

R E P O R T
ON
THE BEGGAR SURVEY IN MADRAS CITY

(A Study under the Auspices of the Research Programmes
Committee of the Planning Commission)

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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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R E P O R T O N

T H E B E G G A R S U R V E Y I N M A D R A S C I T Y

**(A Study under the Auspices of the Research Programmes
Committee of the Planning Commission)**

T H E M A D R A S S C H O O L O F S O C I A L W O R K

O C T O B E R 1 9 5 6

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FOREWORD

In a day and age when rehabilitation is the key word, beggary stands out like a sore thumb, and along with it, mere palliative relief measures in behalf of its disciples. This is particularly true in a country, such as India, where thanks to a socially-minded government, every effort is being lent, looking toward raising the level of living, having people become self-dependent and establishing a functioning standard whereby the norm will be that of a well-adjusted society, rather than merely constitute wishful thinking. India with its Five-year Plans and its social welfare programmes is well on the way toward realisation of those aims, but by way of aiding in the achievement of its goals, specific problems at times loom prominently and require early and effective attention.

One of these problems is that of beggary. In the State of Madras, the Madras School of Social Work was asked to give its attention to this situation by the Research Programmes Committee of the Planning Commission, Government of India. The research team that concerned itself with this study, considered that it could best examine the problem through the use of a questionnaire in a mass approach by way of two separate observational surveys conducted at the same time throughout the city of Madras. A 20 per cent sample for detailed study and analysis was taken from the total universe of non-institutionalised beggars tabulated in the city. In addition, a random sampling was engaged in three institutions that cater exclusively to the needs of beggars, and that are maintained, one by the State Government of Madras, one by the Corporation of the City of Madras, and one under private auspices. As the survey points out, in making an investigation of this kind, one has always to be cognizant of the group-cultural background of the community and the importance attached to begging by various religious beliefs, for among some groups, begging is considered neither illegal nor a disgrace in and of itself. But with the changing economy of the country even group-cultural standards must at times undergo some modification and so it was with a recognition of this process that the survey proceeded in making its findings and then ultimately in making suggestions for a solution of the beggar problem.

In effect, the study made use of two observational surveys, where the services of some 200 volunteers were enlisted to

obtain the information that was later scientifically examined by the research team this latter was responsible for the planning of the project and for the analysis, within the framework outlined by the Research Programmes Committee of the Planning Commission.

Some of the findings are quite revealing, such as, that there is a total of some 5,000 beggars on the streets of Madras, in addition to some 1,200 in institutions, of whom two-thirds are considered able-bodied and fit to engage in gainful employment. It was found that there are 610 females to every 1,000 males engaged in begging, a ratio of women to men less than the proportion of women to men in the population as a whole. This naturally poses a question as to what happens to the rest of the destitute women. Do they engage in prostitution; do they find acceptable working opportunities; or are they being adequately cared for by others?

One sad commentary coming out of the study, is that one-fourth of all the beggars are below 15 years of the age. And yet the silver lining behind that cloud is that precisely because they are so young, it should be relatively easy to rehabilitate them. This along with the finding that more than 60 per cent of all beggars are able-bodied should make possible an effective educational and rehabilitation programme that could bring the beggar problem down to a manageable minimum.

In the course of the survey, the team endeavoured to establish what the priorities were that lead people to begging as a way of life. The results of the investigation as indicated by the statistics that came out of an examination of the replies to the questionnaires show that in a variety of hardships, physical disablement, death of the bread-winner, lack of work and poverty loom large, and in that order. When it is recalled that practically two-thirds of all beggars are able-bodied, and physical disablement nevertheless constitutes a chief cause among beggars, the problem should not be such a difficult one to solve, given a plan and a programme that encompass training for a job and a job to make use of that training.

Another encouraging finding was that although, as pointed out above, one in every four beggars is a child, one-third of this group of children, in addition to begging are engaged in some part-time work. So that they might be encouraged, as they grow older, to give up begging and devote themselves entirely to gainful employment, rather than the reverse,—here, too, there is a clear line of direction in favour of a rehabilitation programme that could prove effective.

The research project engaged in, as it was, by members associated with the Faculty of the Madras School of Social Work, was not purely of an academic nature, as can be seen from its findings. In keeping with the spirit of the profession of social work, which looks toward an improvement in social living along planned and ordered lines, the research team, after making its findings, as will be noted from the study, offered a series of suggestions for a solution to the problem of beggary. The major points may be summarised as follows:—

There is need for a new and comprehensive Beggar Act that would be equally applicable for the entire State of Madras. Also that there at least be established one rehabilitation and transient centre in every district in the State; that there be set up a series of institutions in large areas outside the cities for rehabilitation and occupations training in an atmosphere devoid of congestion. The team further urged the setting up of more training opportunities of a specialised nature, so as to permit those who are rehabilitated to qualify for specific jobs.

A number of additional suggestions made by the research team call for promoting a voluntary sterilisation programme of beggars who are suffering from contagious and difficult-to-cure social disease: for more use of professional Social Work personnel in rehabilitation programmes and for more adoption efforts in behalf of abandoned orphan children as well as the availability of more homes for destitute children.

Along with all this, the research team concluded, it is necessary to educate the public to the danger of perpetuating the beggar problem by indiscriminate giving; and that likewise, there is a need for public interpretation concerning the advantages of a scientific and planned approach, in a solution of the problem of beggary.

It was in this spirit of research-cum-action that this survey was pursued and its findings and recommendations herein offered.

In presenting the following report, the Director of this study should like to point out that this study was sponsored by the Research Programmes Committee of the Planning Commission and was financed by a grant from it. In this connection, he should further like to acknowledge with thanks and appreciation the assistance thus received.

In the pursuit of this study, the general pattern of investigation, organisation of the material and of the techniques used was recommended by the Research Programmes Committee to the Director, but the actual process of study, the procedure applied,

study of the materials, the analysis made, the conclusions arrived at and the suggestions for follow-up, were those made by the Director himself with the aid of those working with him. It is of course understood that neither the Planning Commission nor the Research Programmes Committee have any responsibility for the facts and opinions expressed in this report for which the Director himself has assumed full responsibility.

The Director would also like to take this opportunity to express his gratitude for the immense help and guidance given by Mrs. M. Clubwala Jadhav, Mr. H. C. Norminton (Assistant Representative, the British Council), Mr. S. R. Venkataraman (Servants of India Society) and Mr. K. Mukunda Rao (Lecturer). His thanks are also due to the Members of the Advisory Committee specially constituted for this survey. There are many members of institutions to whom the Director would like to express his appreciation for their co-operation in connection with this survey. Particularly, he wants to express his gratitude to the Superintendents and the members of the staffs of CARE HOME, Melapakkam; Home for the Aged and Diseased, Krishnampet; and Daya Sadan. Appreciation is likewise expressed to the volunteers who were so helpful in conducting the observational surveys that formed the basis of this study.

K. N. GEORGE,
Hon. Director of the Study.

INTRODUCTION

A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF BEGGING ETIOLOGY OF BEGGING.

A retrospective glance at the etiology of begging may help us to assess and evaluate the current social problems of begging correctly and evolve, more effectively, suitable remedies.

Every religion has advocated simple living and high thinking and poverty. They felt that the real object in life must be to promote harmony and peace by non-attachment to mundane things and not to cause economic inequality in society by a mad rush to become rich as quickly as possible. This was to enable the people to realise oneness with each other and with God by serving their fellowmen ; for they were convinced that the pursuit of material wealth was a great obstacle for the attainment of this ideal. The civilisation and culture of our country was nursed by people who were votaries of this ideal. The Scriptures of Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Jain faiths, with one voice proclaim poverty and the renunciation of worldly goods as an ideal on the belief that the material world and all that we see around is not real, but *maya* (illusion).

Ancient law-givers, like Manu, Apasthamba¹ and others laid down strict rules as to who should beg, from whom to beg, and to whom to give. Giving of alms and feeding guests were enjoined on every (Grahastha) householder, whom Thiruvalluvar² likens to a sheet anchor for a boat in a storm-tossed river. The Sastras also state that the beggar who comes to the door of a householder, is God disguised and to refuse alm to him is a sin. Thus the fear of incurring the displeasure of the Almighty and of the subsequent suffering became so indelibly impressed on the minds of people that no woman would consider refusing alms to anyone however undeserving. That was the old order. All these religious injunctions were intended to promote social justice, harmony and peace in the community.

Similarly our old law books declare that begging is specially appropriate to Vedic students (Brahmacharis) and Ascetics (Yogis). Begging can be resorted to by the student for the

1. Refer *History of Hindu Dharma Sastras* by Dr. P. V. Kare, Published by the Bandharkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona-4.

2. *Tirukkural*—Ch. 5, Stanza 1.

benefit of the teacher, for one's own first marriage, for a sacrifice, to support one's parents and to discharge one's own duties towards worthy persons. A man oppressed by hunger may beg for a little cultivated land, a cow, a sheep, gold, corn, or cooked food. Manus says that a person who is without food for three days may even steal corn, or food, to satisfy his hunger even from a person lower than himself in status. In this we find the English saying, 'Beg, borrow or steal' anticipated but with this difference that the person who steals must announce his intention when the owner confronts him.

Similarly, the diseased, the indigent, and one who is torn away from his family and who is on a journey is permitted to beg.

The practice of begging was governed by elaborate rules. The Brahmachari must beg daily for his food from the householder and offer them, in return, fire-wood which he probably brought from the forest after cutting and hewing. A Brahmachari in good health, failing to offer fire-wood in return for the food offered by the house-wife for seven days continuously, would be guilty of having violated the vow of Brahmacharya and he would have to undergo the prescribed penance. A Vedic student had to beg daily. He was not permitted to beg one day and idle the next. What was obtained one day had to be consumed the same day.

With the growth of rigid caste rules governing food, the choice of persons from whom the Brahmachari could beg, became restricted. He was not permitted to beg for instance from those who have deviated from their duties or from those guilty of grave sins (Apapatras). Manus lays down that a Brahmachari should beg alms from houses of those who study the Vedas and perform sacrifices, who are zealous in the discharge of their duties and virtuous in their conduct.¹ Yagnavalka says that a Brahmachari should beg food from Brahmans who are blameless². But Visvarupa, a commentator, says that in the times of distress or difficulty the student may beg from the Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra.³ Angirasa holds that even in times of distress a Brahmachari should not beg cooked food from Sudras.⁴

Giving alms was one of the five great duties (Pancha Maha Yagnas) which every Brahmin had to perform. Any one who failed to give to the student, the traveller, the ascetic and those in need, was considered to have failed in the discharge of his duties to himself, his family and to God.

1-4. See *Parasara Smriti*—Hindu Dharma Sastras by Dr. P. V. Kane.

