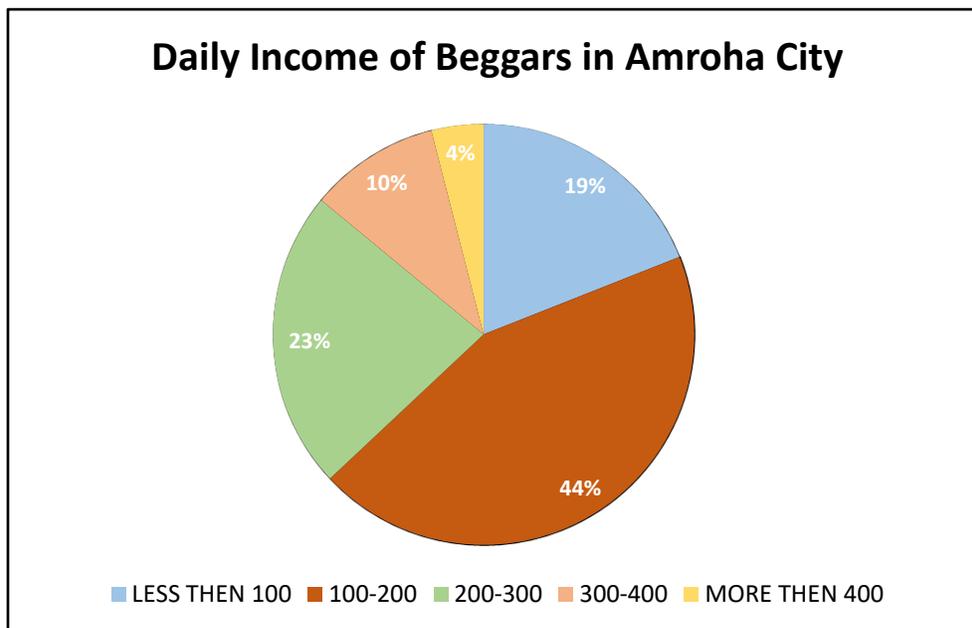
Table 7 provides the information about the daily income of beggars in Amroha city. It is clear from the table that there is a great variation of daily income within beggars because their income depends upon the donor. 44 percent beggars earn between 100-200 rupees per day, 23 percent get

200-300 rupees per day, 19 percent earn less than 100 rupees per day, and only 4 percent gain more than 400 rupees per day.

Table 7: Daily Income of Beggars in Amroha City.

DAILY INCOME	PERCENT
LESS THEN 100	19
100-200	44
200-300	23
300-400	10
MORE THEN 400	4
TOTAL	100

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017



Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017

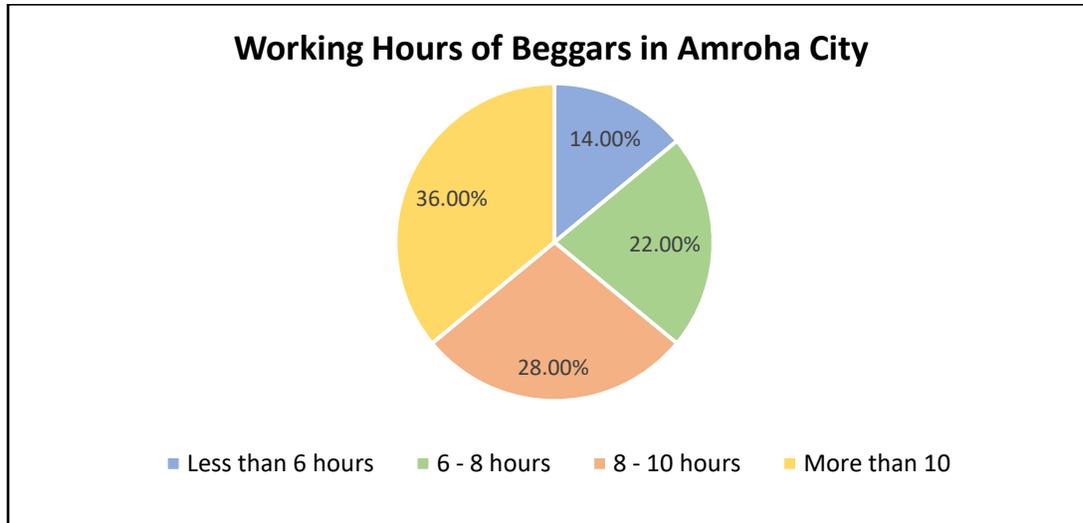
Working Hours:

Table 8 reveals that 36 percent beggars beg more than 10 hours in a day whereas 28 percent of them beg 8-10 hours in a day, 22 percent do 6-8 hours in a day, and only 14 percent beggars beg less than 6 hours in a day.

