

# Child Begging As an Exploitative Labor Practice: A Study Of Begging Children in Unlikely, Antananarivo, Madagascar

Ramiadamahefa Tojoniaina<sup>1</sup>, Solofomiarana Rapanoel Bruno Allain<sup>1</sup>, Andrianjary Myriam<sup>2</sup>, Rahajamanana Jasmin<sup>3</sup>, Ratiarimananjatovo Narindra<sup>4</sup>, Ratsimandisa Haritiana Zo<sup>5</sup>, Koto-Te-Nyiwa Ngbolua<sup>6,7</sup>, Robijaona Rahelivololoniaina Baholy<sup>8,9</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Doctoral School of Human and Social Sciences, University of Antananarivo, Antananarivo, Madagascar

<sup>2</sup>Institute of Higher Education Antsirabe Vakinankaratra, University of Antananarivo, Antananarivo, Madagascar

<sup>3</sup>Soavinandriana Itasy Higher Education Institute, University of Antananarivo, Antananarivo, Madagascar

<sup>4</sup>Higher Normal School, University of Antananarivo, Antananarivo, Madagascar

<sup>5</sup>Doctoral School of Inter-Epistemological Sciences, Educational Sciences, Antananarivo, Madagascar

<sup>6</sup>Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, University of Kinshasa, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo

<sup>7</sup>National Scientific Council, Ministry of Scientific Research and Technological Innovation, Democratic Republic of the Congo

<sup>8</sup>Engineering and Industrial Process, Agricultural and Food Systems, University of Antananarivo, Antananarivo, Madagascar

<sup>9</sup>Polytechnic High School of Antananarivo, University of Antananarivo, Antananarivo, Madagascar

## **Abstract:**

*This study examines child begging in Analakely, a neighborhood of the Malagasy capital, by exploring the socio-economic, cultural, and familial dynamics that perpetuate this practice. Through daily interviews with children and adults over five days, a deductive approach was used to test hypotheses based on Bourdieu's theory of genetic structuralism. The analysis reveals that children are often introduced to begging at a young age, internalizing values such as family solidarity, resourcefulness, and dignity in poverty, which reinforce their commitment to this practice. Social networks within these communities play a crucial role by providing children with the resources needed to survive and instilling in them a perception of begging as a socially and economically viable activity. This research highlights the need for an integrated and comprehensive approach to address child begging by targeting the underlying causes of this phenomenon.*

**Keywords:** Child begging – Genetic structuralism – Family values – Socio-economic dynamics – Analakely.

## **I. Introduction**

Begging is a complex social phenomenon affecting many cities worldwide, particularly in developing countries, and raises issues of public order and social participation. Although often viewed as a problem that needs to be eradicated (Colombo & Reynaud, 2020), begging serves as a survival strategy for marginalized and impoverished social groups (Zubkova, 2013). The income generated typically barely covers basic survival needs, even when supplemented by social aid (Damon, 1997). Attempts to criminalize begging, such as the ban in Geneva in 2008, have only further marginalized those affected without solving the problem (Colombo & Reynaud, 2020). Recently, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that criminalizing harmless begging infringes on the right to privacy (Rigaux, 2021). These perspectives highlight the need to rethink the approach to begging, focusing on collective well-being conditions rather than merely regulating public space (Damon, 1997).

In Madagascar, begging is a widespread activity, often performed by children (Ravololomanga & Schlemmer, 1994). Whether alone, in groups, accompanied by an adult, or with their families, these children are responsible for working and earning money each day. Globally, it is extremely difficult, if possible, to determine the exact number of begging children. However, a 2006 UNICEF estimate suggested there are several tens of millions of children living or working on the streets. In reality, it is primarily an urban issue.

The concept of a begging child represents a complex and multifaceted reality. A begging child refers to someone under 18 for whom begging is a primary means of subsistence or survival (Gnanou, 2017). These children face numerous challenges, including exposure to violence, exploitation, and extremely precarious living conditions. In 2020, of the 2,000 beggars registered by the Urban Commune of Antananarivo (CUA), 40% were children, highlighting the significant issue of child begging in the capital, with around 800 children involved. To better understand this phenomenon, the study focuses on begging in Analakely, Antananarivo. Child labor is predominantly found in developing countries, suggesting poverty as a primary cause (Ballet et al., 2010). In Analakely, begging children represent a visible and vulnerable segment of the urban population.