There were also rules intended to punish illegal begging. *Parasara* stated that the king should find that village where persons of the higher classes wander about begging and are not, like Brahmacharis (students), devoted to the study of Vedas. 'Brahmins who neither study nor teach Vedas, nor keep the sacred fire become equal to Sudras. The king shall punish that village where Brahmins are unobservant of their sacred duties and ignorant of the Vedas, and subsist from begging for it feeds robbers'—Manu. 'Those kingdoms where ignorant man eats the food of the learned will be visited by drought or some other great evil befall them'—Vasishta. These rules bear ample testimony to the fact that indiscriminate begging even by the Brahmins was punishable. There were also other restrictions. During the Mahabharatha times no one not a student, nor a student who had finished his studies, could beg in the kingdom of Kekaya. If he did, it was considered a transgression of his (dharma) duty and he had to make amends for it by penance.¹

Begging was not considered as a humiliation. Manu. Bhudayana and Yagnavalka² state that food obtained by begging was considered as observing a fast. Begging in ancient days was not resorted to indiscriminately. But this state of affairs in time gave way to new social and political changes.

By the Buddhist times, mendicancy, beggary and undue asceticism were regarded as social evils. This appears from the conversation between Buddha and Ajathasathru.³ The monastic order under Buddhism was perhaps the first attempt at organising begging on a rational basis. Under the Mauryan policy something corresponding to the modern welfare state is attempted. Kautilya, the great political philosopher and statesman, laid down in his ARTHASASTRA that the king should make arrangements for the care and maintenance of the aged, infirm, afflicted, and the destitute women, both pregnant and nursing, and the destitute children.

The Mauryan State therefore spent a large amount of its revenue on its social obligations to the under-privileged. In fact we find all kinds of relief work subsidised by the Government. King Harsha on the celebration of the Buddha Jayanthi Day at Prayag spent in charity large sums of money in giving alms to hundreds and thousands of people who had gathered there. In addition to feeding them, he gave costly presents and clothes.

1. See *Prasara Smriti*—Hindu Dharma Sastras by Dr. P. V. Kare.

2. Ibid.

3. (a) *Buddhism as a Religion*—Progothairis Oriental Series.

(b) *Howard Oriental Series*—Buddhas Teachings.

(c) *Buddhism* by Edward Conze, Brio Cassiner, Oxford 1951, p. 55.

This continued, it is said, for several months, if the chroniclers are to be believed. The famous Chinese traveller, Hieun Tsang was present when over half a million people had assembled to receive the charitable offerings of King Harsha. It is not surprising that this distribution of charity by King Harsha resulted in the depletion of the five years' accumulated revenue of the State.

Begging in ancient India was not professional. It was part of the discipline pertaining to the Ashrams or the stages of life of each individual. Begging was not indiscriminate or universal. Generally speaking it was restricted to the student, to the ascetic and to the group or community to which the beggar belonged. Only in exceptional circumstances were these restrictions relaxed. For the under-privileged, his community was a haven of refuge providing him with the social security he needed. The joint family system also provided security for the weaker members in the family. These were the merits of the joint family and the caste system. But, under the pressure of industrialisation, which brought with it a rapid growth of population and a steady flight from the villages to the cities, the traditional pattern of Indian Society is being broken up. No longer can the poor and needy turn to his own community or joint family for sustenance. Loyalties are drifting from the family and caste to the State. Our country is our community. Our country is now our caste and it is the duty of our State to fulfil those functions which in the past fell to the smaller groups. In this responsibility we must not, dare not fail.

The Need for a Study :

1. The creation of a Welfare State, which is the main objective of the Government, requires the maximum use to be made of all resources, natural and human. This means that so far as human resources are concerned those who are able and willing to do work must be given suitable work and those who are handicapped should be rehabilitated.

2. The presence of beggars is a symptom of major social disease and a threat to public health and morale, and, so that the disease may be effectively tackled, a scientific study is essential, particularly because this is not only an economic, social and psychological problem but also because the religious facets of this question have tended to obscure and at times distort the real issues.

The Scope of the Present Survey :

1. To determine the extent and the nature of the problem in the City of Madras.

2. To study the causes—personal, familial, economic and social.

3. To study the existing institutions, Governmental and private, set up to meet the situation and to indicate the lines on which they may be modified or developed.

4. To suggest ways and means of eradicating beggary in the city.

Methodology :

1. Two Observational Surveys, covering the entire city of Madras, were made to estimate the extent of the problem. The first survey was conducted on 21st August 1955 (Suunday) between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. and the second on 14th October 1955 between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. By making two surveys we hoped to narrow the margin of error in our estimations.

2. The figures arrived at by the average of two observational surveys are taken to be indicative of the total estimated beggars in the City of Madras. Of this total a twenty per cent sample was taken for a detailed study.

3. Different types of questionnaires were employed—

(a) In the Observational Surveys,

(b) In the detailed study of Institutional beggars, and

(c) In the detailed study of Non-Institutionalised beggars.

4. In selecting outside beggars we endeavoured to ensure that the sample was as representative as possible, particularly in the distribution of sex, age and locality, as random sample was not possible.

5. In the case of institutionalised beggars, random sampling was followed.

6. Three institutions—one managed by the Government of Madras, one by the Corporation of Madras and one by private undertaking—exclusively catering to the needs of beggars, were investigated to assess their value.

7. The survey was headed by the Director of the School assisted by a Supervisor, Hon. Joint Supervisor and four Investigators, all of whom were professionally trained social workers. The fact that the investigators had background in professional social work lessened our burden considerably in explaining to them the delicacy and tact that are required in a work of this nature. Besides, they were assisted by a number of students from different City Colleges during the two Observational Surveys.

8. The draft questionnaire was pre-tested on hundred cases after which only it was finalised. In the task of preparing and finalising the questionnaire we had the valuable help and guidance of a Committee which consisted of distinguished social workers, public servants and others intimately connected with the beggar problem in Madras. The Supervisors conferred with the investigators periodically to guide them in their work and to clear doubts. This supervision was very helpful as the investigators themselves acknowledged its usefulness in improving the quality of their work. Though one thousand and eighty-four cases were taken for final analysis, many more cases were done by the investigators. But as some of them were incomplete or suspected to be inaccurate they were rejected.

Definition :

According to the Madras City Police Act, 1888, with its modifications of the 15th November 1949 which declares begging to be a punishable offence, a beggar is defined as one "who in any public street, road or thoroughfare or in any place of public resort, begs or applies for alms, or exposes or exhibits any sore, wound, bodily ailment or deformity with the object of exciting charity or extorting alms."

The Bombay Beggars Act of 1945 defines begging as "soliciting or receiving alms in any public place, whether or not under any pretence such as singing, dancing, fortune telling, performing tricks and selling articles; entering private premises for a similar purpose, exposing or exhibiting any wound, deformity or disease, whether of a human being or of an animal, for the purpose of obtaining or extorting alms. A person without means of subsistence and wandering about or found in public places or allowing himself to be used as an exhibit for the purpose of begging is also referred by this definition."

The Travancore Prohibition of Begging Act, 1945, Cochin Vagrancy Act, Madras Prevention of Beggary Act of 1945, Mysore Act for Prohibition of Beggary, Bengal Vagrancy Act, 1943, the Bihar Prevention of Beggars Act of 1952 and other Municipal Acts and City Police Acts of different places define beggars more or less in similar terms.

However, for the purpose of our survey, we have adhered as far as possible to the definition given under Madras City Police Act.

The definition of a beggar in the various States in our country is almost enumerative and not exhaustive. At any rate, the one factor which is common to all definitions is the act by which a person excites charity by importunate soliciting of alms.

Generally, begging is penalised more as a source of annoyance to persons to whom applications for alms are made. It is not treated as a social problem that requires scientific and careful handling. Therefore, we can assume for the purpose of our study that a beggar is a person who solicits or applies for alms by exciting charity or pity consequent upon the fact that there remains no other ostensible means of subsistence for him.

We have eliminated fortune-tellers and snake-charmers from our study as there can be no conceivable process by which we could determine whether they were pursuing those occupations with a view to earn a livelihood or with a view to excite charity. Those found begging while proceeding on pilgrimage do not beg for a living and they are "begging in conformity with certain religious vows on particular occasions." Therefore, this category would not also come under the purview of our study.

CHAPTER I

EXTENT OF THE BEGGAR PROBLEM

The experience gained from the city-wide beggar survey conducted by the Madras School of Social Work in November 1953, confirmed that an Observational Survey with the help of a questionnaire was the most effective instrument for securing precise information about the number, sex, ratio, age composition, and physical state of beggars, and about places frequented and methods adopted in soliciting alms. This method had the added advantage of gathering information without the knowledge of the beggars and consequently of yielding results with minimum possible error.

To maximise the precision of the results, the following steps were taken :—

(i) For the purpose of enumeration, we divided the city into fifty Corporation zones to ensure effective combing.

(ii) About 200 volunteers from different City Colleges were assigned to these divisions at the rate of about four for each division.

(iii) To ensure that no area was left out or covered twice, the Supervisors and Investigators personally supervised the work of the volunteers.

(iv) The first survey was conducted on a Sunday in the forenoon and the second on a festival day (Diwali) in the afternoon.

(v) The survey was conducted throughout the entire city at the same time and restricted to three hours at a time.

Observational Surveys :

The figures relating to the extent of begging are arrived at by taking the average of the two observational surveys.

TABLE I
Beggars Observed in two Surveys—By Sex

Sex	1st Survey	2nd Survey	Average of 2 & 3	Percentage of the average total
Males ..	2,761	2,605	2,683	63
Females ..	1,699	1,428	1,564	37
Total ..	4,460	4,033	4,247	100

As will be seen from the above table, the proportion of males to females is approximately 2 : 1. The estimated total number of beggars in the city of Madras is 4,247—2,683 males and 1,564 females.

TABLE II
Beggars According to Estimated Age

Estimated Age in years	I Survey	II Survey	Average of I & II	Percentage of the average total
Below 10 ..	765	670	718	17
11—20 ..	462	415	438	10
21—30 ..	747	657	702	17
31—40 ..	954	891	922	22
41—50 ..	804	737	771	18
50 and above ..	728	663	696	16
Total ..	4,460	4,033	4,247	100

Ages recorded are based on observation, but as a result of the poverty-stricken conditions the beggars were likely to appear much older than they really were. The beggars were classified into five broad groups for greater precision :—

- (i) Children (estimated to be below 10).
- (ii) Young persons (estimated between 11 and 20).
- (iii) Adults (estimated to be between 21—30).
- (iv) Middle aged (estimated to be between 31 and 50).
- (v) Aged (estimated to be above 50).

Accordingly 17 per cent came within category of 'Children', 10 per cent under 'Young Persons', 17 per cent under 'Adults', 40 per cent under 'Middle Aged' and 16 per cent under 'Aged'.

That more than one-fourth (27 per cent) of the total population appears to be below twenty years of age is of special significance. It is equally significant that sixteen per cent appear to be aged people and that the largest number falls within the age-group 31 to 40.

