



**THE PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPLICATION OF ADOLESCENT  
RAISED IN BEGGING FAMILY: THE CASE OF ARADA  
SUBCITY, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

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## **Acronyms and Abbreviations**

Bo LSA	Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs Office
CCC	Community Care Coalition
CSA	Central Statistical Authority
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ILO	International Labor Organization
MOLSA	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
NGO	Non-government organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children`s Emergency Fund

## Abstract

*This research study examined the psychosocial implications for adolescents who were raised in families that engage in begging as a livelihood. The researcher employed a case study research design, utilizing a qualitative research approach and strategy. Primary data source were utilized to gather the necessary information. The participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. For this particular study, the researcher included 10 participants for semi-structured interview and 5 adolescents took part in focus group discussions that have experience psychosocial implications. The data collected from these sources was then and described using thematic analysis techniques. Through the in-depth case study approach, the researcher was able to gain a nuanced understanding of the complex social and psychological implications on young people growing up in begging families. The research findings reveal that adolescents in begging families experience a range of significant psychological challenges. A major issue is the development of disrupted attachment and trust issues, stemming from the inconsistent and unreliable caregiving they received. These young people also commonly grapple with deep feelings of shame and social stigma associated with their family's reliance on begging. Additionally, the stress and anxiety of their precarious living situation takes a heavy toll, leading to despair and a sense of hopelessness about their prospects. The social implications of being raised in a begging family are equally profound, as these youth face severely limited opportunities, social isolation and marginalization within their communities. The discrimination they face further compounds their struggles. In an effort to elicit sympathy and attention from passersby, the adolescent participants were found to employ a variety of strategic tactics. This includes carefully calculating what to say, how to act, and when to approach potential donors while begging. These nuanced behavioral adaptations reflect the complex coping mechanisms developed by youth in these challenging circumstances.*

**Keywords;** *adolescents, begging families, childhood poverty, street children, begging*

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## **Chapter- One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Begging is a significant social issue in Ethiopia, particularly in urban areas like Addis Ababa (Dagneu & Dagneu, 2020). Children and adolescents are often involved in begging, either coerced by their families or as a means of survival (Tadesse et al., 2018). The Arada sub-city of Addis Ababa is known to have a high concentration of begging activities, with many families relying on this practice as a primary source of income (Abebe & Asfaw, 2021).

Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage, marked by physical, cognitive, and psychosocial changes (Mulugeta & Sahile, 2019). The experiences of adolescents raised in begging families can have significant implications for their psychological and social well-being. Studies in the Ethiopian context have emphasized the potential for these experiences to contribute to mental health issues, social stigma, and disrupted educational and career trajectories (Teka & Worku, 2021). Research conducted in Ethiopia has demonstrated that adolescents from begging families often face various psychosocial challenges. These include low self-esteem, increased risk of substance abuse, and difficulties in developing healthy interpersonal relationships (Getachew et al., 2018). Additionally, the social stigma associated with begging can lead to experiences of discrimination and social isolation, further compounding the psychosocial challenges faced by these adolescents (Gebre & Gebremedhin, 2017).

The educational attainment of adolescents raised in begging families is also a significant concern. Studies in Ethiopia have shown that these adolescents are more likely to have interrupted or limited educational experiences, with many dropping out of school to engage in begging activities (Abebe & Asfaw, 2021). This can have long-lasting implications for their future educational and career prospects, further contributing to the cycle of poverty and marginalization (Tadesse et al., 2018).

The family dynamics within begging families can also play a crucial role in shaping the psychosocial development of adolescents. Research in Ethiopia has emphasized the potential for dysfunctional family relationships, parental neglect, and even physical and emotional abuse in these contexts (Gebre & Gebremedhin, 2017). These factors can significantly impact the

emotional well-being and social adaptation of adolescent's raised in such environments (Mulugeta & Sahile, 2019).

Existing studies in Ethiopia have also explored the coping mechanisms and resilience strategies employed by adolescents in begging families. Some research suggests that these adolescents may develop adaptive strategies, such as seeking support from peers or engaging in community-based programs, to mitigate the negative psychosocial implications of their circumstances (Getachew et al., 2018). However, the availability and accessibility of such resources can vary greatly, emphasizing the need for comprehensive support systems.

Addressing the psychosocial needs of adolescents raised in begging families requires a multidimensional approach. Researcher in Ethiopia have emphasized the importance of the study that address the root causes of begging, such as poverty and social inequality, while also providing targeted support for the mental health and social integration of these adolescents (Dagne & Dagne, 2020). Community-based programs and initiatives that offer educational opportunities, vocational training, and mental health services have been underlined as potential avenues for supporting adolescents from begging families in Ethiopia (Abebe & Asfaw, 2021). Collaboration between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and community stakeholders can be crucial in developing and implementing this study.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Begging is a pervasive social issue in Ethiopia, with many children and adolescents forced to beg on the streets to support their families (Tesfaye, 2020). The psychosocial implications of being raised in a begging family could be severe for adolescents in this context. Studies had emphasized the high levels of social stigma, isolation, and trauma experienced by this population, which could negatively influence their mental health, educational outcomes, and overall development (Negussie, 2018; Woldegiorgis, 2021).

Adolescents from begging families internalized the social stigma attached to begging, leading to low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety (Mekonnen, 2019). They also commonly faced barriers to accessing education and basic services, further exacerbating their social and economic marginalization (Jemamu, 2022). The instability and stress of the begging lifestyle could disrupt normal adolescent development and attachment formation, putting these youth at higher risk of

engaging in delinquent or risky behaviors (Abebe, 2020). Despite the scale of this problem in the city, there was a notable gap in the research on the specific psychosocial implications for adolescents from begging families. Existing studies had tended to focus on the broader experiences of children in street situations, without delving deeply into the unique challenges faced by adolescents in this context (Teka, 2021).

More in-depth research was needed to understand the lived experiences of adolescents raised in begging families, including their personal narratives, coping mechanisms, and perspectives on potential interventions. Another key research gap was the lack of evaluation of existing studies targeting adolescents in begging families. Rigorous assessment of the effectiveness, accessibility, and cultural appropriateness of these programs was essential for strengthening the support available to this vulnerable group (Teka, 2021).

Addressing the psychosocial needs of adolescents in begging families was crucial for promoting their wellbeing and breaking cycles of poverty and social exclusion. However, the limited research in this area meant that the specific challenges and study priorities for this population remained poorly understood. Filling these critical knowledge gaps should have been a priority for researchers and policymakers in Addis Ababa.

### **1.3 Research Question**

1. What are the psychological implications of being raised in a begging family on adolescents' development?
2. What are the social implications of being raised in a begging family for adolescents?
3. What are the strategies used by adolescents to get alms from the society?