As a result, they have increasingly become a desirable source of information, not only because they have been for many years the less popular voice (see for instance, Armstrong, 2011; Ward, 1997; Davie and Galloway, 1996), but also because they are the most familiar with the motives that are likely to trigger children's emotional and behavioural difficulties. The relationship between parents and professionals in the United Kingdom has been influenced by many reports which have drawn attention to the potential of collaboration for encouraging children's learning and development. (Gadour, A. 2011)

Children with emotional and behavioural difficulties can be defined as those who have difficulties in creating satisfactory relationships, and who have very serious problems of adjustment (Gadour, 2006). They are characteristically unhappy and unable to share or take

turns; they may be isolated or seek to use violence to solve problems or get their own way. (Gadour, A. 2009)

Begging can be seen as an extreme form of child exploitation in certain cases (Ballet et al., 2010). Anakely is a known area for its intense commercial activity and high population density. Begging, beyond being a mere subsistence activity, is part of a process of social reproduction where children mimic the economic and social behaviors of their environment. This research aims to explore child begging as a result of the mediation of social habits. Thus, why do they ask for money on the streets of Anakely? Are they attending school or not? What is their economic situation? What type of family do they come from?

## **II. Reserach Methods**

For this study on child begging in Anakely, a hypothetico-deductive approach was employed, and theoretical hypotheses were formulated and tested through observation and data collection. Two main hypotheses were explored: first, that begging children with begging parents are more likely to perpetuate this practice due to internalized dispositions, and second, that the living context, including street life, contributes to the formation of a habitus that supports the reproduction of begging. Bourdieu's concept of genetic structuralism helps understand these dynamics by illustrating how social conditions shape the habitus of children.

A quantitative methodology was adopted to provide numerical data using statistical information from questionnaire surveys, and these data were subsequently subjected to association tests, including the chi-square test and Cramér's V. Due to the difficulty in reaching begging children, a non-probability convenience sampling method was used, interviewing individuals until a sample of 50 begging children, 50 non-begging children, and 25 begging adults was obtained. The survey was conducted over five days at various locations in Anakely, offering a diverse perspective on the social realities of beggars.

## **III. Results and Discussion**

For the study, association tests were conducted to identify key factors in the reproduction of begging. The analyses focused on:

- The relationship between a child begging and having parents who beg
- The relationship between child begging and living on the streets.

Most of the children observed in Anakely were introduced to begging at a young age, reflecting the deep impact of this practice within their families. Early involvement is often driven by urgent economic needs, with parents viewing begging as a necessity for family survival and integrating their children early as contributors to income. Since the variables are qualitative, statistical calculations, including the chi-square test, Cramér's V, and the calculation of the effect size, are needed to assess the strength of the relationship between the variables. The chi-square test helps determine if there is a significant association between two qualitative variables by comparing observed data to expected data under the assumption of independence

**a. Hypothesis 1: Begging children whose parents are also beggars are more likely to continue this practice due to the dispositions they have internalized.**

To determine if having begging parents leads to child begging, it is necessary to compare the variables "Begging Child" and "Begging Parents." The data collected from the survey are as follows:

**Table 1.** Relationship between child begging and having begging parents

	Begging children	Non-begging children	Subtotal
Begging parents	39	5	44
Non-begging parents	11	45	56
TOTAL	50	50	100

The table indicates a presumptive significant association between child begging and having begging parents: 78% of begging children have begging parents, compared to 10% of non-begging children. This suggests that the two variables are related. To validate this hypothesis, an association test will be conducted with a 5% error threshold, assuming the variables are independent (null hypothesis). The following steps will verify this initial hypothesis, which states that begging children with begging parents are more likely to continue this practice due to the behaviors and attitudes they have internalized.

**b. Chi-Square Test**

➤ **Calculating Theoretical Frequencies**

Calculating theoretical frequencies in the chi-square test measures the deviation between observed and expected values to assess whether two variables are dependent.

$$\text{Theoretical Frequency} = \frac{\text{Product of margings}}{\text{Total Frequency}}$$

**Table 2.** Theoretical frequencies

	Begging children	Non-begging children
Begging parents	22	22
Non-begging parents	28	28

The discrepancies between the observed and theoretical frequencies reveal a strong association between child begging and parental begging. There are significantly more begging children among those whose parents are also beggars (39 observed versus 22 expected) and significantly fewer non-begging children (5 observed versus 22 expected). This difference indicates that the begging status of parents strongly influences that of their children.