TABLE III
Beggars Observed According to Physical Condition

Physical Condition	I Survey	II Survey	Average of I & II	Percentage of the average total
Able bodied ..	2,842	2,628	2,735	64
Disabled ..	1,618	1,405	1,512	36
Total ..	4,460	4,033	4,247	100

It is interesting to note that two-thirds of the total are able-bodied, and are at least theoretically capable of taking up some productive work.

TABLE IV
Beggars Observed According to Disabilities

Disabilities	I Survey	II Survey	Average of I & II	Percentage of the average total
Lame ¹	450	419	435	28.8
Blind ²	269	214	242	16.1
Deaf/Mute ³	91	81	86	5.1
Others ⁴	808	691	750	50.0
Total ...	1,618	1,405	1,513	100.0

¹Absence of either one arm, or one leg or both arms and both legs,

²Partial or total loss of eye-sight.

³Those who are either deaf or mute or both.

⁴Includes mutilation or distortion of any kind not coming within the three categories and also those who are temporarily disabled due to malaria, jaundice, cough, cuts or wounds.

TABLE V
Beggars Observed According to Diseases

Disease	I Survey	II Survey	Average of the two surveys	Percentage of the average total
Leprosy	279	236	258	38
Insanity*	162	138	150	22
Skin Diseases†	143	113	128	19
Elephantiasis	96	82	89	13
Others	69	41	55	8
Total ...	749@ ¹	610@ ²	680	100

*Abnormal mental behaviour revealed by external manifestation.

†Itches, scabbies, rashes, sores, wounds, cuts and boils.

@1 and @2, 478 and 393 respectively are disabled persons.

As there are several similarities between the external manifestations of Venereal Diseases and Leprosy, the figures under Leprosy may include Venereal Disease cases also. But even

allowing a margin for this, the number belonging to this group is quite considerable constituting as it does 38 per cent of the total beggars found to be suffering from diseases—(680 in number which is the corresponding average of the two observational surveys). There appears to be a close connection between leprosy and begging and this is due to the enormous social stigma attached to leprosy. We found that a good number of poor leprosy patients migrate to the city because of the social stigma and also in the hope of getting good treatment. The lack of sufficient medical treatment combined with the absence of means of livelihood slowly drive them to the profession of begging.

Nor can the fact be overlooked that more than one-fifth of this group are mental cases.

Tables III, IV and V deal with those who are able-bodied, disabled or diseased. However, there are several cases suffering from both disability and disease. There are 242 such cases out of the estimated population of 4,247 giving a percentage of six.

LOCATION:

TABLE VI.

Beggars Observed According to Places Frequented.

Places Frequented.	I Survey	II Survey	Average of I & II.	Percentage of the average total.
Pavements ...	1,345	1,253	1,299	30
Residences ...	615	612	613	15
Bus stops ...	573	498	535	13
Religious Centres*	491	512	501	12
Hotels ...	330	299	314	7
Markets ...	306	237	272	6
Ry. Stations ...	145	130	138	3
Parks ...	105	108	107	3
Hospitals ...	75	51	63	2
Cinemas ...	64	52	58	1
Choultries ...	67	46	57	1
Schools ...	68	32	50	1
Others ...	276	203	240	6
Total ...	4,460	4,043	4,247	100

*Religious Centres include Mosques, Churches and Temples.

TABLE VII

**Beggars Observed According to the Methods
Adopted for Soliciting Alms**

Methods Adopted	I Survey	II Survey	Average of I & II	Percentage of the ave- rage total
Direct soliciting ...	2,484	2,246	2,365	56
Exhibiting wounds	517	492	505	11
Singing ...	363	323	343	8
Baby in arms ...	351	312	332	8
Self-mortification ...	284	276	280	7
Exhibiting pictures of Gods & Goddesses	235	185	210	5
Rolling ...	107	103	105	3
Exhibiting preg- nancy, false or real	98	78	88	2
Exhibiting corpse ...	21	18	19	...
Total	4,460	4,033	4,247	100

It will be noted that the majority of beggars observed had no special method of soliciting alms. However, the methods used in enlisting the public sympathy indicate great ingenuity. We mention the practice of beggars rolling with their bodies smeared in *Vibhuthi* (sacred ash) and sandalwood paste and with garland to touch the religious sentiments of the public; of exhibiting not only wounds, ulcers, sores, etc. but pregnancy, false as well as real, and even dead bodies.

In this context it is worth mentioning that there is a close agreement between the number of beggars suffering from physical ailments (Table V) and the number of persons exhibiting wounds to enlist public sympathies. It is evident from the above analysis that almost all the cases suffering from disease are relying on their ailments to evoke pity of the passersby.

TABLE VIII
Beggars Observed According to Estimated
Health Conditions

Estimated health conditions		I Survey	II Survey	Average of I and II	Percentage of the average total
Good	..	345	289	317	8
Average	..	2,026	1,885	1,956	46
Poor	..	2,089	1,859	1,974	46
Total	..	4,460	4,033	4,247	100

As shown in the above table 54 per cent of the observed beggars were estimated to be in normal health. It may not be out of place in this context to refer to the figures relating to able-bodied beggars given in Table III, sixty-four per cent. These show close relationship with the percentage enjoying normal health. The group 'Poor' displays close relationship with that of the disabled and diseased.

TABLE IX
Beggars Observed According to their Dress

Dress		I Survey	II Survey	Average of I and II	Percentage of the average total
Dirty	..	3,333	3,188	3,261	77
Neat	..	1,127	845	986	23
Total	..	4,460	4,033	4,247	100

A striking feature of the findings of these two surveys is that there is no major variation between them, and by presenting an effective picture of the extent of begging in the city of Madras, they provide a reasonably dependable basis for further detailed study, which will be discussed in the following pages.

CHAPTER II

COMPOSITION

The last chapter presenting the findings of the two observational surveys conducted in the City of Madras concerned only street-beggars. There are, apart from these, about 1,200 beggars housed in three major institutions in Madras. The detailed study, discussed in this and following chapters, deals with institutionalised beggars :—

This chapter is devoted to a detailed analysis of sex distribution, age composition, religious denomination, civil conditions, physical conditions and their native places.

A twenty per cent sample of institutionalised and non-institutionalised beggars has been selected for the purpose of our study. Care was taken to select a representative sample as far as possible and this was found to be an easier task compared with street beggars who are constantly on the move.

On the above basis, 1,084 cases were studied in detail with the help of an eight-page questionnaire. Of this number, 233 were from institutions and 851 from outside.

TABLE X
Cases Studied by Sex

Sex	Institution	Percentage	Non-institution	Percentage
Males	.. 179	77	541	64
Females	.. 54	23	310	36
Total	.. 233	100	851	100

The sex ratio of institutionalised beggars was not the same as that of non-institutionalised beggars. Of the three institutions, only two had female inmates and even so their number was not considerable, which explains the difference in sex ratio noted above.

TABLE XI

Distribution of Beggars According to Religion

Religion	Institution		Per- cent- age	Non-Insti- tutional		Per- cent- age	Average per- cent- age
	Male	Female		Male	Female		
Hindus ..	155	47	88	472	239	83	85
Muslims ..	17	5	10	34	25	8	9
Christians ..	8	1	2	52	28	9	6
Total ..	180	53	100	558	292	100	100

It will be observed that 85 per cent of the beggars are Hindus, drawn from all castes, 9 per cent Muslims and 6 per cent Christians. In the general population of the City of Madras, Hindus formed 82 per cent, Muslims 10 per cent and Christians 8 per cent. Hence not much variation is found between the religionwise distribution of beggars and the total population.

TABLE XII (A)

Civil Condition (Non-Institutional Beggars)

Age in years	Married		Unmarried		Separated		Widowed		Male % of Total	Female % of Total
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.		
Below 1 yr. ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1—5 ..	...	...	3	9	...	...	...	...	1	3
6—10 ..	...	...	28	46	...	...	...	...	16	14
11—15 ..	1	...	26	19	...	...	...	...	15	6
16—20 ..	1	10	10	3	...	...	...	1	5	3
21—30 ..	6	22	13	11	8	34	6	7	10	13
31—40 ..	18	23	8	8	23	24	6	14	10	15
41—50 ..	18	25	5	...	34	27	23	16	13	14
51 and above ..	56	20	7	4	35	15	65	61	30	32
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE XII (B)
Civil Condition (Institutional)

Age in years	Married		Unmarried		Separated		Widowed		Male	Female
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	% of Total	% of Total
Below 1 year ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1—5	...	...	...	8	...	...	...	...	...	2
6—10	...	...	4	15	...	...	...	...	2	4
11—15	1	...	5	15	...	...	...	...	3	3
15—20	...	...	12	15	...	14	...	...	7	7
21—30	7	...	33	23	31	22	6	22	24	20
31—40	35	67	20	8	46	43	6	18	21	27
41—50	32	17	8	16	15	14	9	31	13	18
51 and above	25	16	18	...	8	7	79	29	30	19
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Tables XII (A) and (B) give particulars regarding the sex, age and civil condition of beggars studied. Out of the 396 unmarried male beggars studied in the institutions and outside, 23 per cent belonged to the age-group 21—30. The age-group 31—40 has 14 per cent of the unmarried males. It is valuable to know that 44 per cent of the unmarried male beggars belong to the age-group of 21—40. That such a large number of people in the group 21—40 are living in an unmarried status when they are normally expected to lead a marital life, shows the effect of begging on their personal and family life.

Of the 112 unmarried female beggars, 27 per cent came from the age-group 16—30.

During the course of the study we did not come across any married beggar below the age of 14, i.e., married child-beggar.

Out of the 720 male and 364 female beggars studied, 39 and 47 respectively were found to be living away from their spouses. Widows were more numerous than widowers.

Of 514 men above the age of 20, 133 were widowers (22 per cent). Of 286 females above 16, 162 (57 per cent) were widows. When women lose their husbands who happen to be in most cases bread winners also, they are likely to take to begging in the absence of other support. Whereas, in the case of men, death of their wives does not lead them to begging.

Thirteen per cent of the beggars are children below the age of 10; 15 per cent from age-group 11—20; 28 per cent are from the age-group 21—40; and 44 per cent above 41.

TABLE XIII

Frequency of Marriage

Marriage	Institutional			Non-Institutional		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Once	71	38	109	234	194	428
Twice	4	4	8	19	4	23
Thrice & More	2	...	2	5	1	6
	77	42	119	258	199	457

Of 1084 cases studied in the institutions and outside, 576 were married. Of these 576; 305 males and 232 females married only once and 23 males and 8 females twice, while 7 males and 1 female had three or more than three marriages to their credit. One was found to have married five times and another four. We did not come across any beggar having more than one spouse living. All the remarriages took place after the death of the spouse, except in the case of 5 beggars where the cause was desertion. In general, the marital pattern of the beggars adheres to the monogamic marital pattern in India.