Table8:PercentageDistributionofbegginghours ofBeggars in Amroha city

Begginghours	Percent
Less than6	14.00
6-8	22.00
8-10	28.00
Morethan10	36.00
Total	100

Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.



Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Table 9 showed percentage distribution of Subsidiary occupation of beggars in Amroha city. Out of total interviewed, 79 percent comes under the category of whole time begging and 21 percent belong the category of part-time beggars. Among Part-time beggars, 8 percent are rag pickers, 6 percent are hired as labourers, 4 percent are engaged in a sweeping activity, and remaining 3 percent are Rickshaw pullers.

Table 9: Percentage Distribution of Subsidiary Occupation of Beggars in Amroha City.

Subsidiary Occupation	Percentage
Whole time Begging	79
Rag Pickers	08
laborers'	06
Sweeping	04
Rickshaw polling	03
Total	100

Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.

3. Housing

Table 10 provides the information about housing condition and type of dwelling facilities available in the dwelling of beggars in Amroha city. Beggars are the poorest section of the society. Most of them have no pure air to breath, pure water to drink, and house to live because their income is too low, so that's why they could not afford to live better condition. The table clearly indicates that majority of beggars are living either rented house or slums areas. Nearly one-fourth of beggars have own houses, 39 percent live in the rented house, 26 percent in slum areas, and 7 percent stay on government property. Moreover, the housing condition of beggars is very poor, only 16 percent beggars have the pucca house, 11 percent live in kuccha houses, 44 percent in semi kuccha house, and remaining 29 percent live in semi-pucca houses. Table 10 also give the information about the source of drinking water and fuel. Nearly 37 percent beggars obtain water from the public hand pump, 24 percent from the private hand pump, 35 percent from public taps, 23 percent taken from the private tap while 8 percent beggars have other sources of drinking water. Moreover, 44 percent beggars use cow dung as fuel, 55 percent use wood, 23 percent use tree leaves, 3 percent use LPG, and only 2 percent beggars use kerosene for cooking.

Table 10: Percentage Distribution of Housing Conditions and Type of Facilities Available in the Dwellings of Beggars in Amroha City

S. No.	Status of House	PERCENT
1	Own	28
2	Rented	39
3	Slum	26
4	Government property	07
	TYPES OF HOUSE	PERCENT
1	Kuccha	11
2	Pucca	16
3	Semi-Kuchcha	44
4	Semi-Pucca	29

	Total	100
	Means of drinking water	Percentage
1	Public hand pump	37
2	Private hand pump	24
3	Public taps	35
4	Private taps	23
5	Others	08
	Means of fuel	Percent
1	Cow-dung	44
2	Wood	56
3	Leaves	23
4	LPG	02
5	Kerosene	02
	TYPES OF TOILET	PERCENT
1	Private toilet	22
2	Public toilet	53
3	Field	41
4	Septic tank	21

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017

Table 11 explains the percentage distribution of availability of durable goods in the dwelling of beggars in Amroha city. Watch, radio and cycle are most important items used by beggars because these items are very cheap. The costly items like fridge, washing machine, motorbike and car are not found in the dwelling of beggars because of their low income that's why they could not afford to purchase such expensive items. During the survey, it was found that 11 percent beggars don't have any item of durable goods and even do not able to purchase basic needs like food, shelter and cloth. So they are begging food to survive for their life.

Table 11: Percentage Distribution of Availability of Durable Goods in the Dwelling of Beggars in Amroha City

S. No.	Durable Goods	Percentage
1	Watch	31
2	Radio	32
3	Cycle	34
4	T.V.	16
5	Mobile	23
6	C.D. Player	07
7	Electric Fan	08
8	Pressure Cooker	01
9	NO ITEM	11

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017.

4. Health:

Table 12 shows the percentage distribution of diseases among beggars in Amroha city. Health problems are very common among the beggars. Due to their unhygienic living conditions, poor nutrition and bad habits, beggars suffer from many diseases. They, generally, eat and drink without washing their hands. Most of them are the victims of diseases like - asthma, Respirational problem, headaches, and skin diseases; and the proportion of beggars suffered by these diseases has been recorded 38per cent, 24 percent, 09 percent and 29 percent respectively. Moreover, 18 percent of them were physically handicapped. However, 09 percent beggars have no diseases.