➤ **Calculation of Simple Deviations**

The simple deviation in a chi-square test measures the difference between observed and theoretical frequencies for each cell, helping to identify influential or potentially

dependent variables. Only cells with positive values can indicate a dependency between the variables.

*Simple deviation = Observed frequencies – Theoretical frequencies*

**Table 3.** Simple Deviations

	Begging children	Non-begging children
Begging parents	+17	-17
Non-begging parents	-17	+17

According to this table, a positive deviation of 17 indicates that there are 17 more beggng children among those whose parents beg than expected, suggesting a higher propensity for beggng in these children. Conversely, a negative deviation of -17 reveals that there are 17 fewer non-beggng children than expected among those whose parents beg.

➤ **Calculation of Weighted Deviations**

The calculation of weighted deviations aims to obtain the distance from independence,  $D^2$ . This measure is crucial for determining the existence of an association between two qualitative variables. A low value of  $D^2$  indicates that the variables are close to independence.

$$\text{Weighted Deviation for Each Cell} = \frac{\text{Simple Deviation}^2}{\text{Theoretical Frequency}}$$

**Table 4.** Weighted Deviations

	Begging children	Non-begging children	Subtotal
Begging parents	13,136	13,136	26,272
Non-begging parents	10,321	10,321	20,642
TOTAL	23,457	23,457	$D^2 = 46,914$

➤ **For Begging Parents**

The weighted deviations for both beggng and non-beggng children are 13.136. This indicates that the proportion of children with beggng parents is observed similarly to the theoretically expected proportion, but with weighting that accounts for the significant differences between observed and theoretical frequencies.

➤ **For non-beggng parents**

The weighted deviations for both beggng and non-beggng children are 10.321, indicating a similarity in the weighting of observed deviations compared to theoretical expectations for this category of parents.

$D^2$ , calculated from the weighted deviations, measures the distance from independence between the variables. Here,  $D^2$  is 46.914, indicating a degree of dependence between the variables "children's begging status" and "parents' begging status."

➤ **Calculation of Degrees of Freedom (df)**

Before comparing  $D^2$  to  $\chi^2$ , it is essential to calculate the degrees of freedom (df). This allows determining the critical value of  $\chi^2$  in the Pearson chi-square table at the 5% significance level, representing the maximum acceptable error risk.

$$df = (\text{Number of Rows} - 1) \times (\text{Number of Columns} - 1)$$

Thus, the degrees of freedom (df) are calculated as follows:  $(2 - 1) \times (2 - 1) = 1$ . Consulting the Pearson chi-square table, the critical value of  $\chi^2$  at the 5% significance level is found to be 3.84.

Performing a chi-square test on our table, we found that the distance from independence  $D^2 = 46.914$  is significantly higher than  $\chi^2 = 3.84$  (for  $df = 1$  and a 5% significance level). Therefore, we have strong reasons to reject the null hypothesis  $H_0$  and consider the two variables "begging parents" and "begging children" as associated or dependent. Thus, we can conclude that there is a relationship between the two variables.

**c. Cramér's V**

The chi-square test indicates whether variables are related with a certain degree of certainty but does not measure the strength of the relationship. To evaluate the intensity of the association, Cramér's V is calculated, which ranges from 0 to 1. A high V value indicates a strong dependence between the variables, while a low V suggests a relationship close to independence. To determine this measure, proceed as follows:

$$\text{Cramér's } V = \sqrt{\frac{D^2}{N \times \min \{\text{number of rows} - 1\} \text{ or } \{\text{number of columns} - 1\}}}$$

$$\text{Cramér's } V = \sqrt{\frac{46,914}{100 \times \min \{2 - 1\} \text{ or } \{2 - 1\}}}$$

$$\text{Cramér's } V = \sqrt{0,47}$$

$$\text{Cramér's } V = 0,69$$

The Cramér's V coefficient, calculated at approximately 0.69, indicates a significant association between the variables, as a value above 0.2 is considered substantial. Thus, with a Cramér's V of 0.69, we can conclude that there is a strong association between the begging status of children and that of their parents in the studied sample.

#### d. Maximum Deviation Percentage or MDP

After evaluating the strength of the association between the variables, it is crucial to determine if their relationship is significant. This involves focusing only on the cells with a positive, simple deviation in the simple deviation table, indicating a notable deviation from the expected values.