TABLE XIV (A)

Native Place (Non-Institutional Beggars)

Places	Non-Institutional					
	M.	%	F.	%	Total	%
Madras City	180	33	125	41	305	36
Madras State excluding Madras City	312	57	163	53	475	56
Other States	51	10	20	6	71	8
Total	543	100	308	100	851	100

TABLE XIV (B)
Native Place (Institutional)

Places	Institutional					
	M	%	F	%	Total	%
Madras City ...	39	22	9	17	48	21
Madras State excluding Madras City.	112	62	37	69	149	64
Others States ...	29	26	7	14	36	15
Total ...	180	100	53	100	233	100

Of the 851 non-institutional beggars studied, 92 per cent were from the State. Of the above, 36 per cent were from the City of Madras and the rest from the other parts of the State. Out of the 233 institutionalised beggars 85 per cent were from Madras State: 21 per cent from the City and the rest from other parts of the State. Five per cent of the non-institutionalised beggars were from Andhra. Others came from Assam, Calcutta, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Jodhpur, Karwar, Nagpur and Bombay. A few claimed to come from Burma, Singapore, South Africa and Karachi. Only one was found to be a refugee from Pakistan.

TABLE XV
Physical Condition of Beggars—Able-Bodied

—	Institution- alised Able-bodied		Non-Institu- tional Able-bodied		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Men ...	93	76	294	60	387	63
Women ...	29	24	200	40	229	37
Total ...	122	100	494	100	616	100

TABLE XVI
Physical Condition of Beggars—Disabled

Type	Institutional			Non-Institutional		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Blind ...	24	5	29	38	23	61
Lame ...	12	2	14	51	7	58
Deaf ...	1	...	1	...	...	...
Total ...	37	7	44	89	30	119

Among physical disabilities, blindness appears to be the major one ; more than half of the physically disabled are blind.

TABLE XVII
Physical Condition of Beggars—Diseased

Types of Diseases	Institutional			Non-Institutional		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Leprosy ...	15	...	15	96	22	118
Skin Diseases.	6	...	6	16	1	17
Elephantiasis.	1	3	4	1	...	1
V.D. ...	5	4	9	8	2	10
T.B. ...	...	...	...	4	...	4
Smallpox ...	...	...	...	2	2	4
Epilepsy ...	3	...	3	4	2	6
Asthma ...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Rheumatism ...	...	...	...	4	...	4
Piles ...	1	...	1	1	1	2
Malaria ...	1	...	1	...	...	...
Mentally Defec- tive ...	6	4	10	3	...	3
Eye Disease ...	...	...	...	3	3	6
Paralysis ...	6	1	7	2	4	6
Others ...	16	11	27	20	20	40
Total ...	60	23	83	165	57	222

The above table gives an idea of the distribution of the beggars according to the diseases from which they are suffering. It also reveals that leprosy is the most prevalent disease but then it is the most easily recognised, unlike Tuberculosis, Venereal Disease, Piles, etc.

TABLE XVIII
**Distribution of Beggars According to their
Level of Education**

	Institutional		Non-Institutional	
	No. of persons	%	No. of persons	%
Primary ...	63	80	176	75
Middle ...	15	19	48	21
Secondary ...	...	...	10	4
College ...	1	1	...	...
Total ...	79	100	234	100

This chapter dealing mainly with the composition of the beggars studied according to their sex, age, religion, civil conditions, state of physical condition, place of origin and level of educational standards, reveals certain striking features. In spite of the fact that Madras is one of the major cosmopolitan cities of the country, the number of beggars hailing from outside the city is negligible. Numercially the male beggars out-number female beggars; 85 per cent are Hindus. Unmarried beggars out-number the married—nearly half of them being in the age-group of 21-40. We may infer from this that a number of male beggars between 21-40 do not lead a normal sex life. We find more than half of the unmarried beggars in the age-group of 41 and above: a stage when the need of a stable home-life is very great. It is significant that all those beggars who remarried, did so only after the death of their spouses; there was not a single instance of a beggar living with more than one spouse.

In this chapter we have given the distribution pattern of beggars, regarding sex, age, religion, marital status, etc.

CHAPTER III

PRE-PROFESSIONAL

The last chapter gave information about the composition of the beggars studied. In this chapter an attempt is made to discuss the background of the beggars: their family environment, educational standards, the type of work they did, the reasons for leaving these occupations, the places they migrated to, original aversion to begging, if any, and the immediate factors which led them to take to begging.

As the family environment plays an important part in moulding the personality of the individual during childhood and youth, this is studied in some detail.

TABLE XIX
Occupation of Bread-Winners

Occupation	No. of Persons	Percentage
Manual Work	354	39
Farming	244	27
Business	105	12
Weaving	48	5
Begging	36	4
Rickshaw Pulling	35	4
Tailoring	18	2
Government Service	11	1
Carpentry	10	1
Others	45	5
Total ...	906	100

The study of the occupation of the bread-winners revealed that 354 were engaged in manual work, 244 in farming and 105 in petty business. A considerable number was engaged in weaving, tailoring and carpentry. About two-thirds of the beggars' parents or guardians were engaged in either manual

work or farming which are of an undependable nature with no steady income. Thirty-six gave begging as a profession in itself. This reveals that good majority of the beggars are drawn from low economic strata of the society.

With regard to parental treatment, more than sixty per cent considered that they received good treatment; thirty per cent said that they got tolerable treatment and the rest felt that they were treated badly by their parents.

As shown in the last chapter (Table XVIII), 313 beggars out of 1,084 were literate. Of this number 77 per cent attained the primary standards and most were capable of reading and writing in their own mother tongue, 20 per cent Middle, and 20 per cent High School. Thirty-five per cent gave poverty as the reason for leaving school. An equally large percentage discontinued their studies either because their parents did not consider education for them as worth pursuing or because they were dependent on these children for household or other work. Only 5 per cent of the cases were discouraged from studies by the ill-treatment of teachers or class-mates.

TABLE XX
Professions Prior to Taking to Begging and the
Causes for Leaving them

Professions	No.	Disease	Disablement	Old age	Lack of work	Retrenchment	Lack of income	Loss of property
Agriculture	68	26	4	12	...	...	22	4
Manual Work	302	78	...	44	172	4	4	...
Domestic Servant	38	30	6	...	2	...	...	...
Rickshaw Pulling	6	3	...	2	1	...	...	...
Weaving	28	...	2	4	18	...	4	...
Business	8	4	2	...	...	...	2	...
Cattle Grazing	8	...	4	...	...	...	4	...
Army	4	4	...	...	...	...	...	...
Carpentry	4	...	...	...	...	4	...	...
Total ...	466	145	18	62	193	8	36	4

Four hundred and sixty-six beggars said that they had some occupation or other before taking to begging. Three hundred and two were manual workers and sixty-eight earned their livelihood in agriculture. The next important group was represented by domestic servants (38), almost all of them women. From this we can see that there is no difference between the occupations of the beggars and their bread-winners. If we exclude children, and congenitally handicapped persons from the total number of beggars, it shows that a good number of them have work experience and the fact that they are not work-shy should be borne in mind when planning a rehabilitation programme.

While about 150 left their occupations (mostly unskilled), because of illness, unemployment was the cause in ninety cases. Old age and retirement were the causes in 60 cases. After leaving the occupation, they took to some other occupations before they took to begging. Often they stayed in these professions for a very long time: in two or three cases, as long as sixty years and as many as 54 cases had forty years and more of work to their credit before they became beggars. It is a common misconception among the general public that people take to begging easily. But this is not so, as is evident from the above findings. There is a great deal of resistance to take to this profession, which involves a steep fall in social status and personal dignity. They only do so under compelling circumstances like continuous unemployment, sickness, old age, etc. The lamentable fact that persons could not provide for themselves even after sixty years of work, shows the crying need for some social security measures.

As for earnings: about forty per cent earned from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 per month, 23 per cent got below Rs. 5 per month and nearly 20 per cent Rs. 50 to Rs. 100.

The study revealed that apart from beggars who belonged to Madras, others found their way to the city only after going to two or three towns before-hand in search of jobs. Forty-one per cent of the beggars considered, took to begging in their towns before reaching the city of Madras where they came for the specific purpose of begging; whereas 34 per cent came to the city in search of work, without begging in their own towns and ultimately resorted to begging, only when they failed to secure jobs in the city.

Yet another significant finding is that twenty per cent came to the city to secure medical facilities and subsequently strayed into begging. A good number of people, come to the city in the hope of getting a good medical treatment, and those of them who fail in this objective and have no means of supporting themselves, slowly take to begging.

About 60 per cent of the cases studied migrated from place to place unaccompanied, and about 37 per cent with families. It is by no means surprising that 75 per cent of these people travelled by train without tickets.

The negative answer given by almost all the beggars to the question as to whether their fathers, mothers or relatives had warned them against begging is revealing, showing as it does, that none of those normally expected to put the young men and women in the right path, exerted any influence on them.

We obtained information from only 30 beggars (economically better off than the ordinary beggars) that they had well-to-do relatives and of these only six sought help from them. The facts however show that the preponderant majority of those who have taken to begging come from very low economic strata and have no relatives to whom they might turn. This is borne out by the information we had obtained about the average income in their previous occupations which was below Rs. 20/- per month for 63 per cent of them.

The beggars themselves considered that the main reasons for their taking to begging are disablement, poverty, desertion, compulsion, unemployment, death of a bread-winner, hereditary profession, etc.

TABLE XXI
Causes of Begging

Causes	No.	Percentage
Disablement	... 236	22
Orphans and Death of Bread-winner	... 228	21
Lack of work	... 157	15
Poverty	... 129	12
Desertion	... 87	8
Compulsion	... 37	3
Hereditary Profession	... 36	3
Natural Calamities	... 23	2
Others	... 151	14
Total	... 1084	100

This brings out that disablement, congenital or otherwise, together with the death of bread-earner stand out as major

causes of begging. Next in importance comes the lack of work, general poverty and desertion. It is an interesting phenomenon that out of 1084 beggars only 36 are hereditary and all the rest have taken to begging only recently. Natural calamities are pointed out by two per cent as a cause of their taking to begging. By natural calamities we mean draught, cyclone, etc. Fifteen per cent of the beggars attribute their begging to poverty.

We hope that this chapter gives an idea of how most of the normal working individuals drift into begging due to adverse circumstances.

CHAPTER IV

PROFESSIONAL LIFE

The previous chapter revealed some of the circumstances under which people take to begging, but it is equally important to know what makes people continue in this activity. Why do they not leave it to take up something more honourable? Do they attempt to do so?

Apart from social economic factors, some may take to begging for religious reasons; so also the attitude of the public towards begging varies according to the religious or ethical significance given to it.