### **1.4 Objective of the study**

#### **1.4.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study had been to explore the psychosocial implications of adolescents raised in a begging family.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objective**

Specifically, this study had been intended:

1. To investigate the psychological implications of growing up in a begging family on adolescent development.
2. To examine the social implications on the social integration of adolescents from begging families.
3. To identify major strategies used by adolescents to get alms from the society in the study area.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The study addressed a critical gap in the current evidence base. While prior research had explored the broader experiences of children in street situations in the city, there was a notable lack of in-depth, focused studies on the unique challenges faced by adolescents within begging families specifically (Teka, 2021). Gaining a deeper understanding of the psychosocial implications on this vulnerable population was essential for developing appropriate and effective interventions. The findings from this research had important implications for policy and program development for the city administrations. By illuminating the lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and support needs of adolescents in begging families, the study informed the design of targeted psychosocial services, educational initiatives, and social protection measures. This knowledge could guide the allocation of resources towards evidence-based strategies for improving the wellbeing and life outcomes of this marginalized group (Jemamu, 2022).

The study held the potential to reduce the transmission of poverty and social exclusion associated with the begging lifestyle. Adolescents raised in begging families faced compounded disadvantages that could negatively impact their future prospects. By addressing their psychosocial needs, this research contributed to breaking these cycles and promoting more equitable opportunities for personal and professional development (Abebe, 2020).

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

This research study focused on exploring the psychosocial implications of adolescents raised in begging families within the Arada sub-city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Arada sub-city was selected as the primary study location for several key reasons: Arada was known to be one of the centers of child and adolescent begging in Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. Studies had shown that a significant proportion of the begging population in Arada was young people, many of whom were part of multigenerational begging families (Tesfaye, 2020). Focusing the research within this

sub-city allowed for a more in-depth exploration of the unique dynamics and challenges faced by this target population.

Arada sub-city represented a diverse socioeconomic and cultural context within Addis Ababa. The area was home to both prosperous and impoverished communities, providing an opportunity to examine how socioeconomic status and other contextual factors may have influenced the psychosocial experiences of adolescents in begging families (Mekonnen, 2019). It was important to note that while the research primarily focused within the Arada sub-city, the findings may have held relevance and transferability to other urban settings in Ethiopia facing similar challenges related to child and adolescent begging. The study's in-depth exploration of the psychosocial implications for this vulnerable population could inform policies at the national level.

### **1.7 Limitation of the study**

The study focused on a single sub-city within the larger Addis Ababa metropolitan area limited the transferability of the results to other urban contexts in Ethiopia. Arada sub-city, while representative of certain socioeconomic and cultural dynamics, not fully captured the diverse experiences of adolescents in begging families across different sub-cities within the city. Expanding the geographic scope of the research to include multiple sub-cities provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue. However, it is difficult to conduct due to financial constraint, time-consuming and challenged.

The reliance on self-reported data from the adolescent participants introduced potential biases, such as social desirability bias or recall bias. Adolescents in begging families are hesitant to disclose certain experiences or emotions due to feelings of shame, stigma, or fear of consequences. The researcher employed strategies to establish trust, ensure confidentiality, and create a safe and non-judgmental environment for data collection. The qualitative, exploratory nature of the research, while providing rich, in-depth insights limited the ability to draw generalizable conclusions or establish causal relationships. Finally, the study's reliance on reconsidering accounts of the adolescents' experiences subjected to potential biases and inaccuracies. Incorporating diverse data sources, such as interviews with parents or caregivers, observations of family dynamics, and reviews of relevant institutional records, enhanced the reliability and triangulation of the data. The study on the psychosocial implications of adolescents raised in begging families holds significant value and the potential to contribute to a critical knowledge gap.

The research strived to address these limitations through study design, data collection techniques, and analytical strategies to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

### **1.8 Operational Definition of Variable**

- Adolescents: - an individuals between the ages of 15 and 19 years old. This age range is consistent with the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of adolescence, which encompasses the period of physical, psychological, and social transition from childhood to adulthood (WHO, 2021).
- Begging Families: defined as households where one or more members, including children and adolescents, engage in the act of begging as a means of income generation or survival (Tesfaye, 2020).
- Psychosocial Implications: - refer to the psychological, emotional, and social experiences, challenges, and well-being of adolescents raised in begging families. This includes, but is not limited to, their self-esteem, mental health, peer and family relationships, social integration, and future aspirations (Mekonnen, 2019).
- Arada Sub-City:- is one of the 10 sub-cities that make up the Addis Ababa city administration in Ethiopia. It is located in the central part of Addis Ababa and is known for its high concentration of informal economic activities, including child and adolescent begging (Negussie, 2018).

### **1.9 Organization of the study**

The study divided in to five sections. The first section deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, basic research questions and objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study, operational definitions of key terms. The second section deals with the reviews of related literature on Definition of Begging, Theoretical Explanation of Begging, Social Learning Theory, attachment Theory, Psychological and Social implication of Begging. The third section research methodology, research paradigm, research approach, research design, type and sources of data, sample design, data collection procedure, methods of data analysis and quality assurance. The forth section deals with findings and discussion. Finally then fifth section is about summary, conclusions and recommendations.

## **Chapter –Two: Review of Related Literature**

The literature review section provides theoretical explanations, strategies, and factors contributing to begging. It specifically explores the psychological and social issues related to begging within the Ethiopian cultural context. The researcher also attempts to connect begging with various research findings, theories, and identifying its contributing factors.

The concept of begging can have different definitions depending on the individuals involved and the reasons for begging. Some people beg as part of a ritual, others for religious purposes and the majority engage in begging due to economic or social reasons. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA, 1992) defines begging as a means of obtaining a livelihood by relying on the income obtained from other sectors of society. These individuals hinder the health and socioeconomic development of society, and begging is often associated with poverty and destitution. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2013) defines begging as a range of activities where individuals ask for money, food, or resources based on their poverty or need for basic survival, health, or religious reasons. For the purpose of this study, begging is defined as the act of asking for alms, either as a business or for survival and supporting one's life and family.

### **2.1 Theoretical Explanations of Begging**

Researcher has connected the factors, strategies, and psychological and social problems of begging with established scientific theories and findings. In this study, the following relevant psychological, social, and economic theories are used to frame the research problem.

#### **2.1.1 . Attachment theory**

Attachment theory is a psychological framework that explains how early childhood experiences with caregivers shape an individual's ability to form close relationships later in life. The core ideas were first proposed by British psychologist John Bowlby in the 1950s and further developed by American psychologist Mary Ainsworth. The theory posits that humans are born with an attachment behavioral system that motivates them to seek proximity to caregivers, especially when under stress.. The theory posits that the quality of an individual's early attachment relationships, particularly with primary caregivers, shapes their emotional, social, and cognitive development (Bowlby, 1969, 1982). Secure attachment, characterized by responsive, sensitive, and consistent caregiving, is associated with positive outcomes, such as better self-regulation, social competence, and psychological well-being (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). Conversely, insecure attachment,



resulting from neglectful, inconsistent, or abusive caregiving, can lead to various psychosocial difficulties, including poor emotional regulation, interpersonal challenges, and increased risk of mental health problems (Sroufe, 1988). Adolescents raised in begging families, the attachment theory may provide a useful framework for understanding their psychosocial development. Adolescents in these families may have experienced disrupted or unstable attachment relationships due to the demands and stresses of the begging lifestyle, which could contribute to emotional and social challenges (Williamson & Greenberg, 2010). Additionally, the social stigma and marginalization associated with begging may further exacerbate the attachment-related difficulties, leading to poor self-esteem, social withdrawal, and difficulties in forming healthy relationships (Putnam, 2000).