##### *Maximum Deviation Percentage for “Begging Children” – “Begging Parents”*

###### ➤ *Calculation of the Maximum Deviation*

*Maximum deviation = min between {row margin or column margin} – Expected frequency*

$$\text{Maximum deviation} = 44 - 22$$

$$\text{Maximum deviation} = 22$$

###### ➤ *Calculation of the Maximum Deviation Percentage (MDP)*

$$\text{MDP} = \frac{\text{Simple deviation}}{\text{maximum deviation}} \times 100$$

$$\text{MDP} = \frac{17}{22} \times 100$$

$$\text{MDP} = 77,27 \%$$

##### *Maximum Deviation Percentage for “Non-Begging Children” – “Non-Begging Parents*

###### ➤ *Calculation of the Maximum Deviation*

*Maximum deviation = min {row margin, column margin} – Expected Frequency*

$$\text{Maximum deviation} = 50 - 28$$

$$\text{Maximum deviation} = 22$$

###### ➤ *Calculation of the Maximum Deviation Percentage (MDP)*

$$\text{MDP} = \frac{\text{Simple deviation}}{\text{Maximum deviation}} \times 100$$

$$\text{MDP} = \frac{17}{22} \times 100$$

$$\text{MDP} = 77,27 \%$$

In summary, the notable associations are: "Begging Children – Begging Parents" with MDP = 77.27% and "Non-Begging Children – Non-Begging Parents" with MDP = 77.27%. In other words, begging parents socially produce begging children. Therefore, Hypothesis 01 shows a positive trend.

***Hypothesis 02: The living context, including life on the streets, contributes to the formation of a habitus that promotes the perpetuation of begging.***

The data from the following table were subjected to a chi-square test to assess whether living on the streets influences child begging.

**Table 5.** Relation between Child Begging and Living on the Streets

	Begging children	Non-begging children	Subtotal
<b>Living on the Streets</b>	45	13	58
<b>Not Living on the Streets</b>	5	37	42
<b>TOTAL</b>	50	50	100

According to the table, among the 58 children living on the streets, 45 are beggars, representing a high proportion of 77.6%. In contrast, only 13 children living on the streets are not beggars (22.4%). Among the children not living on the streets, the majority, 37, are not beggars (88.1%). These data suggest a strong association between living on the streets and child begging. Most children living on the streets are beggars, while those not living on the streets are mainly non-beggars. A chi-square test is needed to confirm this association statistically.

**e. Chi-Square Test**

➤ **Calculation of Theoretical Frequencies**

$$\text{Expected frequency} = \frac{\text{Product of margins}}{\text{Total number of observations}}$$

**Table 6.** Theoretical Frequencies

	Begging children	Non-begging children
<b>Living on the Streets</b>	29	29
<b>Not Living on the Streets</b>	21	21

The data in this table show that there are significantly more begging children living on the streets (45) than theoretically expected (29). Conversely, fewer non-begging children are living on the streets (13) than theoretically expected (29). For children not living on the streets, there are far fewer begging children (5) than theoretically expected (21). The observed number of begging children (45) is considerably higher than what would be expected if begging were independent of the living situation (29). This suggests that living on the streets is strongly associated with a higher likelihood of begging. The observed number of non-begging children (13) is much lower than expected (29), reinforcing the idea that children living on the streets are much more likely to beg.

➤ **Calculation of Simple Deviations**

$$\text{Simple deviation} = \text{Observed frequencies} - \text{Expected frequencies}$$



**Table 7.** Simple Deviations

	Begging children	Non-begging children
<b>Living on the Streets</b>	+16	-16
<b>Not Living on the Streets</b>	-16	+16

A positive deviation of 16 means there are 16 more begging children than expected among those living on the streets. This positive deviation indicates a higher tendency for street-living children to beg. A negative deviation of -16 means there are 16 fewer non-begging children than expected among those living on the streets. This negative deviation indicates a lower tendency for street-living children not to beg.

➤ **Calculation of Weighted Deviations**

$$\text{Weighted deviation} = \frac{\text{Simple deviation}^2}{\text{Expected frequency}}$$

**Table 8.** Weighted Deviations

	Begging children	Non-begging children	Subtotal
<b>Living on the Streets</b>	8,83	8,83	17,66
<b>Not Living on the Streets</b>	12,19	12,19	24,38
<b>TOTAL</b>	21,02	21,02	D <sup>2</sup> = 42,04

➤ **For Children Living on the Streets**

*Begging Children:* The weighted deviation of 8.83 indicates a significant contribution to the chi-square statistic, as the number of begging children living on the streets is much higher than expected.