This chapter discusses the professional life of the beggars.—when they took to begging, how long they have been occupied, whether they are part-time or full-time beggars, the places frequented, methods adopted, time chosen, amount secured, the major items on which expenditure is incurred, their savings and indebtedness, attitude towards refusal of alms, etc.

Some of the beggars we questioned have been active twenty years, whereas, and a very considerable number among others took to this life as recently as a year ago. The following table gives a clear picture in this regard:—

TABLE XXII
Distribution of Beggars According to the Number of Years Spent in the Profession

No. of years	Institutionalised		Non-Institutional	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Below 1 year ...	282	34	74	36
1—5 years ...	382	46	88	42
6—10 years ...	97	12	27	13
11—15 years ...	18	3	8	4
16—20 years ...	21	3	3	1
21 and above ...	21	3	8	4
Total ...	821	100	208	100

As regards the beggars living in institutions, we find that there are marked similarities with the outside beggars regarding the length of stay in the profession.

The above table shows that the greatest number of beggars (48 per cent) are found to be begging for the last five years. About 4 per cent are begging for more than 20 years.

Since a considerable number of the total beggars studied (34 and 36 per cent of the institutionalised and non-institutional beggars respectively) are found to have taken to this profession only recently, a detailed analysis of this category is given below.

TABLE XXIII (A)
Details Regarding Beggars Who Have Taken Up
This Profession for the Last One Year
Institutional Beggars

Physical Condition	Males				Females			
	Children	Mid. aged	Old	Total	Children	Mid. aged	Old	Total
Able-Bodied	8	15	8	31	3	7	2	12
Elephantiasis	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	3
Blind	...	1	6	7	...	2	1	3
Leprosy	...	2	...	2	...	1	...	1
Lame	...	1	1	2	...	1	...	1
Others	...	8	1	9	...	4	...	4
Total ...	8	27	16	51	3	18	3	24

TABLE XXIII (B)
Details Regarding Beggars Who Have Taken Up
This Profession for the Last One Year
(Non-Institutional Beggars)

Physical Condition	Males				Females			
	Children	Mid. aged	Old	Total	Children	Mid. aged	Old	Total
Able-Bodied ...	71	26	25	122	23	27	33	83
Elephantiasis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Blind	...	1	10	11	...	7	...	7
Leprosy	2	15	2	19	...	6	...	6
Lame	...	2	2	4	1	2	...	3
Others	1	12	4	17	3	4	3	10
Total ...	74	56	43	173	27	46	36	109

As the above tables show, there are more able-bodied beggars than the disabled. Among non-institutional beggars, we find a large number of able-bodied children, next comes the category of beggars above the age of 55, which shows, among the 282 non-institutional beggars who have been in the profession for only less than one year, 205 are able-bodied, i.e., 73 per cent. Out of this category of able-bodied beggars among the males, the number of children below sixteen is the greatest while in the case of females, the number of beggars above 55 is the greatest.

Most of the male blind beggars attributed their blindness to old age, whereas blind women blamed diseases.

TABLE XXIV
Causes of Begging in the Case of Able-Bodied
Beggars Who are in the Profession for
Less than One Year

Causes	Non-institution						Institution					
	Children		Mid. aged		Old		Children		Mid. aged		Old	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Unemployment	30	5	21	5	...	...	2	...	9	4	...	...
Hereditary	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
profession	12	4	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...
Bad home	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
environment	25	12	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	...
Abandonment	...	...	...	...	25	30	3	1	...	...	8	2
Accident	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...
Sickness	4	2	5	5	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...
Laziness	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Calamities	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Desertions	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...
Death of Spouse	...	...	...	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	71	23	26	27	25	30	8	3	15	10	8	2

Of the 248 able-bodied beggars who started begging less than one year ago 76 (30 per cent) gave unemployment as the major reason for their taking to begging. Out of this number, 32 are children who said that they had worked as cleaners in hotels, domestic servants, etc., but they were forced to take to begging because of unemployment. Forty children gave bad home environment as reason for their taking to begging.

Areas frequented for the purpose of begging can be grouped under three broad categories—residential, places of worship and business localities like Cinemas, Markets, Fairs, etc.

TABLE XXV

**Distribution of Beggars According to the Places
Frequented for Begging**

Places frequented		No. of Persons	Percentage
Business	...	417	44
Religious	...	410	42
Residential	...	137	14
Total	...	964	100

TABLE XXVI

Reasons for Frequentering the Areas of Begging

Places Frequented		Food	Money	Both	Total
Business	...	123	241	53	417
Religious	...	61	283	66	410
Residential	...	48	63	26	137
Total	...	232	587	145	964

It is interesting to note that 587 beggars select their areas because of monetary considerations, compared with 232 in search of food. However, it is to be noted that beggars do not exclusively stick to these areas mentioned, though they broadly indicate the areas of preference.

Out of the 782 beggars, 116 begged in the morning, 129 in the evenings and the rest have no fixed time for begging.

TABLE XXVII

Methods adopted for Begging

S. No.	Methods adopted	No.	Percentage
1.	Direct Soliciting	450	64
2.	Exhibiting Wounds	90	13
3.	Pretending to be physically handicapped	6	1
4.	Exhibiting Children	6	1
5.	Singing	4	1
6.	Others (Exhibiting Corpses, pregnancy, pictures of deities, rolling on the ground, etc.)...	144	20
		700	100

As for methods adopted a good majority solicit alms by simple request, many do not have any technique and frequently change methods.

TABLE XXVIII
Daily Earnings of the Beggars

Daily Earnings	No. of persons	Percentage	Average Daily Earning Rs. A. P.		
1—4 as.	451	53	0	3	0
5—8 as.	244	29	0	7	0
9—12 as.	86	10	0	11	0
13 as.—1 Re.	36	4	1	0	0
1-1 as.—1-4 as.	7	1	1	3	6
1-5 as.—1-8 as.	10	1	1	8	0
1-9 as.—1-12 as.	1	...	1	12	0
1-13 as.—2 Rs.	6	1	2	0	0
Rs. 2 and above	12	1	3	9	3
Total ...	853	100	0	4	9

We cannot be completely sure of the accuracy of these data since considerable reluctance to divulge earnings was experienced. From the information secured it would seem that more than half of the beggars earn less than 4 annas a day.

Next to this group, about 30 per cent of the beggars earn between four annas and eight annas. Not more than seven earn between Rs. 1-9-0 and Rs. 2 per day out of a total of 853 and only 12 can boast of a daily income of above Rs. 2.

In other words, on a percentage basis, beggars who earn daily between Re. 1 and Rs. 2 form only 4 per cent of the total, whereas those whose daily earnings average above Rs. 2 form the negligible percentage of eight only. The preponderant majority of the beggars (82 per cent) earn from one to eight annas a day.

TABLE XXIX
Detailed Analysis of Beggars who are earning below 4 annas Daily on Normal Days

Daily Earnings	No. of persons	Percentage
1 anna and below	43	10
1 anna and below 2 annas	128	29
2 annas and below 3 annas	72	15
3 " 4 "	208	46
Total ...	451	100

Sixty-one per cent of the beggars who are earning below four annas per day earn between 2 and 4 annas while the rest earn below 2 annas.

Another feature, as revealed by our study, is the general increase in the amount received on the festival days.

TABLE XXIX (A)
Daily earnings of the Beggars of Festival Days

Festival Days Income		No. of persons	Percentage	Average Income		
				Rs.	A.	P.
Below 4 annas	...	170	25	0	3	6
4 as.—8 as.	...	221	32	0	7	0
9 as.—12 as.	...	87	13	0	11	3
13 as.—1 Re.	...	106	15	0	15	0
1-1 as.—1-4 as.	...	7	1	1	4	0
1-5 as.—1-8 as.	...	24	4	1	7	0
1-9 as.—1-12 as.	...	...	...	...	...	...
1-13 as.—2 Rs.	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rs. 2 and above	...	70	10	2	12	0
Total	...	685	100	0	12	6

We find that the number in the higher earning brackets increase on festival days compared with the normal days. As against 3, on normal days the daily average earning is 3 as. 6 ps. on festival days. Similarly not only the number receiving Rs. 2 and above per day increases on festival days but also the average earnings of a beggar rises from Rs. 2-12-9 to Rs. 3-9-4.

TABLE XXIX (B)
Detailed Analysis of Beggars with Daily earnings below 4 annas on Festival Days

Income		No. of persons	Percentage
3 to 4 as.	...	110	64
2 as.—3 as.	...	27	16
1 anna—2 as.	...	28	17
Below 1 anna	...	5	3
Total	...	170	100

The changes noted in Table XXIX (A) between earnings on normal and festival days are seen in the case of daily earning pattern of those who get less than 4 annas per day. Sixty-four per cent of the beggars who get less than 4 annas per day came within the earning group 3 annas to 4 annas. Only a negligible number gets less than 1 anna.

It should be borne in mind that besides cash, most of these beggars receive alms in kind such as food and clothing. Six hundred and six beggars were admitted: they were given food and forty-five, clothing. However, these categories are not mutually exclusive.

Regarding the expenditure pattern of beggars, 828 gave information. Apart from food, clothing, shelter, other items also feature. Eighty-seven out of the total were in the habit of going to the cinema. Others spent money on puzzles and lotteries.

These items of expenditure are classified under two headings, daily and monthly. Food, chewing and smoking come in the former category while shelter, clothing, films, puzzles and lotteries under the latter.

Out of 828, 796 were found to spend an amount ranging from 4 annas to Rs. 2 on food. Thirty-two beggars spend nothing on food which they receive in the form of alms.

TABLE XXX
Distribution of Beggars According to the amount
Spent on Food per Day

Expenditure in Annas		Institutional and non-institutional beggars	Percentage
Below 4 annas	...	346	43
5—8 as.	...	270	34
9—12 as.	...	80	11
13 as.—1 Re.	....	61	7
Re. 1—Re. 1-4	...	6	1
Re. 1-5 to Re. 1-8	...	15	2
Re. 1-9 to Re. 1-12	...	1	...
Re. 1-13 to Rs. 2	...	15	2
Above Rs. 2	...	2	...
Total ...		796	100

A comparison of the income and expenditure of beggars reveals some interesting points. If there are 83 per cent of the total beggars with an income below 8 annas, there are as many as 88 per cent who spend up to 12 annas a day. This disparity is

explained if we assume that some of the beggars have under-estimated their incomes, and over-estimated their expenditure.

TABLE XXXI

Distribution of Beggars According to the amount they spent on Clothing and Shelter per month

Expenditure in Rupees	Clothing		Shelter	
	No.	Per-centage	No.	Per-centage
Below Re. 1	58	47	1	4
1 Re. to Rs. 2	29	23	9	43
2 Rs. to Rs. 3	6	5	5	23
3 Rs. to Rs. 4	5	4	2	10
4 Rs. to Rs. 5	15	12	2	10
Rs. 5 and above	11	9	2	10
Total ...	124	100	21	100

Only 124 beggars were found to spend anything on these items.