Table 12: Percentage distribution of diseases among Beggars in Amroha City

Diseases	Percentage
Asthma	38
Physically Handicapped	18
Respiration problems	24
Head Aches	09
Skin Diseases	29
Others	03
Nothing	09

Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Percentage distribution of bad habits among the beggars in Amroha city is explained by table 13. Smoking, chewing gutka and tobacco have become the common bad habits among the people, especially young generation. Beggars beg because of money but it was observed during the survey that some beggars especially children and young age were begging because to purchase of cigarette, gutka and tobacco substance. Out of total beggar, 63 percent are smokers, 35 percent are chewing gutka and tobacco, 13 percent beggars are addicted to drinking, 5 percent are the gambler and 6 percent have no bad habit.

Table 13: Percentage Distribution of Bad Habits among the Beggars in Amroha City.

Bad habits	Percentage
Smoking	63
Chewing Gutka and Tobacco	35
Drinking	13
Gambling	05
No bad habits	06

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017.

5. Social order and belonging

Table 14 gives the information about the families of beggars in Amroha city. About three-fourths of them belong to nuclear family whereas rest of them to the Joint family. And Mostly beggars (45 percent) belong to the family having 6-10 members. In the study area, more than half of them force to their children for begging, and 18 percent beggars' children work as child labours. Only 12 percent beggars send their children to school, because they want to their children will get the better job and not choose to beg.

Table 14: Family Status of Beggars in Amroha City.

Family Type	Percentage
Joint	23
Nuclear	77
Total Members in a family	Percentage
1-3	11
4-6	21

6-10	45
10 +	13
Beggars' children status	Percentage
go to school	12
Begging	55
child labour	18
nothing	15

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017.

The percentage distribution of the various helps received by the beggars from the government side is given in Table 15. It is clear from the data that beggars got help by the government in the form of voter Identity card, Aadhar card, BPL card and Bank account facilities with individual shares of 48 percent, 41 percent, 22 percent and 8 percent respectively. Apart from it, some beggars' children also get scholarship and mid-day meal facilities in their respective schools.

Table 15: Percentage Distribution of government facilities received by Beggars in Amroha City.

Facilitates	Percentage
Voter identity	48
Adhaar card	41
BPL card	22
Bank account	08
Pan card	00
Scholarship for children in school	08
Mid-Day Meal	08
Nothing	11

Source: Based on Field Survey, 2017.

6. Problem Faced by Beggars

Table 16 provides a detailed account of various problems faced by beggars in Amroha city. It is clear from the table that poverty (75 percent) and unemployment (58 percent) are the main problems found among the beggars in Amroha city. Besides these problems, beggars' children

face the problem of discrimination at school, playing spot and other places. Lack of houses (32 percent), Lack of Electricity (42 percent), Lack of water supply (41 percent), Illiteracy and ignorance (23 percent), Skin diseases (29 percent), Discrimination at begging spot (20 percent), rude behavior of donors (30 percent) are also the problems which have to faced by beggars in the Study Area.

Table 16: Percentage Distribution of Major Problem Faced By Beggars in Amroha City.

Problems	Percentage
Very low income and poverty	75
Unemployment	58
Lack of houses	32
Lack of Electricity	42
Lack of water supply	41
Illiteracy and ignorance	23
Skin diseases	29
Discrimination at begging spot	20
Discrimination with child at school, playing spot etc	45
Rude behavior of donors	30
No problem	00