### **2.1.2. Social Exchange Theory**

According to the social exchange theory posits that human relationships are formed by the use of a subjective cost-benefit analysis and the comparison of alternatives (Homans, 1958; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In the context of adolescents raised in begging families, this theory can provide some insight into the potential psychosocial implications. The social exchanges experienced by these adolescents may be tilted toward a greater emphasis on "costs" rather than "benefits." Growing up in an environment where the primary mode of subsistence involves begging, these adolescents may internalize a sense of low self-worth, as their social interactions are often centered on obtaining resources through appeals rather than reciprocal exchanges (Scanlon et al., 2002). This could lead to the development of attachment difficulties, social anxiety, and a perceived lack of agency, as their social relationships may be perceived as transactional rather than intrinsically rewarding (Daly & Wilson, 1988).

However, it is also possible that these adolescents develop alternative strategies to navigate their social environments and derive benefits from their circumstances. For instance, they may form strong bonds within their family or community, and these relationships may provide emotional support, a sense of belonging, and opportunities for personal growth, despite the financial challenges (Whitbeck et al., 1992). In this case, the social exchange theory would suggest that the perceived benefits of these relationships outweigh the costs, leading to more positive psychosocial outcomes. Some research has indicated that adolescents raised in begging families may exhibit resilience, developing coping mechanisms and a sense of resourcefulness that could serve them

well in adulthood (Ennew & Swart-Kruger, 2003). This would suggest that the social exchanges experienced by these adolescents, while potentially presenting unique challenges, may also foster the development of important life skills and a stronger sense of self-efficacy.

### **2.1.3 Social Learning Theory**

According to the social learning theory, developed by Albert Bandura (1977), provides another perspective on the psychosocial implications for adolescents raised in begging families. This theory posits that individuals, particularly during their formative years, learn and model the behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of those around them, especially their primary caregivers and influential figures in their immediate environment (Bandura, 1977).

The social learning theory suggests that these adolescents may internalize and adopt the behavioral patterns and coping mechanisms associated with the begging lifestyle, such as reliance on public assistance, social withdrawal, and potentially illicit activities to supplement income (Bandura, 1986). This could lead to the perpetuation of a cycle of poverty, social marginalization, and learned helplessness, as the adolescents may have limited exposure to alternative, socially acceptable pathways for personal and professional development (Moffitt, 1993).

The social stigma and negative societal perceptions surrounding the begging lifestyle may lead these adolescents to internalize a sense of shame, low self-worth, and a distorted social identity, which can significantly impact their psychosocial well-being (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This could manifest in behavioral issues, such as antisocial tendencies, substance abuse, or engagement in illegal activities, as the adolescents seek to cope with or rebel against the perceived social exclusion (Akers, 2009). However, the social learning theory may not fully account for the individual differences and resilience that some adolescents in begging families may demonstrate (Ungar, 2011). Despite the potentially challenging social environment, some adolescents may be able to draw upon their own internal resources, such as strong personal values, educational aspirations, or supportive relationships outside the immediate family, to resist the negative influences and forge their own path (Masten, 2001).

## **2.2. Empirical Review**

Studies have consistently documented elevated levels of depression, anxiety, and emotional distress among adolescents from begging families. Mekonnen (2019) found that these adolescents

were more likely to experience symptoms of mental health disorders, which were often exacerbated by the social stigma and isolation they faced.

Researcher has reported that adolescent's raised in begging families often struggle with social integration and developing healthy peer relationships. Alemayehu and Gebremedhin (2020) noted that these adolescents frequently experienced bullying, social exclusion, and difficulties forming meaningful connections with their peers, further contributing to their feelings of marginalization.

The disruption of educational opportunities has been a common concern for adolescents in begging families. Tesfaye (2020) found that these adolescents were more likely to have irregular school attendance, lower academic performance, and reduced educational aspirations, ultimately

Several studies have highlighted the increased vulnerability of adolescents from begging families to engage in risky behaviors, such as substance abuse, criminal activities, and early sexual initiation. Girma and Mamo (2021) attributed these behaviors to the lack of parental supervision and the need to generate income to support their families.

Despite the significant challenges faced by adolescents in begging families, some studies have also explored the factors that foster resilience and positive adaptations. Negussie (2018) identified social support networks, access to educational opportunities, and the development of self-efficacy as important protective factors that enable some adolescents to navigate their circumstances more effectively.

The existing empirical evidence emphasizes the multifaceted and complex nature of the psychosocial implications for adolescents raised in begging families. While the literature has provided valuable insights, there is a need for more in-depth, context-specific research to further understand the unique experiences and coping mechanisms of this population within the Arada sub-city context in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

## **2.3. Factors of begging**

### **2.3.1 Socioeconomic factors of Begging**

Studies have identified poverty, unemployment, and the lack of access to basic services as key drivers of begging among families in Addis Ababa. Negussie (2018) found that families living in extreme poverty often resort to sending their children to the streets to beg as a survival strategy,

with the income generated supplementing the household's meager resources. Additionally, Tesfaye (2020) noted that the limited availability of social safety nets and limited economic opportunities for marginalized groups further exacerbate the reliance on child and adolescent begging. Furthermore, developing countries like Ethiopia face socio-economic challenges such as low incomes, high unemployment rates, increasing living costs, rapid population growth, and rural-urban migration. Conflict, famine, and displacement are additional factors that particularly affect Ethiopia (Woubishet (2005). These socio-economic pressures lead to the breakdown of traditional social structures and close-knit communities, leaving individuals without support systems. The widespread poverty manifests itself in urban areas through the emergence of slums and shantytowns, which further contribute to the prevalence of begging (MOLSA, 1992). A study conducted by Fantahun, 2017) also confirms that a significant portion of society engages in begging as a means of survival, reflecting the current socio-economic conditions in Ethiopia (as cited in Teweldeberhan, 2011).

### **2.3.2 Political Factors of Begging**

Political ideology plays a significant role in shaping a country's economic conditions, which can subsequently contribute to poverty and begging (Mattes & Seeman, 2010). The political system and the development paradigm it follows can have profound implications for the distribution of wealth and resources within a society.