*Non-Begging Children:* The weighted deviation is also 8.83, showing that the number of non-begging children living on the streets is much lower than expected.

➤ **For Children Not Living on the Streets**

*Begging Children:* The weighted deviation of 12.19 shows that the number of begging children not living on the streets is much lower than expected.

*Non-Begging Children:* The weighted deviation of 12.19 indicates that the number of non-begging children not living on the streets is much higher than expected.

Indeed, the total sum of weighted deviations, denoted D<sup>2</sup>, is 42.04. If this value is high compared to  $\chi^2$ , then the differences between observed and expected frequencies are significant enough to reject the null hypothesis of independence between the variables.

➤ **Calculation of Degrees of Freedom(df)**

$$\text{Degrees of Freedom (df)} = (\text{Number of Rows} - 1) \times (\text{Number of Columns} - 1) \quad d) = (2 - 1) \times (2 - 1)$$

$$df = 1$$

In performing the chi-square test on our table, we found that the distance to independence,  $D^2 = 42.04$ , is significantly greater than  $\chi^2 = 3.84$  (for  $ddl = 1$  and a 5% error threshold). Therefore, we have good reason to reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and consider the two variables "begging child" and "living on the streets" as associated or dependent.

#### i. Cramér's V

$$\text{Cramér's V} = \sqrt{\frac{D^2}{N \times \min \{ \text{Nb of rows} - 1 \} \text{ or } \{ \text{nb of columns} - 1 \}}}$$

$$\text{Cramér's V} = \sqrt{\frac{42,04}{100 \times \min \{ 2 - 1 \} \text{ or } \{ 2 - 1 \}}}$$

$$\text{Cramér's V} = \sqrt{0,42}$$

$$\text{Cramér's V} = 0,65$$

The analysis shows a strong intensity of association, as the Cramér's V coefficient exceeds the average value (Cramér's V of  $0.65 > 0.2$ ). This high value indicates a strong association between living on the streets and the likelihood of being a begging child in our study. It underscores the crucial importance of the living environment in determining the social conditions of children, which could significantly influence interventions and social policies aimed at supporting vulnerable children.

#### f. Maximum Deviation Percentage (MDP)

##### *Maximum Deviation Percentage for "Begging Child" – "Living on the Streets"*

###### ➤ *Calculation of Maximum Deviation*

$$\text{Maximum Deviation} = \text{mmin}(\{\text{row margin or column margin}\}) - \text{Expected Frequency}$$

$$\text{Maximum Deviation} = 50 - 29$$

$$\text{Maximum Deviation} = 21$$

###### ➤ *Calculation of the Maximum Deviation Percentage Maximum (MDP)*

$$\text{MDP} = \frac{\text{Simple Deviation}}{\text{Maximum Deviation}} \times 100$$

$$\text{MDP} = \frac{16}{21} \times 100$$

$$\text{MDP} = 76,19 \%$$

##### *Maximum Deviation Percentage for "Non-Begging Child" – "Not Living on the Streets"*

###### ➤ *Calculation of Maximum Deviation*

$$\text{Maximum Deviation} = \text{mmin}(\{\text{row margin or column margin}\}) - \text{Expected Frequency}$$

$$\text{Maximum Deviation} = 42 - 21$$

$$\text{Maximum Deviation} = 21$$

###### ➤ *Calculation of the Maximum Deviation Percentage (MDP)*

$$\text{MDP} = \frac{\text{Simple Deviation}}{\text{Maximum Deviation}} \times 100$$

$$MDP = \frac{16}{21} \times 100$$

$$MDP = 76,19 \%$$

In summary, the notable attractive combinations are "Begging Child—Living on the Streets" with an MDP of 76.19% and "Non-Begging Child—Not Living on the Streets" with an MDP of 76.19%. In other words, living on the streets significantly influences the continuation of begging. Thus, Hypothesis 02 also shows a positive trend.