It is generally safe to presume that most beggars are insolvent; but only 59 out of the total 1,084 beggars examined confessed to being actually in debt. Often the debt was incurred before the person had taken to begging, because of bad crops, medical expenses, family requirements, marriages, birth, etc. Contracting loan to buy food cannot be taken seriously when one considers the borrower's complete lack of security and such 'loans' become in effect another aspect of begging though euphemistically termed otherwise.

TABLE XXXII

Distribution of Beggars According to Savings

Amount saved in Rupees	Number
Up to Re. 1	13
1—5	20
6—10	17
11—15	4
16—25	8
26—50	2
51—100	6
100 and above	8
Total	78

TABLE XXXIII

Distribution of Beggars showing how they spend their Savings

Nature of Expense		Number
Spends on clothes	...	26
Gives to family	...	14
Lends to others	...	9
Usurped by others	...	3
Entertainment	...	2
Has not spent so far	...	24
		—
Total	...	78

Only about 7 per cent of the beggars had any savings. The above tables give information regarding the size of the savings and the ways in which they are utilised.

The study also revealed interesting information about beggars' attitude towards their patrons and towards those who refuse alms.

Of the 982 beggars who gave particulars, 644 said that men gave more frequently, but 338 said that women gave more generously. Nearly half of all beggars interviewed confessed that religious centres offered them the best prospects. Thirty-eight per cent obtained more from business areas while the residential districts appeal to only 16 per cent.

TABLE XXXIV

Beggars' Reaction to Refusal of Alms

Attitude		Percentage
Indifferent	...	86
Persistent	...	13
Cursing	...	1
		—
Total	...	100

People hold widely divergent views on begging and can only make hazardous guesses about their income and expenditure and the several aspects of the traffic. Our aim was to collect factual data about beggars and their way of life so that an objective and accurate picture of the working life of this unfortunate section of society would be available.

CHAPTER V

INSTITUTIONS FOR BEGGARS IN MADRAS CITY

In Madras we have several institutions catering to the needs of beggars, orphans, destitutes and aged. Among these only three cater exclusively for beggars, but institutions for the aged and orphans admit also some beggars. As far as this study is concerned, we have confined our investigations to these three institutions which take in only beggars.

Corporation Beggar Home

This is managed by the Corporation and is situated at Krishnampet. Known as "Corporation Special Home for the Infirm and Aged Beggars" this was found in December 1943 and has accommodation for 300. Here, only those beggars who are either ill or diseased are taken in. After being apprehended by the Police under the Madras City Police Act they are produced before the Court where they are given sentences usually ranging from six months to two years. Those who are ill or diseased are separated and assigned to this Home, which is situated within the city limits in an area of about four acres. The dormitories, kitchen, dining halls and latrines are of pucca structure and some of the halls were constructed with funds donated by private bodies such as the Madras Race Club. There are separate dormitories for men and women and the leprosy patients are in a separate dormitory. At the time of survey, there were 184 men, 34 women and four children including 62 male and 32 female leprosy patients. Usually children are not taken in this institution except in such cases where they cannot be separated from their parents.

There are ten physically and three mentally handicapped beggars. During their stay they are given treatment for their ailments and those among them who are capable are given opportunities to work at weaving, gardening, cooking, etc. Many are not in a position to do any work because of their poor physical condition. The inmates are given Kanji for breakfast and rice with sambar and curry for lunch and supper. Twice in a week meat and once fish is served. Occasionally some thoughtful donor distributes food or sweets. At the time of admission, a beggar is given two sets of clothing. Those suffering from

leprosy are separated at meal times, their clothes are also washed separately and we are given to understand that all possible care is taken to avoid any contamination.

The staff is headed by a qualified Medical Superintendent with four nurses and a compounder. Besides these, there are one clerk, one chief warder, 13 second grade warders, 4 attenders, 4 cooks, 3 peons, 12 scavengers, 3 dhobies, 2 barbers and one gardener.

The institution has a weaving section with three looms at which four beggars work under supervision of an instructor. About 10 beggars help in the garden and six in the kitchen. Some women help in cleaning the rice and do such other sundry jobs. There is a radio set to provide recreation for the inmates. Within the precincts there is a small Hindu Shrine erected by the beggars and we are told that a Christian priest also regularly visits the Home to minister for the Christian beggars.

The cost of maintaining this Home comes to about one lakh and twenty thousand rupees a year. We find that there is hardly any rehabilitation programme and the beggars are released after the expiry of their term and in many cases in the middle of it. If the inmates were kept for a longer period and given a more nutritive diet some might regain sufficient health and strength to take up some gainful occupation. As it is, many find themselves on the streets again after release. They are not completely cured and go back to begging having no other alternative. Some even find their way back to the institution after re-arrest and conviction. Leprosy patients, especially those who are released from this institution, are forced to stretch out their arms again and their disease aggravates due to lack of proper treatment and nourishment; thus ultimately rendering previous stay in the institution useless. To some extent this contingency can be prevented if the beggars are convicted for a longer period and are kept in the institutions until they are completely cured and are given training in some craft by which they can support themselves after release. Those beggars who suffer from incurable diseases can be separated and cared for in a separate institution until their death.

Government Care Home, Melapakkam :

The Care Home at Melapakkam is situated about eighteen miles from the city. This was started in the year 1954 by the Government of Madras and the management is entrusted to the Police Department. This is the most extensive of all institutions of its kind in Madras spreading

in about 8 acres. The location is ideal since it is very far away from the din and bustle of the city. The buildings are of pucca and semi-pucca type and there are dormitories, dining halls, sheds for the craft training section, dispensary, stores, etc. The whole area is cool and shady because of the many big trees within the compound which gives also an altogether pleasant atmosphere. Though the total capacity is about 500, there are about 367 males, 82 women and 30 children making altogether 479 inmates. One of the significant aspects of this institution is that it takes in only able-bodied beggars the object being to minimise begging by able-bodied beggars. The able-bodied beggars who are found soliciting alms are apprehended by the police and after medical inspection they are produced before the courts. Usually the conviction is up to a maximum of one year. Soon after admission, they are given two changes of clothes.

As in the previous institution, they get Kanji in the morning, and rice with sambar and curry for lunch and supper. The diet is vegetarian except for two meals a week when dried fish is given. All the inmates are given work for eight hours a day. Those among them who appear to be intelligent are given training in crafts like weaving, tag-making, carpentry, pottery and tailoring. A good number of inmates are engaged in gardening and in cultivating vegetables which are sufficient for the needs of the institution. Some of the inmates help in conducting classes for the children and some others in cooking, serving and drawing water. Supervisory staff including the Superintendent who is the Head are drawn from the Police Department. The Superintendent is assisted by a Sub-Inspector, 2 Head Constables and 12 Constables. The dispensary is in the charge of a part-time doctor assisted by a compounder and a nurse. There are four full-time instructors for various crafts and there is an accountant and a clerk in the office. We are given to understand that the annual expenditure comes to about one lakh thirty thousand rupees.

From the inception of the institution about sixty beggars have been rehabilitated in useful occupations. The institution was started with the excellent idea of draining away able-bodied beggars from begging. As an experiment it seems to have attained a certain amount of success in that it has reduced the number of able-bodied beggars in the city. However, it is to be remembered that confining these people for a certain period and releasing them perhaps to beg again in the streets is a wasteful measure unless able-bodied persons during their stay in this institution are given a re-orientated outlook on life bringing them to realise the dignity of earning a living through work.

Daya Sadan :

This institution is different from the two others in that it is wholly the outcome of private endeavour. Daya Sadan is situated in the Perambur area of the city. This is meant for diseased, disabled and aged beggars in which respect it resembles the Corporation Home at Krishnampet. It was started in 1954 at the initiative of some businessmen of the Marwari community. It covers an area of 130 grounds. The sheds meant for the inmates are of semi-pucca type. The male and female beggars live in separate sheds as also those who are suffering from leprosy. At present there are 317 inmates of which 211 are men, 71 are women and 35 are children. There are about 70 persons suffering from leprosy taking shelter in this institution. While nearly half of the inmates entered voluntarily, the rest were sent by the police after arrest. An interesting feature of this institution is that there is no limit to the length of stay and beggars can stay as long as they wish. This applies also to those sent by police. Soon after their admission, they are given three pairs of clothes. The diet is strictly vegetarian and consists of Kanji, and coffee in the morning and rice with curry and sambar, both for lunch and supper. Occasionally some donors visit this place to distribute food and sweets. This is the only Home where besides food, betel leaves, tobacco and beedies are given to inmates. The Staff consists of a Superintendent, a Manager, two paid Maistries, 2 instructors, one part-time doctor, 2 peons and 2 scavengers. Training is given to those who are interested in Slate-Pencil making and Cane Work. Many of the inmates work in the garden cultivating vegetables which partly meet the requirements of the Home. There are a few huts in the compound for temporary stay of those visitors to Madras who find themselves stranded due to want of shelter. Classes for children are conducted by the Superintendent.

It is creditable that a group of private individuals have taken interest in the problem of begging and are making efforts of their own to alleviate it. As mentioned earlier, unlike in other homes, the beggar can voluntarily seek admission here and stay as long as he wishes, but as this is a home for the disabled and diseased, the treatment facilities are scarcely adequate. More recreational facilities would make the life of the beggars less monotonous and dreary, while space limitation imposes an over-crowding in the dormitories. We learn that shortly there is a possibility of a separate home for leprosy patients being established by the same Management. Leprosy patients will ultimately be transferred to this and this will greatly alleviate the present crowded conditions.

From our study of the above three institutions we have the following observations to make. We consider that the Government Care Home at Melapakkam enjoys the best situation: far from the city and extensive grounds. If possible, efforts should be made to shift the other two institutions also outside the city into extensive areas. At present, Daya Sadan and Corporation Beggar Home, Krishnampet, are situated in congested unhygienic areas. For instance, there is a big refuse dumping ground very near the Krishnampet Home and Day is Sadan opposite a large open drain. The adverse effect of such surroundings on the health of the diseased and infirm beggars need not be over-emphasised. In all the three institutions beggars were found huddled together in long dormitories in a crowded manner without any privacy. Early steps should be taken to separate persons suffering from leprosy and other infectious diseases to eliminate the danger of infection. Regarding Krishnampet Beggar Home, it is felt that the short duration of beggars' stay (one year) is not at all sufficient to administer any effective treatment, especially in cases like leprosy, tuberculosis and mental illness. Beggars should be convicted for a period determined by the recommendation of the Doctor-Superintendent. Except Daya Sadan no other institution supplies pan, beedies or tobacco for the inmates. The deviation of these make much difference to a man's contentment. The daily programme and craft training imparted is more or less similar in all institutions. But the facilities are meagre and only a few beggars can make use of these especially in Daya Sadan and Krishnampet because of their poor physical condition. However, such activities can be enlarged at Melapakkam to provide better and more useful training to a greater number of beggars so that when they go out they can start on a vocation of their own. It is so often the case that many beggars, after their release from the institutions, return to the profession of begging when they fail to find employment. Unless this aspect of after-care is attended to and the released beggars are provided suitable work, establishment of any number of institutions cannot solve the problem. The recreational facilities in all the three institutions can be improved. It will lessen the prisonlike atmosphere at Melapakkam if all the staff there take to civilian dress and are permanently assigned to this Home only.