For instance, the decline of socialism and the spread of capitalism in many developing countries have led to an imbalance in economic, political, and socio-cultural linkages, resulting in a widening divide between the rich and the poor (Mattes & Seeman, 2010). This has left some populations behind, contributing to the persistence of poverty and the need for individuals to resort to begging as a means of survival. Political dissatisfaction and instability can also drive migration, with individuals seeking better opportunities in other regions or countries. However, upon arrival, these migrants often face significant financial difficulties and may turn to begging as a last resort (Mattes & Seeman, 2010).

The political ideology of a country, therefore, can have far-reaching consequences for the economic conditions and social welfare of its citizens, which in turn can contribute to the prevalence of begging, especially among vulnerable populations such as adolescents. Addressing

this issue requires comprehensive policy interventions that address the legal, political, cultural, organizational, and economic dimensions of poverty (Mattes & Seeman, 2010).

### **2.3.3 Cultural and Religious Factors of Begging**

Begging has deep-rooted cultural and religious significance that has contributed to its persistent growth over time (Radi, 2015). In the past, the practice of begging was not considered a significant societal issue, as it remained at a "tolerable" level. However, as begging has transformed into a widespread and lucrative profession, it has become a more prominent concern.

One of the key cultural factors contributing to the growth of begging is the Christian doctrine of almsgiving, which has been prevalent during the Middle Ages and continues to influence perceptions and behaviors today (Radi, 2015). The religious teachings related to almsgiving, which encourage compassion and charity towards the poor as a means of salvation and absolution of sins, have consistently reinforced the cultural acceptance and normalization of begging.

This cultural acceptance has had a profound impact on individuals' well-being and the broader societal dynamics. In some communities in Ethiopia, begging has even been viewed as a profession and a business, leading to the migration of individuals from their home regions to engage in street begging in major cities (Radi, 2015). This shift is further influenced by the presence of a culturally diverse population, including many almsgivers, which has contributed to the perpetuation of begging as a cultural norm.

It is important to note that while begging was traditionally considered taboo in many ethnic groups in Ethiopia, the cultural and religious constructs that have shaped the perception and practice of begging have had a significant impact on its prevalence (Radi, 2015). Addressing this complex issue requires a multifaceted approach that considers the historical, cultural, and religious dimensions that have contributed to the normalization and institutionalization of begging in certain contexts.

### **2.3.4 Health factor of Begging**

The health factor of begging, specifically in relation to a society, is closely tied to its socio-economic status. When individuals in a particular social setting are impoverished, they are likely to face various health-related issues and lack access to adequate medical or healthcare services. Consequently, they may resort to begging or other means of obtaining money in order to save their

lives. However, it's important to note that individuals may engage in begging for reasons unrelated to health or economic factors, such as relying on charity for survival (Ramasamy, 2004).

The primary health concern for adolescents in begging families is the increased risk of malnutrition and stunted growth (Ennew, 1994; Harpham, 2009). The lack of access to adequate and nutritious food, as well as the diversion of limited family resources towards begging activities, can lead to chronic undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies. This, in turn, can impair physical growth, cognitive development, and immune function, making these adolescents more susceptible to various health problems. Adolescents in begging families often face heightened levels of psychological distress and mental health issues (Harpham, 2009; Volpi, 2002). The constant exposure to poverty, social stigma, and the precarious nature of their living conditions can contribute to the development of depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. These mental health challenges can further impact their academic performance, social relationships, and overall well-being.

Moreover, adolescents in begging families are at a higher risk of experiencing various forms of abuse, exploitation, and neglect (Ennew, 1994; Volpi, 2002). The lack of a stable and nurturing home environment, coupled with the demands of begging, can leave these young individuals vulnerable to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. This, in turn, can lead to long-term trauma and further exacerbate their physical and mental health concerns.

## **2.4 Problems Associated with Begging**

Begging gives rise to various negative consequences that impact both the dignity of individuals and the reputation of the nation. It affects the lives of both beggars and non-beggars within a society, resulting in a range of economic, cultural, political, psychological, social, and health-related issues. However, for the purpose of this study, the focus was limited to exploring the psychological and social problems associated with begging.

### **2.4.1 Psychological Challenges of Begging**

Beggars have historically faced a lack of acceptance within society. Begging is often viewed as an antisocial behavior, particularly within suburban residential communities, leading to various psychological difficulties for individuals engaged in begging. Even those who beg themselves acknowledge that begging is a problematic situation, describing it as harsh, humiliating,

demeaning, degrading, and frustrating (Lynch, 2005, p.521). However, due to a lack of alternatives, many individuals continue to resort to begging on the streets, despite the regulations in place (Fitzpatrick & Kennedy, 2001).

Research conducted by Teweldeberhan (2011) revealed that begging has significant psychological consequences for those involved. Beggars in Addis Ababa reported experiencing fear, depression, loneliness, hopelessness, identity crisis, anxiety, stress, low self-confidence, low self-esteem, shame, guilt, and various forms of abuse. The study also found that individuals who endured these distressing and degrading conditions on the streets developed emotional problems such as fear, anxiety, trauma, hopelessness, self-hatred, depression, and ultimately, an identity crisis (Teweldeberhan, 2011).

#### **2.4.2 Social Issues Associated with Begging**

To comprehend the psychological and societal challenges connected with begging, it is essential to recognize the interconnectedness of psychological and social problems. In contemporary societies, begging and the presence of beggars in public spaces have been regarded as significant social problems (Bromley, 1987). Beggars face various social problems while on the streets, including discrimination, marginalization, segregation, prejudice, isolation, conflicts, and limited social relationships and interactions (Teweldeberhan, 2011).

#### **2.4.3 Psychological and Social Challenges of Begging in Ethiopia**

In early human civilizations, there were no beggars. Instead, alternative forms of support, such as slavery, remarriage, prostitution, clientage, and vassalage, existed within the societal framework. However, changes in economic structures or political stability, agricultural failure, increased cost of living, religious practices and beliefs, crusades, migrations, feudal system decline, plagues, or famines led to the emergence of begging (Woubishet, 2005). Furthermore, modern civilization has also affected traditional social and economic structures. One crucial structure influenced by civilization is the extended family system, which historically provided care for the disabled, elderly, and orphans. However, due to various reasons, such as the breakdown of the family support system, large numbers of unaccompanied children, elderly individuals, lactating mothers, and handicapped soldiers flocked to urban areas (MoLSA).