## Discussions

### a. Early Socialization of Begging by Begging Parents: Processes and Impact

Early socialization refers to the process by which individuals acquire the norms, values, attitudes, and behaviors of their culture from the earliest stages of life, often during early childhood (Hay, 2019). As suggested by Emile Durkheim in 1922, early sociologists defined socialization as an educational process from the beginning of the 20th century. However, many psychological approaches, which are less receptive to this perspective, emphasize group integration as the goal of socialization. Caregiving practices would facilitate this goal during early childhood (Neyrand, 2013).

Early socialization plays a crucial role in the development of individuals' social and professional identities (Lemieux, 1993). This process begins in childhood, where children develop a "*social sense*" that allows them to understand and navigate the complexities of social interactions and hierarchies (Zarca, 1999). In Analakely, children under one year old, carried on their elders' or mothers' backs, are often involved in begging, reflecting the impact of extreme poverty and the necessity of drawing attention to earn money (Ricaldi Coquelin, 2010). Early socialization in this context profoundly influences identity formation, shaped by various factors, including gender and social class (Zarca, 1999). The father's role in this socialization is particularly significant for the development of the child's gender identity (Zaouche Gaudron, 1997). Socialization is a continuous process, allowing individuals to adapt to social and professional changes throughout their lives (Lemieux, 1993). This social construction of reality profoundly affects identity formation, although individual subjectivity also plays an important role (Qribi, 2010).

### b. Intergenerational Transmission of Begging: Family Dynamics and Cultural Contexts

The intergenerational transmission of begging is a complex phenomenon influenced by various social and spatial factors. Academic failure is identified as a primary channel for this transmission (Dollé, 2008). While early intervention programs have proven effective in improving the psychosocial development of children and parents, they have not significantly reduced poverty itself (Bouchard, 1989). The spatial dimension also plays a crucial role in socialization processes, affecting social trajectories and intergenerational transmission through residential strategies of higher classes and the formation of gendered dispositions (Cayouette-Remblière et al., 2019).

Research indicates that family interactions are pivotal in transmitting cultural norms and values. Siblings, especially in blended families, can act as "*cultural transmitters*" (Octobre & Berthomier, 2012). The relationship between parents and childcare professionals also impacts the transmission of values, with social class influencing these interactions (Geay, 2014). Various family models and educational approaches exist, mainly linked to parents' ideological preferences rather than social groups. The success of value transmission within families depends more on the type of attitudes and values transmitted than on the parenting style used (Percheron, 1985).

For begging children in Analakely, interactions with begging family members, including parents and siblings, create a rich context for the transmission of cultural norms and values. This suggests that children in these situations are raised in this environment and have little choice but to imitate and adopt the behaviors they observe. Early socialization thus plays a crucial role in the intergenerational transmission of begging. Children exposed to begging from a young age internalize the behaviors of their parents and authority figures through observation and imitation, making begging a legitimate and necessary form of work integrated into their daily lives.

### **c. Begging is a Normal and Accepted Activity for Children in Analakely**

Growing up in an environment where begging is not only common but also accepted, begging children in Analakely come to see this activity as a standard job. They observe their parents starting each day with the same determination as any worker heading to their job, even though their workplace is a busy street or a crowded market. For these children, begging becomes a crucial responsibility and an essential contribution to their family's economic well-being. They view this activity not only as a means of survival but also as a demanding job requiring skills, resilience, and an understanding of social dynamics. Although informal and often stigmatized, begging is integrated into their daily lives as a legitimate and respected activity, shaping their work ethic around necessity, perseverance, and family solidarity.

The 2008 anti-begging law in Geneva, aimed at addressing the perceived influx of Roma, led to increased hardship for beggars rather than eliminating the practice (Colombo & Reynaud, 2020). The law's ineffectiveness stems from its treatment of begging as a public order issue rather than addressing the need for social participation. In the post-war Soviet Union, begging persisted as a survival strategy for impoverished groups despite state efforts to control it (Zubkova, 2013). These studies highlight that begging is not merely a public nuisance but a complex socio-economic phenomenon tied to religious practices, urban dynamics, and social exclusion.

### **d. Transmission of Norms and Values within Begging Families**

The perception of work among begging children is heavily influenced by their experience of begging, which is often linked to poverty and sociocultural factors. Talibé children, entrusted to Quranic teachers, are frequently compelled to beg to meet their own needs and those of their teachers (Ella et al., 2022). This practice, which focuses more on exploitation than on education, is rooted in religious beliefs and the trust parents place in

Quranic teachers (Ella et al., 2022). Household poverty is often cited as a key factor in child labor, although this relationship is complex and sometimes ambiguous (Boutin, 2012). Child labor can be seen as a household strategy to mitigate income variability in the face of economic vulnerability (Boutin, 2012). This situation can lead to a vicious cycle of intergenerational poverty (Bhukuth, 2004).