The total capacity of the above three institutions together is at present about 900 only, and even as it is, it cannot be said that the accommodation is adequate. Hence the need for many more institutions catering to the needs of the different types of beggars and with better programmes cannot be over-emphasised.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Unlike academic research, an investigation of this kind should give some indication of possible solutions to the problems under review. We should emphasise that whatever suggestions we offer are based on our findings and data collected during the course of our survey. We could have given the following suggestions a broader and firmer basis with more resources at our disposal. As it is, we were unable to give as much attention to factors, such as social life, community living, and such other aspects as we should have liked. Also, we are aware of the lack of a conceptual basis derived from social sciences such as Sociology, Psychology, etc., hence we have had to confine our investigations to a limited area and to make them as representative as possible within the limitations.

Regarding the total number of beggars in the city it is significant that no great variation was observed between the two observational surveys. Allowing for slight error, we can assume that the total number of beggars in Madras City does not exceed 5,000 excluding those in institutions who number about 1,200.

According to the latest census, the sex ratio for the population in Madras City is 931 females per thousand males (p. 66 CENSUS OF INDIA), whereas from our study we find that the sex ratio in beggars differs from the general picture: 610 females to 1,000 males. Normally one would expect the sex ratio among beggars to adhere to the general pattern and indeed for the number of destitute women to exceed the number of men for whom more avenues of livelihood are open. Hence it is surprising that the ratio of beggar women to beggar men is in fact less than among the general population. This leads us to conjecture as to what happens to a large number of destitute women who are not accounted as beggars. Whether these women are drawn to professions like prostitution or are being taken care of by immediate relatives and friends is a matter for study. According to age-division, we find that nearly half of the beggars (men and women) are over forty-years of age. This might be due to various reasons: either they have not sufficient resources to fall back on in their advanced age, or have none to look after them, or have

suddenly become victims of some unexpected calamity. This indicates that a number of beggars in the city need institutional care and are not able to undertake any strenuous work because of their advanced age.

Beggars below fifteen years of age constitute nearly a quarter of the total. In view of their youth they are more easily rehabilitable. Nearly sixty per cent of all beggars are able-bodied, even if we exclude children, and cite lack of employment and unhappy work experience as the main reasons which have led them to beg. In view of their physical ability and their general willingness to work, if satisfactory and sufficiently remunerative work is provided, we believe that the crux of the problem would be overcome.

Our study further reveals that the majority of beggars above 51 years of age are unmarried; this in an age when society expects people to live in settled family life.

Our study also confirmed the common belief that most beggars are drawn from the lowest economic strata of society. Nearly half of the parents of these beggars were engaged in casual manual work. The occupational strata and the income of beggars, before they took to begging was not very different from that of their parents. Uncertainty and insecurity of employment coupled with low subsistence level of income have possibly killed the incentive to work.

It is difficult to answer the question as to why people take to begging. A combination of diverse factors, some of them economic, some social and some physical and psychological, contribute to bring about a state of despair and cause people to lose their normal values of self-respect, dignity of labour, and so forth. There are several methods of ascertaining the information regarding the causes of begging and one of them is the direct approach. We adopted the method of checking our findings against the beggar's parental environment and working life. Replies received show that physical disablement, death of bread-winners, lack of work, poverty, were the major causes, in that order. According to our analysis, about half the number of beggars were only recently drawn into this profession, *i.e.*, below five years, and this gives us hope that these could be weaned from the practice without much difficulty.

Normally people work six to eight hours a day to earn a living. Most beggars, however, have no fixed hours of work and those who have, work only a maximum of four hours a day. As the average daily cash earnings is only 3 annas, it is clear that

they cannot sustain themselves on such meagre income. Cash earnings are supplemented, to some extent, by food, clothing and kind, the value of which could not be estimated. The fact that beggars seem to earn a satisfactory income without much exertion within a very short period should be kept in mind in formulating any rehabilitation programme. Their pattern of expenditure does not differ from that of any other low-income group in that most of their income is spent on food alone.

A pathetic picture of the beggar problem in Madras City is that nearly one in four beggars is a child. Meagre family income, lack of sufficient parental care and bad company have driven them to begging. That they have not completely lost their desire to work is evident from the fact that about one-third of the juvenile beggars engage themselves in some part-time work or other.

After careful consideration of all factors we make the following suggestions to alleviate this problem in the city :—

1. The existing Beggar Act should be replaced by a comprehensive one covering the whole Madras State and should be strictly enforced.

2. To prevent large-scale accumulation of beggars who come to the city in search of treatment facilities or employment, it would be better if we have at least one large institution in every district. In that case, the beggars who come to the city can be referred back to the institution in their native district. Concentration of beggars in the city could be reduced by a strict check on ticketless travel by beggars.

3. A large-scale rehabilitation programme involves considerable financial outlay and it will not be possible for the State Government to shoulder this in full unless the charitable public channels donations through organised institutions. This requires an intensive and gradual education of the public to stop indiscriminate charity.

4. Institutions in the city are quite inadequate. There is great need for more institutions on a specialised basis. First of all, there is need for a Reception Home to which all the beggars are referred and from which distributed to institutions according to their individual needs. As the number of destitute children is very large, priority should be given to an institution where the children can be housed and given a vocational training.

5. For the able-bodied, Work Centres should be organised wherein the inmates would be paid for the work done. Naturally, for the diseased and handicapped, different kinds of institutions are required but the inmates should be retained until they are completely cured of the diseases. For incurables, an institution similar to the "CHESHIRE HOMES" should be started. It is a welcome sign that the City Corporation and Government of Madras are already thinking of starting different types of institutions. In the meanwhile institutions should be reorganised and strengthened.

6. These institutions should be situated outside the city and have sufficient space to provide facilities for agriculture, craft training, exercise and other such activities. Instead of huddling people into dormitories it is preferable to house a limited number of people together in the cottage type of building and so avoid the soul-destroying impersonal atmosphere of institutional life. Cottages further permit members of the same family to remain together and it is always more effective to rehabilitate a family than an individual.

7. Diseased and handicapped beggars pose a different problem which is of both medical and sociological importance. If we confine ourselves to the better aspect, we suggest that these beggars who are found to be capable of transmitting their disease or handicap, should be prevailed upon to submit themselves to sterilisation.

8. The setting up of numerous institutions involves considerable financial outlay and for this reason we advocate that such institutions be run by a Joint Managing Committee consisting of the representatives of Government, City Corporation and philanthropic organisations. On such a basis, there will be more co-operation from the public and less chances of inefficient administration. We should also welcome more public co-operation at the management level in existing Corporation or Government institutions and stress the need for the Superintendent of the Home being a person qualified in professional Social Work.

9. To integrate public charity, Collection Boxes (Dharma Hundies) should be kept at temples and other places of worship to encourage pilgrims and worshippers to subscribe to organised welfare rather than indiscriminately to individual beggars. This practice would also discourage the hordes of beggars from infesting places of worship. Funds could also be raised through business organisations or by collecting a tax similar to the profession-tax.

10. It is neither possible nor desirable to allow all these people to stay for an indefinite period in institutions. Work on a permanent basis has to be found for them. A comprehensive after-care programme is required to assist in the work of rehabilitation since without such after-care the same people tend to shift back to the same institution and this results in needless waste of effort.

11. The after-care programme should concentrate on two aspects. One, the providing of temporary shelters until work is found, and the other, helping patients to find suitable and permanent work.

12. Orphan children might be adopted by deserving parents. The Gore Committee Report of After-Care Programme (Central Social Welfare Board) has made various suggestions on these lines which are worthy of serious consideration.

13. There should be much closer link between employment Exchanges and these institutions.

14. From police reports on crime and delinquency in the State we learn that over 80 percent of the cases referred to the Juvenile Courts are clearly cases of destitution. This is also borne out by the type of inmates at present found in the Certified Schools. Hence, for most of the children, destitution is the primary cause and if they are not helped in time they easily degenerate to delinquents and professional criminals. It is therefore impossible to exaggerate the urgency of undertaking the immediate establishment of institutions for destitute children. For destitute women, institutions on the basis of Avvai Home at Adyar should be started.

15. One point we would like to stress is the importance of the right approach. The beggar problem is essentially a human problem and the presence of so many beggars is a pestering sore, a blot in our society which can never be cured until the public's present attitude is replaced by a more human approach. In apprehending beggars, in the administration of beggar institutions or in working out a rehabilitation programme, workers are needed who are not only imbued with a sense of service but who are equipped with the scientific technical training and knowledge to do the work efficiently and effectively.

We should point out that most of the above recommendations can at best be temporary measures in the absence of a comprehensive social security programme. Such a social security programme can on the one hand guarantee full employment, and

on the other hand, contain safeguards against unemployment, sickness, disablement, disease and dependence. Until such time we have to embark upon a programme on the lines above suggested.

It is often agreed that more money cannot be raised from the public. Our study showed that this argument is false. Each beggar on an average earns about four annas a day, in addition to the alms he receives in kind. This means that as much as Rs. 46,500 per month is being squandered in haphazard and indiscriminate charity which at best provides only temporary relief from misery. Furthermore, we consider this sum to be very much below the actual figure, because beggars are always reluctant to reveal their true income. The real figure would be, perhaps, double this figure, even excluding alms given in kind. The enormous resource from the public need only to be channelled in proper and systematic way. This can perhaps be achieved by creating public opinion for organised charity. This campaign for organised charity can be organised by the State Government with the aid of philanthropists, voluntary social workers and students. Finances could also be raised by the Government by organising a campaign similar to that of T. B. Seals Campaign.

Begging is inescapably an act which involves two persons. It degrades as much him who gives as him who receives. At present, giving, however promiscuous, is considered a virtue while receiving is regarded a vice, if not an offence. So long as this anomalous attitude continues, a correct solution to begging cannot be found. This attitude too is self-contradictory. On the one hand people encourage begging by giving alms indiscriminately at their homes, in markets and places of worship. This giving is, for the most part, not done so much to help the beggar but to do a 'good act' and thereby smoothen the way to salvation. On the other hand, the same people despise the man who receives their alms. Thus we see the beggar problem is also fundamentally a 'giver problem'.