Consequently, people engaged in begging and encountered diverse psychological and social problems as a consequence of regulating begging on the streets. The impact of begging varied

among those involved, with some significantly affected while others were not. Insufficient research has been conducted to explore the psychological and social problems associated with begging in Ethiopia. Studies by Woubishet and Teweldeberhan in Addis Ababa indicated that begging resulted in alienation, marginalization, social exclusion, and poor social interactions. However, a study by Woubishet and Tatek on street beggars in Addis Ababa revealed that beggars cooperated and supported each other through various means, such as sharing resources, exchanging skills, and providing emotional support. These activities were based on friendship, personal closeness, and group affinity (Woubishet, 2005; Tafere, 2007). On the other hand, Teweldeberhan's research contradicted the above findings, suggesting that beggars faced numerous issues related to begging. The study revealed instances of conflict and quarrels among beggars as they competed for "Bule" (leftover food) from almsgivers, and their interactions with each other were highly deficient. Consequently, they lacked cohesion, solidarity, and interdependence, viewing each other as adversaries (Teweldeberhan, 2011). Additionally, a study by Fireyihun on the experiences of mother beggars highlighted the emotional instability they encountered, including feelings of insecurity, hopelessness, stigma, and discrimination (Fireyihun, 2011).

## 2.5 Strategy of begging

There are several strategy employed by beggars when soliciting alms from potential donors. The most common locations where beggars operate and receive alms are bus stations, churches, mosques, and marketplaces. Begging is seen as a business that requires dedication and competition to capture the attention of potential almsgivers. Beggars employ various strategies to attract passersby, such as verbally or visually expressing their needs to evoke sympathy and support from potential donors.

Begging has evolved into a profession that requires little physical or mental effort to earn a living. The success of this profession relies on the compassionate behavior of the public towards those in need. While beggars are indeed disadvantaged individuals, many of them have adopted tactics to maximize their collection of alms in order to avoid physical labor.

The ultimate goal of begging is to elicit sympathy and support, so beggars employ different techniques and skills to capture the attention of donors. They utilize various strategies similar to those employed in other businesses. Beggars with visible issues such as illness, deformity, old age,



pregnancy, or disabilities are more likely to attract attention from passersby by showcasing their visible problems. Those without visible issues face a disadvantage in this competitive environment and may resort to pretending to be sick, disabled, blind, or deaf.

According to (Fentahun Kolech, 2017), beggars demonstrate creativity in their approach to soliciting alms. One of their techniques is sitting or lying on the ground, hoping to evoke sympathy and attention from the public. By doing so, they aim to convey a sense of humility and inferiority.

Additionally, some beggars who are physically capable intentionally present themselves as patients, injured individuals, or disabled when soliciting alms. This research also focuses on beggars who are physically capable but portray themselves as lacking certain body parts or temporarily appearing as patients to the public. Others dress in worn-out, old, and dirty clothes to attract the attention of passersby. The rationale behind this strategy is that people are less likely to offer help to those who are well-dressed unless they have observable problems.

Some beggars resort to begging with their children in order to evoke sympathy from potential donors. Physically challenged beggars, such as the blind, may sing songs to capture the ears of passersby while presenting themselves to the public (Fentahun Kolech, 2017).

When begging on the street, it is effective to establish an emotional connection with potential donors. Beggars use specific words and phrases to appeal to the emotions of passersby. The choice of language depends on factors such as the age, gender, and physical appearance of both the beggars and potential donors. For example "the child beggars usually use the terms "Abaye" meaning "my father"; "Emaye" meaning "my mother"; "wondimachin" meaning "our brother"; "Gashe" meaning "elder brother"; "Etiye" meaning "My sister"; etc. Elderly men and women beggars while addressing younger passers-by usually say "my son", "my daughter". However, the most widely and frequently used terms of address for general purpose are "Wogenoche" meaning "my relatives", "Abatoch" means "my fathers", "Enatoche" meaning "my mothers," "Wondimaoche" meaning "my brothers", "Ehitoche" meaning "my sisters". Young beggars address in a unique way "Friend", "Jealous" meaning "Friendlier", "Abba" meaning "Kindly, well disposed", "keshitu" meaning "Jolly boy", "Keyo" meaning "one red in his color complexion," "Nefsu" meaning "Soul or sweet boy", "Konjiye" meaning "Handsome boy", "Shebellaw"

meaning "physically charming and appealing boy", "Konjit" meaning "beautiful lady," "Emu" meaning "very young girl" (Woubishet, 2003).”

When beggars address passersby during their begging activities, they commonly use certain expressions in order to solicit help. One of the most prevalent expressions is repeatedly mentioning the name of a saint. An example of this is observed on St. Mary's Day, where beggars would say "ከለግርዖን" which translates to "for the Sake of Mary." They may also use other expressions such as "in the name of Mary" or "if you believe in Mary." Additionally, beggars may invoke the names of other saints as well (Woubishet, 2003, p. 77, Fentahun Koleh, 2017)

## **Chapter – Three: Research methodology**

### **3.1 Description of the study area**

Arada sub-city is one of the 11 sub-cities that make up the city of Addis Ababa, the capital and largest city of Ethiopia. Situated in the central part of Addis Ababa, Arada sub-city covers an area of approximately 16 square kilometers and is home to an estimated population of over 300,000 residents (Addis Ababa City Administration, 2022).

The sub-city is characterized by a diverse socioeconomic landscape, with both affluent and impoverished neighborhoods existing in close proximity. While some parts of Arada are home to middle and upper-class residents, a significant portion of the population lives in informal settlements, often in overcrowded and substandard housing conditions (Woldegebriel, 2020).

The prevalence of poverty and economic hardship in certain areas of Arada sub-city has contributed to the phenomenon of begging, with many individuals and families, including adolescents, engaging in this practice as a means of survival (Belete, 2016). These begging families often face a range of health challenges and vulnerabilities that can have lasting impacts on the well-being of their children and adolescents.

The sub-city's proximity to the central business district and popular tourist destinations has further exacerbated the presence of begging, as individuals and families seek to capitalize on the high foot traffic and potential for charitable donations (Belete, 2016). This, in turn, has created a complex social and economic environment that requires a nuanced understanding of the factors contributing to the health and well-being of adolescents in begging families.

### **3.2 Research paradigm**

#### **3.2.1 Interpretive paradigm**

The interpretive paradigm is well-suited for this research context as it emphasized the importance of understanding the subjective experiences and social meanings that individuals assign to their lived realities (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This aligns with the aim of exploring the psychosocial implications for adolescents in begging families, which inherently involves capturing their perspectives, perceptions, and the broader social and cultural context that shapes their experiences. The interpretive approach recognizes that the experiences of these adolescents are influenced by various social, cultural, and environmental factors, and that their understanding of these

experiences is subjective and context-dependent (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This paradigm allows the researcher to delve into the complex and nuanced ways in which the psychosocial well-being of these adolescents is impacted by their unique circumstances, rather than seeking to establish universal causal relationships.

The interpretive paradigm encourages the researcher to engage in a dialogical process with the participants, allowing for a deeper exploration of their lived experiences, meanings, and interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach is particularly relevant for understanding the psychosocial implications, as it provides a platform for the adolescents to share their stories, perceptions, and the ways in which they make sense of their experiences.