Early socialization in begging creates a difficult cycle to break, where children, absorbing family practices and values, are led to replicate this activity in adulthood. Growing up in an environment where begging is normalized, they develop behaviors and attitudes that reinforce their perception of this practice as a legitimate means of survival. This internalization of values such as resilience, resourcefulness, and family solidarity can limit their aspirations to explore other socio-economic opportunities, fostering a sense of fatalism about their social position. The habitus of begging children is formed through repeated experiences and daily family interactions.

Early socialization plays a crucial role in shaping children's dispositions and values. Parental educational practices influence the internalization of norms and children's self-esteem (Bouissou, 1996). In middle and upper-class families, children learn to plan and anticipate, whereas in working-class environments, they develop a more immediate relationship with time (Henri-Panabiere et al., 2019). Child labor can contribute to acquiring important skills and knowledge, but its relevance depends on the socio-economic context (Invernizzi, 2007). Relationships between parents and childcare providers are influenced by social background, creating specific affinities between certain social groups and types of care (Geay, 2014). These studies highlight the importance of social factors in the transmission of norms and the formation of dispositions in children.

Thus, the transmission of norms and values within begging families in Analakely is crucial for perpetuating begging as a socially accepted practice. Family solidarity is a fundamental value within these families. Malagasy begging children, also known as "*Quatr'mis*" (*because they often beg in groups*), learn from a very young age the importance of supporting their family members, whether through sharing resources obtained from begging or providing emotional support during times of difficulty. In these families, each member contributes to the collective survival by sharing the resources acquired through begging.

Parents send their children out to beg early in the morning along the streets of the capital, Antananarivo, particularly in traffic jams where motorists are the main targets. By presenting themselves as needy and hungry, these children, often accompanied by a baby on their back or an elderly blind or disabled person, frequently manage to earn money daily. These "*Quatr'mis*" face problems with their parents or other adult family members if they do not collect some money to feed the family by midday.

From a young age, begging children observe how the funds they collect are used to meet their family's essential needs, learning that begging is a collective effort for family welfare. They develop resourcefulness, learning to maximize begging earnings and manage resources creatively. Dignity in poverty is a key value passed down by parents, providing children with a sense of pride and self-esteem despite economic hardships. However, this dignity can sometimes be compromised when the funds are spent on vices such as alcohol or

tobacco. In some cases, begging may be seen as an extreme form of child exploitation (Ballet et al., 2010).

Research on child begging reveals complex socio-cultural and economic factors driving this practice. In Madagascar, most begging children are exploited by their families rather than living on the streets, with varying levels of coercion depending on age (Ballet et al., 2010). Similarly, in Benin, poverty and religious beliefs lead parents to send their children to Quranic schools, where they are often compelled to beg (Ella et al., 2022). The practice of child begging is deeply rooted in family values and cultural norms, with children developing an emotional attachment to begging by internalizing principles of solidarity, resourcefulness, and dignity in poverty. This complex interplay of factors makes combating child begging a challenging social issue (Ella et al., 2022).

For Malagasy begging children, begging is much more than just an economic activity; it is deeply embedded in their identity and family values. Solidarity, resourcefulness, and dignity in poverty are central principles that shape their commitment to begging. They develop an emotional attachment to this practice, viewing it as a crucial means of maintaining family bonds, preserving family unity, and upholding community traditions.

#### **e. The Transmission of Social Capital**

Research on child begging in Antananarivo reveals that most begging children are exploited by their families rather than living on the streets (Ballet et al., 2010). The study identifies three categories of begging children based on age and parental coercion, ranging from physical violence for the youngest to psychological manipulation for the older ones. Despite economic challenges, family structures in Antananarivo have remained stable over time, with a trend toward smaller nuclear families (Antoine et al., 2008). However, employment has increasingly become precarious for both men and women. The perception of beggars as dangerous persists in legal discourse, as evidenced by the continued use of the concept of "*dangerousness*" in laws concerning vagrancy and begging (Bertrand, 2003). These studies highlight the complex interaction of family dynamics, economic factors, and social perceptions in the perpetuation of begging across generations in Antananarivo.