Beggars must first of all be rehabilitated in the public's esteem. They must be shown the respect to which as human beings they are entitled. The public must be educated to realise that beggars are as much victims of our social and economic structure, as the sick are victims of bacteria and virus, or the mentally retarded are victims of heredity or emotional pressure. What is required is not sentimentality nor a vague religious impulse to do good but a scientific and objective approach which can grapple with the problem fearlessly and effectively.

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*The cost of publication being borne by the Directors concerned.

MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

“ BEGGAR PROBLEM IN MADRAS CITY ”

(Research Programmes Committee, Planning Commission)

S. No. Name of Investigator.....

Date..... 1. Ward.....

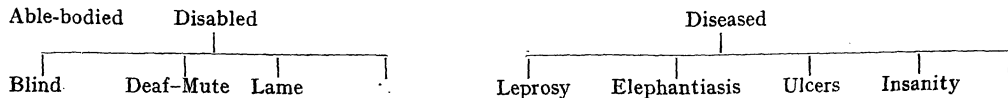
2. Location :

Hotel	Rly. Station	Bus Stop	Temple	Hospital	Pavement
Market	Residence	Park	Cinema	Choultry	Schools

3. Sex : M / F

4. Age : (Below 10); (11-20); (21-30); (31-40); (41-50); (over 50)

5. Type



6. Methods adopted : Exhibiting : Wounds / pregnancy / corpse / snakes / animals / birds / pictures / baby singing / rolling / self-mortification /

7. Observation { Health : VG / G / VB / B
} Dress : NE / D / NA

8. General {
} Remarks

THE MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

“BEGGAR PROBLEM IN MADRAS CITY”

(A study under the auspices of the Research Programmes Committee, Planning Commission)

INSTITUTIONAL BEGGARS

Serial No.

Name of Investigator

Name of the Institution

Date

I. PERSONAL

1. Name

2. Sex: M / F

3. Age

4. Religion

5. Caste

6. Place of Birth

7. Migrations

No.	Places	Causes	With whom?	How migrated?

8. Languages known

9. Accomplishments

10. General Appearance

(a) Health

(b) Clothing

II. CIVIL

1. Married/Unmarried/Separated/Divorced/Widowed

2. If separated or divorced: (a) After how many years of married life

(b) Reasons

3. Number of marriages

4. No. of children

LIVING				DEAD			
No.	Sex	Age	Occupation	No.	Sex	Age	Cause of Death

5. Where were the children before you came here ?
6. Who looked after them then ?
7. Where are they at present ?
8. Who is looking after them ?
9. Have you any dependants ?
10. If yes, their :—

No.	Relationship to you	Sex	Age	Occupation	Residence

III. FAMILY

1. Were you living with your family ?
2. If no, where were you living during rainy season ?
At other times:
3. Where did your family live before you came here ?
4. Where does it live now ?
5. Home environment

Members	Alive	Dead	Treatment meted out				Occupation
			V. Good	Good	Tolerable	Bad	
Father							
Mother							
Wife							
Brothers	1						
	2						
	3						
Sisters	1						
	2						
	3						

6. Have you any step-parent ? : Step father/Step mother ?

7. Did your family stay in one place/move about.

IV. PREVIOUS HISTORY

I.

No.	Profession before begging	Duration	Earnings per month	How spent?		Reasons for leaving the job
				Self	Family	

2. How long have you been in this profession ?

3. Causes of begging : Unemployment/Death of bread winner/Compulsion/Disablement/Calamities/
Any other.....

4. Did any one dissuade you from taking to begging : Yes/No Father/Mother/Relatives.

5. Have you any friends or relatives who are also in this profession ? Yes/No

6. If yes, their :—

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Relationship to you	Residence

7. Have you any well-to-do relatives ? Yes/No

8. If yes, their :—

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Relationship to you	Profession	Residence	Income	Help sought	Results

9. Did you seek help from any other quarters ? Yes/No Results.

V. DISABILITIES**1. Disabilities :**

Nature	Cause	By whom?

2. Diseases :

No.	Diseases	Treatment		Duration	Expenses incurred from		Results of the treatment	Reasons for discontinuing treatment
		Govt.	Private		Savings	Loan		

VI. EDUCATION

Schooling at present		Class last attended	Reasons for leaving
Yes	No.		

VII. OCCUPATION

No.	Places frequented	Reasons for the choice	Methods adopted	Time of begging

2. From whom/where you received more alms ?

Men/Women/Residential quarters/Religious Centres/Business localities.

3. Do you know of places where a large number received alms ? Yes/No**4. If yes, Name of the places** 1. 2. 3. 4.**5. What was your reaction towards those who refused you alms ?** Persisting/Cursing/Hating/Indifference.

VIII. LEISURE AND HABITS

1. How did you spend your time when you were not begging ?

Gambling	Cards	Sleeping	Gossiping	Games & Recreation	Any Other

2. Habits

Habits	Family Members	Friends	Self	Did you learn from others ?	From whom ?
Smoking					
Drinking					
Gambling					
Sex					

3. Did you belong to any group ? Yes/No

4. If yes, purpose of the group ?

5. How did you join ?

6. Do you worship any God ?

7. Who looked after you when you were sick ?

IX. INSTITUTION

1. Had you been in an Institution before ? Yes/No

2. If yes :—

Name of the Institution	Duration	Training received	Reasons for leaving	Remarks

3. When were you admitted in this Institution ?

4. Nature of admission. Voluntary/compulsory.

5. Do you like this place :—

	Food	Clothing	Shelter	Work	Treatment	Relationship with Colleagues	Relationship with Authorities	Remarks
V. Good								
Good								
Tolerable								
Bad								
V. Bad								

6. Do you have any suggestions to make this Home more useful ? Yes/No

7. If yes, 1. 2. 3. 4.

X. FUTURE PLANS

1. When you leave this institution will you take to begging ? Yes/No

2. Reasons.

3. If not, what else will you do to earn your living ?

4. Are you prepared to do some work, if secured ? Yes/No

5. If no, reasons ?

6. If yes, what type of work would you prefer ?

1. 2. 3. 4.

7. What work do you know ? 1. 2.

3. 4. 5.

8. Did you learn them in the institution ?

9. Would you like your children to beg ? Yes/No

10. If no, do you have any plans for them ? Yes/No

11. If yes, what plans ?

XI. GENERAL REMARKS

THE MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

“BEGGAR PROBLEM IN MADRAS CITY”

(A study under the auspices of the Research Programmes Committee, Planning Commission)

NON-INSTITUTIONAL BEGGARS

Serial No.

Name of Investigator

Place

Date

I. PERSONAL

1. Name

2. Sex : M / F

3. Age

4. Religion

5. Caste

6. Place of Birth

7. Migrations

No.	Places	Causes	With whom	How migrated

8. Languages known

9. Accomplishments

10. General Appearance

(a) Health

(b) Clothing

1. Married/Unmarried/Separated/Divorced/Widowed

2. If separated or divorced : (a) After how many years of married life

(b) Reasons

3. Number of marriages

4. No. of children

LIVING				DEAD			
No.	Sex	Age	Occupation	No.	Sex	Age	Cause of Death

5. Where are the children at present ?
6. Who is looking after them ?
7. Have you any dependants ?
8. If yes, their :—

No.	Relationship to you	Sex	Age	Occupation	Residence

III. FAMILY

1. Are you living with your family at present ?
2. If no. where are you living during rainy season ?
3. At other times ?
4. Where does your family live ?
5. Home environment :

Members		Alive	Dead	Treatment meted out				Occupation
				V. Good	Good	Tolerable	Bad	
Father								
Mother								
Wife								
Brothers	1							
	2							
	3							
Sisters	1							
	2							
	3							

6. Have you any step-parent ? Step father/Step mother ?
7. Does your family stay in one place/move about ?

IV. PREVIOUS HISTORY

I.

No.	Profession before begging	Duration	Earning per month	How spent		Reasons for leaving the job
				Self	Family	

2. How long have you been in this profession ?

3. Causes of begging : Unemployment/Death of bread winner/Compulsion/Disablement/Calamities/
Any other.....

4. Did any one dissuade you from taking to begging ? : Father/Mother/Relatives.

5. Have you any friends or relatives who are also in this profession ? : Yes/No.

6. If yes, their :—

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Relationship to you	Residence

7. Have you any well-to-do relatives ? : Yes/No.

8. If yes, their :—

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Relationship to you	Profession	Residence	Income	Help sought	Results

9. Did you seek help from any other quarters ? : Yes / No

V. DISABILITIES**1. Disabilities :**

Nature	Cause	By whom?

2. Diseases :

No.	Diseases	Treatment		Duration	Expenses incurred from		Results of the treatment	Reasons for discontinuing treatment
		Govt.	Private		Savings	Loan		

VI. EDUCATION

Schooling at present		Class last attended	Reasons for leaving
Yes	No.		

VII. OCCUPATION**1. The Present Occupation :**

No.	Places frequented	Reasons for the choice	Methods adopted	Time of begging

2. From whom/where you receive more alms ?

Men/Women/Residential quarters/Religious Centres/Business localities.

3. Are you aware of places where a large number receive alms ? Yes/No**4. Name of the places** 1. 2. 3. 4.**5. What is your reaction towards those who refuse alms ?** Persisting/Cursing/Hatin Indifference.

6. Average daily earnings :—

During	MAXIMUM		MINIMUM	
	Kind	Cash	Kind	Cash
Holidays				
Other days				
Festivals				
Monsoon				

7. Other sources of income? Yes/No.

8. If yes, amount and source

9. Expenditure :—

Item	Daily	Monthly
Food ..		
Chewing ..		
Smoking ..		
Clothing ..		
Shelter ..		
Cinema ..		
Puzzles } Race Lotteries }	..	

10. Savings and Indebtedness

Savings			Indebtedness				
Amount	What do You do with it ?	Rate of interest	Amount	Why incurred	How incurred	From whom incurred	Remarks

11. What do you do with surplus?: Food/Clothing

VIII. LEISURE AND HABITS

1. How do you spend your time when not begging?

Gambling	Cards	Sleeping	Gossiping	Games & Recreation	Any Other

2. Habits

Habits	Family Members	Friends	Self	Did you learn from others	From whom
Smoking					
Drinking					
Gambling					
Sex					

3. Do you belong to any group?

4. Purpose of the group?

5. How did you join?

6. Do you worship any God?

7. Who looks after you when you are sick?

IX. INSTITUTIONS

Ever been to a Home	Name of the Home	Duration	Treatment	Training	Reasons for leaving you	Would like to be in a home	Why

X. FUTURE PLANS

1. Do you like begging? Yes/No

2. Reasons?

3. If no, what else will you do to earn your living ?
4. Are you prepared to do some work, if secured ? Yes/No.
5. If yes, what type of work would you prefer ?

1.	2.	3.	4.
----	----	----	----
6. What work do you know ?

1.	2.	3.	4.
----	----	----	----
7. Would you like your children to beg ? Yes/No.
8. If no, what are your plans for them ?

XI. GENERAL REMARKS