By adopting an interpretive approach, the researcher can gain a rich, contextualized understanding of the psychosocial challenges and resilience strategies employed by adolescents raised in begging families. This understanding can then inform the development of tailored interventions and support systems that address the unique needs and experiences of this vulnerable population.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

The qualitative research approach is well-suited for this study, as it enables an in-depth exploration and understanding of the lived experiences, perceptions, and social contexts of the target population (Patton, 2015). This aligns with the goal of examining the psychosocial implications for adolescents raised in begging families, as it allows the researcher to delve into the complex, nuanced, and context-specific factors that shape their well-being.

Within the qualitative research approach, researcher specifically selected a case study research design. The case study approach particularly relevant, as it allows for a comprehensive, in-depth investigation of a specific "case" within its real-world setting (Yin, 2018). In this case, the "case" would be the Arada sub-city in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where the adolescents raised in begging families reside.

The case study design enabled the researcher to explore the unique social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors that shape the psychosocial experiences of the adolescents in this specific geographic and socioeconomic. By conducting in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis, the researcher gained a comprehensive understanding of the specific phenomenon and its implications within the Arada sub-city. The case study approach allows qualitative data to provide

a more holistic and triangulated understanding of the case (Yin, 2018). The qualitative data from interviews and observations with relevant demographic, socioeconomic, and psychological assessment data to develop a more nuanced the psychosocial implications.

By adopting a qualitative, case study research design and the researcher can gain a deep understanding of the psychosocial implications for adolescents raised in begging families within the Arada sub-city.

### **3.4 Research design**

The case study design allows for an in-depth, holistic examination of the psychosocial experiences of adolescents raised in begging families within a specific context or "case" (Yin, 2018). This enabled the researcher to gain a rich, contextual understanding of the phenomenon, exploring the complex interplay of social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors that shape the adolescents' well-being.

In the case of adolescents raised in begging families, the researcher can define the "case" as a specific community, neighborhood, or geographic location where this population resides in particular sub-city, district, or even a specific begging spot within a larger urban area. The researcher included in-depth interviews with the adolescents, their families, and relevant stakeholders; observations of the begging practices and social dynamics; analysis of relevant documents and records; and the use of standardized psychological assessments or surveys. The psychosocial implications for adolescents raised in begging families were likely to be heavily influenced by the specific socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental context in which they live. The case study design enabled the researcher to capture these nuances and develop a deep understanding of adolescents' experiences and well-being.

### **3.5 Type and Source of Data**

The primary source of data was taken in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the adolescents themselves, as well as their families, community members, and relevant stakeholders (Patton, 2015). These interviews would allow the researcher to explore the lived experiences that shape the psychosocial well-being of the adolescents.

The researcher incorporate observational data collected through field visits and ethnographic observations within the Arada sub-city (Yin, 2018). This enabled the researcher to directly observe

the daily lives, social interactions, and begging practices of the adolescents, as well as the broader community dynamics that influence their psychosocial development.

### **3.6 Sample design**

The researcher employed a purposive sampling approach, specifically a maximum variation sampling technique (Patton, 2015). This involved deliberately selecting a diverse range of adolescents (aged 13-19 years) who were currently or have been raised in begging families within the Arada sub-city. The goal was to capture the breadth of experiences and perspectives by including participants with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, family structures, educational levels, and levels of involvement in begging activities.

After the initial purposive selection of adolescent participants, the researcher utilized a snowball sampling technique (Patton, 2015). This involved asking the initial participants to recommend or refer other adolescents who fit the study criteria and may be willing to participate. This approach is particularly useful for accessing hard-to-reach or marginalized populations, as the initial participants can help the researcher connect with others who share similar experiences.

The rationale for combining these two sampling techniques was that the purposive sampling ensured the inclusion of a diverse range of participants, while the snowball sampling helps to expand the pool of participants and reach individuals who may be more difficult to identify through other means. The combined approach is well-suited for the current study, as the target population of adolescents raised in begging family's hard-to-reach or hidden population within the Arada sub-city. By employing both purposive and snowball sampling, the researcher gained more comprehensive understanding of the psychosocial implications for adolescents raised in begging families, capturing the nuanced and complexities of their lived experiences from a range of perspectives.

### **3.7 Data Collection Techniques**

The main data collection methods used in this study was non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The interviews and FGDs utilized semi-structured interview guides.

### **3.7.1 Semi-structured Interviews**

Qualitative research interviews should be guided by open-ended questions that allow participants to use their own words, rather than pre-defined responses. In-depth Interviews: The primary data collection method was semi-structured, in-depth interviews with the adolescent participants. These interviews allow the researcher to explore their lived experiences, perceptions, and the complex socio-cultural, economic, and environmental factors that shape their psychosocial well-being (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The interviews covered topics such as family dynamics, educational experiences, and involvement in begging activities, social relationships, and mental health.

Yin (2011) emphasized that qualitative research interviews guided by open-ended questions, allowing participants to use their own words to discuss the topics, rather than being constrained by pre-defined questions. Similarly, Creswell (2007) recommends asking open-ended research questions when studying emotion-laden and practical topics, as this approach can help capture the nuances and complexities of the participants' experiences.

Accordingly, in conducting the in-depth interviews with the adolescent participants and key informants, the researcher utilized a semi-structured interview format. This involved preparing an interview guide beforehand, but remaining flexible in terms of the precise wording of questions and the order in which they are asked (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The goal was to create an open and responsive interview environment, where participants were given the opportunity to discuss issues that are important to them, even if they were not initially anticipated by the researcher.

Braun and Clarke's (2013) recommendation that the "ideal qualitative interview was 'on target while hanging loose'." By maintaining this balance, the researcher ensured that the interviews remain focused on the research objectives, while also allowing space for unexpected insights and perspectives to emerge from the participants' own narratives.

### **3.7.2 Focus Group Discussion**

FGDs are a form of group interview that allow researchers to collect data and observe interactions among participants on a specific topic or issue. FGDs create an open and supportive environment where participants can discuss even quite sensitive topics in-depth. The group dynamic and interaction between participants can lead to more elaborated and detailed accounts. (Braun & Clarke, 2013 cited by Melaku, 2022).

FGDs mimic "real life" conversation, as participants talk to each other rather than just the researcher. This encourages the use of participants' own vocabularies and ways of discussing the topic. Contrary to the assumption that sensitive topics may not suit FGDs, research has found FGDs can actually be better than individual interviews for collecting data on sensitive or personal subjects, especially when working with children and young people. (Braun & Clarke, 2013 cited by Melaku, 2022).

Participants feel less uncomfortable discussing sensitive topics in a group context compared to an individual interview setting. However, larger studies benefited from offering both FGDs and individual interviews as options.

In this study, a group of 5 adolescents participated in the FGDs. This was intended to elicit a wide range of perspectives and in-depth information from different entities.

### **3.8 Methods of Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis was the analytical approach used in this study. This method involved extracting themes and patterns from the data and organizing them into a coherent, consistent narrative. Qualitative research aims to give meaning and understanding to participants' perspectives and experiences. Accordingly, the researcher approached the analysis from the participants' viewpoint, trying to understand how they interpreted and defined their situations.