In begging families, the transmission of social capital is crucial for maintaining begging practices across generations. According to Pierre Bourdieu, social capital encompasses the resources and advantages derived from individuals' and families' social networks and relationships. Begging families often establish extensive networks within their communities, providing essential support for their survival and ensuring the continuity of begging. In Senegal, the persistence of child begging among Quranic students (*talibés*) is partly explained by its social function, allowing urban donors to fulfill their religious charity obligations (Ndiaye, 2015). In Benin, poverty drives parents to send their children to Quranic schools, where they are compelled to beg for their teacher and themselves (Ella et al., 2022). These studies underscore the importance of understanding local contexts and social networks to address child begging, as well as the need to consider the perspectives of all involved stakeholders.

From a young age, begging children in Analakely are introduced to social networks by their parents, learning to interact with various individuals, including other begging families, merchants, charitable organizations, and regular passersby. This immersion teaches them how to navigate a sometimes hostile environment, optimize donations, and choose the best times and places to beg. By observing and mimicking their parents' strategies, they acquire crucial survival skills. Strong community ties provide a safety net and reinforce the perception that begging is legitimate. By integrating these practices and values, children perpetuate the cycle of begging, with a daily and often unconscious transmission of social capital, making it difficult to break away from this practice.

Research on child begging in West Africa reveals a complex interplay of socio-economic and cultural factors. This practice, particularly prevalent in urban areas, has become a persistent social issue in Senegal since the rural exodus caused by the 1970s drought. The perpetuation of child begging is reinforced by public donations, which are rooted in religious, humanitarian, and mystical beliefs. Children raised in this environment internalize these practices, making it challenging to break the cycle of begging. This intergenerational transmission of social capital mirrors findings on the transfer of consumption practices from mothers to daughters, suggesting that children exposed to begging are likely to replicate these behaviors in adulthood.

Extensive social networks provide begging families with crucial access to information about available resources, safe locations, and effective methods for obtaining assistance. These connections play a fundamental role in perpetuating begging by providing children with not only the means to survive but also a perception of begging as a socially and economically viable activity. According to Pierre Bourdieu, social capital refers to the resources, current and potential, derived from possessing a network of more or less formal relationships based on mutual knowledge and recognition. In the context of begging families, this social capital manifests as networks of support and solidarity, including other begging families, regular passersby, and charitable organizations.

Begging families exchange crucial information about the best strategies for begging, the most profitable locations, and the optimal times to seek help. From a young age, children grow up in this environment and are socialized to navigate these networks. Regular interactions with community members who accept and sometimes even encourage begging reinforce the idea that this practice is a legitimate response to economic difficulties. In a context where begging is not only tolerated but also valued, children come to see this activity as a social norm.

Children observe that begging is accepted by their peers and community members, which reinforces their perception of the practice as natural and appropriate. They learn to master specific skills such as effective communication with passersby, strategic selection of begging locations, and management of the resources they collect. By using words and expressions likely to evoke generosity, as well as techniques involving body language and eye contact, they enhance their chances of receiving donations. Parents pass on not only the

necessary skills but also the social networks and community connections that facilitate begging.

#### IV. Conclusion

Research on child begging in Anakely has revealed a complex reality deeply rooted in the social, economic, and cultural dynamics of the community. Through an in-depth analysis of the factors influencing child begging, we have highlighted the multifaceted nature of this phenomenon and its individual and collective implications. It is clear that child begging cannot be understood in isolation; it is closely tied to a web of interdependent factors shaping the experiences and realities of both begging children and their families. Cultural norms, social networks, and socialization practices all play a crucial role in perpetuating begging within this community. The research also underscored the importance of early initiation into begging as part of the socialization process for begging children. Most of them start begging at a very young age, raising concerns about children's rights, their well-being, and their access to education and other developmental opportunities. In light of these findings, it is imperative to adopt a holistic and integrated approach to address child begging in Anakely. This requires a deep understanding of local realities and the implementation of targeted policies and interventions aimed at addressing the root causes of child begging and supporting children and their families in their struggle against poverty and social exclusion. Thus, to what extent can family and community support programs contribute to breaking the cycle of child begging? This question paves the way for an in-depth exploration of various strategies and programs aimed at supporting begging families and providing viable alternatives to begging for children.

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