B. Socio-economic Causes of Begging

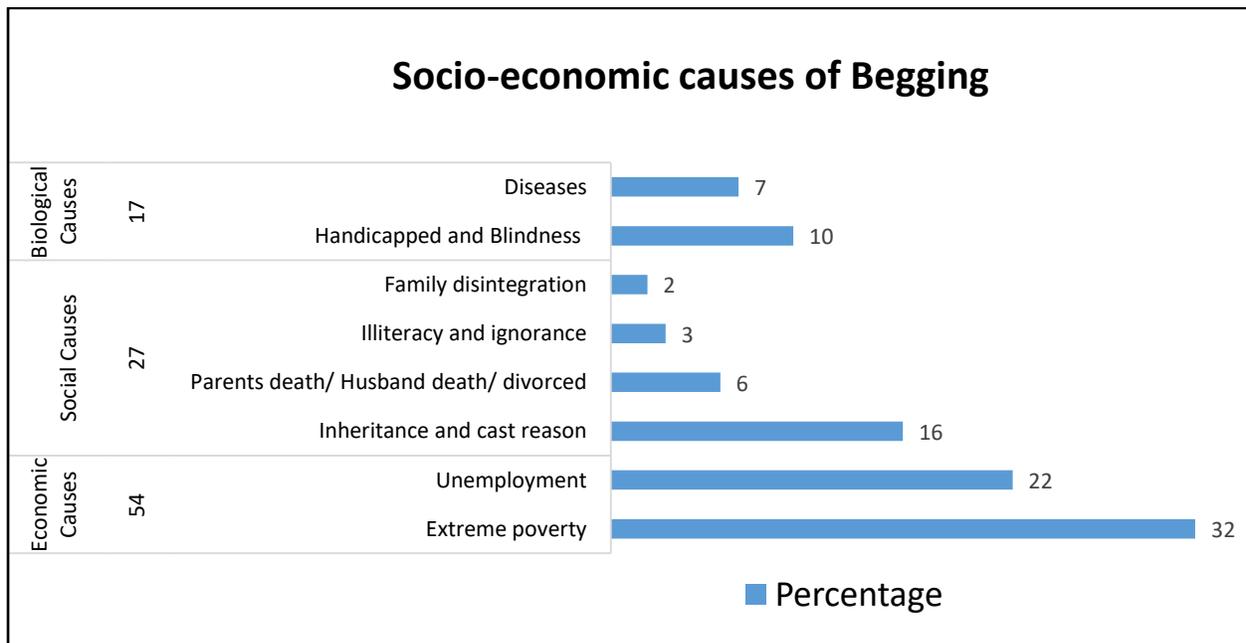
Table 17 gives the information about the causes which force to compel them in begging activity. No person wants to beg but some circumstances create a situation to oblige for begging. People are migrated from rural areas to urban areas in search of the job due to mass poverty, lack of employment, illiteracy, family disintegration and so on. But they don't get the job or any means of livelihood in urban areas, so that's why they were started begging. Some people were begging because they are addicted to begging but in some cases found that begging takes place for the sake of drinking and drugs.

Table 17: Percentage Distribution of Socio Economic Causes of Begging in Amroha City

Causes	Percentage	Causes	Percentage
Economic Causes	54	Extreme poverty	32
		Unemployment	22
Social Causes	29	Inheritance and cast reason	16
		Parents death/ Husband death/ divorced	06
		Illiteracy and ignorance	03
		Family disintegration	02
Biological Causes	17	Handicapped and Blindness	10
		Diseases	07

Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Extreme poverty, unemployment, mental illness and inheritance and caste are major causes of begging activity in Amroha city. Out of the total female beggar, most of them were begging due to husband death or divorce. It is clear from the table that Poverty and unemployment are the main causes of begging in Amroha city along with other causes like inheritance and cast reason parents' death, husband death/ divorced, illiteracy and ignorance, family disintegration, handicapped and blindness, diseases.



Source:Based on Field Survey, 2017.

Conclusion:

The overall analysis of study reveals that beggars are the weakest section of the society and they live in poor condition. Nearly four-fifths of them are Muslim and more 14 percent are literates. Out of total interviewed, 79 percent beggars come under the category of whole time begging and 21 percent belong the category of part-time beggars. Among Part-time beggars, 8 percent are rag pickers, 6 percent are hired as labourers, 4 percent are engaged in a sweeping activity, and remaining 3 percent are Rickshaw pullers. The income of beggars is very low because their income is based on the donors' behaviour. They are also unaware about the government schemes for poverty alleviation. Moreover, their accessibility in the basic amenities and infrastructure facilities is also very poor. Many problems like very low income and poverty, unemployment, lack of houses lack, of electricity lack of water supply, illiteracy and ignorance, skin diseases, and discrimination at begging spot, discrimination with the beggars' children, rude behaviour of donors and etc problems faced by the beggars of Amroha city. Among these problems, discriminations with beggars' children are one of the major problems in the city. Mostly beggars said that nobody wants to play or friendship with their child at school, playing spots and other places. Moreover, nearly 50 percent beggars chose this profession, just because of economic causes (unemployment and poverty), while 29 percent due to social causes (inheritance and cast reason, parents death/ husband death/ divorced, illiteracy and ignorance, family disintegration) and 17 percent beggars due to biological causes (handicapped and blindness, diseases).

For the improvement of beggars' socio-economic condition, the following suggestions may be put forward.

- There should be the provision of basic facilities for the families of beggars.
- Housing facilities should be provided to these people through various housing Yojanas like Indira Awas Yojana (1985-86), Rajiv Awas Yojana (2009) and VAMBAY (2001).
- Improve the literacy level of beggars and make them aware about the various government poverty alleviation programmes.

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