The researcher employed a rigorous qualitative data analysis approach centered on thematic analysis to thoroughly explore the psychosocial implications for adolescents raised in begging families in the Arada sub-city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This systematic process begins with immersing in the interview transcripts, focus group recordings, and observational notes to gain a deep understanding of the participants' experiences (Saldaña, 2016). The researcher then generated initial codes, collating them into potential themes that capture the essence of the data. These themes would be carefully reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represent the research objectives and are well-supported by the evidence.

The final step in developing the themes would involve defining and naming them in a way that captures the core meanings and patterns within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher included crafting concise, insightful theme names and providing detailed descriptions of what each theme entails, supported by relevant quotes from the participants.



### 3.9 Trustworthiness of Qualitative data

The researcher enhanced the credibility of the study that employed investigator triangulation, engaged to independently analyze the interview transcripts, focus group discussions, and observational notes (Patton, 2015). The collaborative approach helps to mitigate the influence of individual biases and ensured that the emergent themes and interpretations are well-supported by the data and conducted member checking, revisiting the participant families to validate understanding of their experiences and perspectives accurately reflects their realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ensuring the dependability of the research process was another key priority. The researcher maintained detailed audit trails, thoroughly documenting the decision-making involved in the coding, thematic development, and data interpretation stages (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This enabled an external auditor to examine the consistency and reliability of the analysis, further strengthening the trustworthiness of the findings.

Finally, to enhance the conformability of the study, the researcher engaged in ongoing reflexivity, critically examining researcher own biases and assumptions, and how they influenced the research design, data collection, and analysis (Patton, 2015). The researcher was transparent about the limitations of the study and potential sources of bias, allowing readers to assess the objectivity and integrity of the research.

### **3.10 Ethical Consideration**

This research study raises several important ethical considerations that must be thoughtfully addressed. The investigation into the psychological effects of growing up in a begging family on adolescent development involved exploring deeply personal and potentially traumatic experiences. Extreme care must be taken to protect the privacy and wellbeing of the participants, ensuring that data collection methods do not cause further distress. Informed consent procedures, the right to withdraw, and the provision of mental health resources will be critical. The examination of societal attitudes and their impact on the social integration of adolescents from begging families raises ethical concerns around the researcher's own biases and the potential for perpetuating harmful stereotypes. The study must be designed and conducted in a manner that challenges, rather than reinforces, negative societal perceptions. This may require collaboration with community organizations and the active inclusion of the target population in the research process. Throughout the research process, the principle of "do no harm" must be the guiding ethic. This may require the researcher to make difficult decisions, such as withholding certain findings or modifying data collection methods, in order to protect the vulnerable participants. Ongoing consultation with an ethics review board and the incorporation of feedback from community stakeholders will be essential to navigating these complex ethical considerations.

## Chapter –Four: Analysis and Findings

### 4.1 Demographic characteristics of participants

The researcher employed a purposive sampling method to identify and select participants who met specific criteria that were essential to addressing the research objectives. Ten able bodies with the age range between 13 and 19 years old were selected and this developmental stage is critical for identity formation and psychological well-being. Six respondents were male and four were female. This shouldn't be said that male adolescents engaged in begging are greater than female in the study area since the participants of the study were selected purposively based on inclusion criteria through snow ball sampling technique To further expand the sample and reach more participants who fit the criteria, the researcher employed the snowball sampling technique. This involved asking the initial participants to refer others from their social networks who met the study's requirements. This approach allowed the researcher to access hard-to-reach populations and gain a deeper understanding of the shared experiences within this community. Participants were required to have substantial and direct experience with their families' reliance on begging as a primary means of livelihood. The study targeted adolescents from low-income, impoverished households where begging was the primary or sole source of income. Participants were recruited from Arada subcity, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. By utilizing both purposive and snowball sampling techniques, the researcher was able to create a representative sample that provided rich, in-depth insights into the psychological implications of growing up in a begging family.

**Table I- Socio-demographic information of interview participant of adolescents**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Years stayed in begging</b>
Respondent 1	16	F	8
Respondent 2	17	F	7
Respondent 3	15	F	7
Respondent 4	16	F	5
Respondent 5	16	M	3
Respondent 6	15	M	4
Respondent 7	13	M	3
Respondent 8	15	M	4
Respondent 9	15	M	6
Respondent 10	14	M	4

**Table II-Socio-demographic information of focus group discussions participants**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Years stayed in begging</b>
Group Respondent 1	17	M	8
Group Respondent 2	15	M	4
Group Respondent 3	18	M	5
Group Respondent 4	15	F	7
Group Respondent 5	16	F	6

The researcher carefully selected five adolescent participants in focused group discussion with a combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques. This strategic approach enabled the researcher to gather a rich and representative dataset that provide a comprehensive understanding of this vulnerable population's lived experiences. The researcher conducted in-depth interview with participants between 13 and 19 years old. Participants required a substantial and direct experience with their families' reliance on begging as a primary or sole means of livelihood. The researcher targeted adolescents from low-income, impoverished households where begging was a significant or primary source of income. Participants were recruited from the Arada sub city, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to capture the unique challenges and experiences. Existing participants were asked to refer others from their social networks that fit the study criteria, allowing access to hard-to-reach populations.

**Table III-Socio-demographic information of interview participant of parent**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Marital status</b>
Parent Respondent 1	41	F	3	Married
Parent Respondent 2	36	F	4	Widowed
Parent Respondent 3	47	M	-	Married
Parent Respondent 4	51	M	-	Single

The researcher selected four parent participants by a purposive sampling required to be the parents and primary caregivers of adolescents reside in Addis Ababa. The participants' families rely on begging as a primary source of income and captured a range of family structures, including single-

parent, widowed and married families to understand the psychosocial experiences and challenges faced by these adolescents.

**Table IV-Socio-demographic information of key informants**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Occupation</b>
Key informant R1	M	37	10+	Police officer
Key informant R2	M	27	MSc	MOLSA Arada sub city officer

The researcher selected these key informants by their direct involvement and expertise in working with the target population of the study. The key informants were chosen for their in-depth knowledge and experience in the Arada subcity, as well as their unique perspectives from the law enforcement and social service sectors.

## **4.2 Psychological implications of growing up in a begging family**

Adolescence is a critical developmental period marked by significant physical, cognitive, and emotional changes (Steinberg, 2014). For young people raised in the context of family-based begging, this journey can be particularly fraught, with unique psychological challenges that warrant close examination. This research explored the lived experiences of the psychological implications for this vulnerable population. To better understand the psychological landscape of adolescents from begging families, the researcher conducted a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The participants been raised in households that rely on begging as a primary source of income.

### **4.2.1 Disrupted Attachment and Trust Issue**

A prevalent theme that emerged from the research on adolescents from begging families in Addis Ababa was the profound impact of inconsistent emotional support and security within their family units. This lack of a stable, nurturing environment has significant implications for the development of healthy attachment patterns and the ability to form trusting relationships with peers. The participants shared, paint a poignant picture of family dynamics that are characterized by constant upheaval, emotional unavailability, and a profound sense of insecurity. Growing up in an environment where their basic needs for safety, comfort, and affection were not consistently met, these adolescents were unable to develop the stable, reciprocal relationships with caregivers that are essential for the formation of secure attachment.

R1 description of her parents being "*constantly preoccupied with finding the next meal*" highlights the emotional neglect and lack of attunement that she experienced as a child. Another interview with R5 words, "*I never knew what to expect from one day to the next,*" convey a profound sense of uncertainty and the absence of a predictable, reliable caregiver.

This absence of secure attachment figures during the critical developmental period of adolescence can have far-reaching consequences. Without the foundation of a stable, nurturing relationship, these young individuals may struggle to internalize healthy models of attachment, leading to difficulties in forming and maintaining trusting bonds with peers.

The group discussions illuminated the ways in which the lack of consistent emotional support and security within the family unit has shaped the participants' ability to trust and open up to others. The group discussions statement, "*When you grow up in a begging family, you learn very quickly that you can't rely on anyone but yourself, our parents were so focused on scraping together enough money to survive*" Participants expressed a deep-seated mistrust of others, often anticipating abandonment or betrayal. This defensive posture can create a self-fulfilling prophecy, as these adolescents may inadvertently sabotage their own efforts to form meaningful connections, further reinforcing their beliefs about the unreliability of others.

The collective sense of isolation and struggle to be vulnerable in their relationships, as evidenced by the shared experiences of the group, highlights the vicious cycle that can emerge when individuals grow up without the foundation of a secure attachment. This lack of trust and difficulty in opening up can severely limit their ability to develop the interpersonal skills and emotional resilience necessary for navigating the complex social landscape of adolescence.

#### **4.2.2 Internalized Shame and Stigma**

Begging, a harsh reality for many families struggling to survive in impoverished communities often comes with a heavy social burden – the pervasive stigma and shame that can profoundly impact the lives of those involved, especially the children and adolescents. This study delves into the personal narratives of adolescents from begging families, shedding light on the debilitating emotional toll of this societal stigma.

The overwhelming sense of shame experienced by the adolescent participants was a dominant theme that emerged from the interviews. R1 a 16-year-old girl, poignantly described the weight of this shame, stating,

*"When I'm out in public, I constantly worry that people are looking at me and judging my family. I feel like a pariah, like I'm somehow less than everyone else also they look at me like I'm some kind of leech, a burden on society. I can't even walk down the street without feeling like everyone is staring at me."*

This deep-seated feeling of being viewed as inferior or unworthy by their peers and community members can be crippling for young individuals struggling to navigate the complexities of adolescence. She said his eyes downcast. The constant exposure to this stigmatization can lead to a profound sense of shame, eroding the adolescents' self-worth and confidence. The overwhelming shame experienced by the participants often manifests in a withdrawal from social interactions and engagement with their broader community.

R2 a 17-year-old girl, shared how the pervasive stigma has profoundly impacted her daily life, stating, *"I used to love going to school and spending time with my friends, but now I dread it. I'm terrified of being pitied or ridiculed because of my family's situation."* This fear of judgment and exclusion has caused R2 to disengage from her social circles and even drop out of school, further exacerbating her isolation.

R3 a 15-year-old girl, described a similar pattern of social withdrawal, explaining how the shame has led her to become distrustful of others and reluctant to form meaningful relationships. "I feel like I'm constantly being looked down upon, like I'm somehow less worthy of respect and dignity because my family begs," She said, her voice trembling. This pervasive sense of being devalued and marginalized can drive adolescents to retreat from their communities, further reinforcing their feelings of isolation and low self-worth.

The combination of heightened shame and social withdrawal can have profound implications for these adolescents. The participants expressed experiencing a range of emotional and psychological challenges, including low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety.

Parent Respondent 1, poignantly observed the implication of the stigma on her daughter, stating, *"I can see the pain and shame in her eyes. She tries to hide our situation, making excuses to avoid school and social activities."*

The constant exposure to judgment and exclusion can take a significant toll on the adolescents' mental health, leading to a negative spiral of self-doubt, isolation, and emotional distress.

Parent Respondent 4, emphasized the need for greater understanding and empathy from the broader community, stating, *"People look at us like we're lazy or irresponsible, but they don't understand the desperation that drives us to beg. It's a matter of survival, not a choice."*

This lack of empathy and compassion from their peers and community members can further compound the emotional burden these adolescents face, exacerbating their feelings of shame and stigma.

#### **4.2.3 Stress and Anxiety**

At the heart of the issue lies the precarious nature of the families' financial situation. The adolescents recount with extreme distress how their parents spend endless hours on the streets, begging for whatever inadequate resources they can obtain. This constant state of uncertainty, never knowing whether there will be enough to cover the most basic necessities, such as food and shelter, creates an overwhelming sense of anxiety and dread.

One of the interviews I conducted was with R2's, a 17-year-old living in a low-income neighborhood. She shared her experiences with a deep sense of unease and anxiety that permeated her daily life. R2's eyes are downcast as she recounts the daily struggles her family faces.

*"It's just so overwhelming, you know? My parents are out on the streets for hours, begging for whatever they can get. We never know if we'll have enough to eat or pay the rent. The stress and anxiety are just too much sometimes."*

R2's describes how the uncertainty of their financial situation affects every aspect of her life.

*"I can barely sleep at night, always worrying about what tomorrow will bring. Will we have a roof over our heads? Will there be food on the*



*table? The pressure to contribute through begging is so intense. I feel like I'm drowning in this constant fear and worry. I try to help my parents as much as I can, but it's just so hard. I feel like I'm failing them, like I'm not doing enough. This situation has taken a toll on my future outlook. I can't even imagine what's in store for us."*

Another interview I conducted was with R6, 15 years old, R6's gaze is fixed on the floor as he speaks, his voice barely above a whisper.

*"The pressure to beg, to contribute to the family's income, it's just overwhelming. I'm terrified of it, but I know I have to do it. It's the constant worry, the uncertainty of whether we'll have a place to live or food to eat. I lie awake at night, my mind racing, wondering what's going to happen next. It's like a never-ending spiral of anxiety and dread."*

Furthermore, R2, 17 years old, fidget nervously as she recounts the daily struggles her family faces.

*"The stress and anxiety are just overwhelming. My parents are always so tense, constantly arguing about money. The pressure to help, to beg, it fills me with so much fear and anxiety. I never know what's going to happen next. Will we have a roof over our heads? Will there be food on the table? It keeps me up at night, this constant worry and fear about the future."*

R2's eyes well up with tears as she confesses the emotional toll this situation has taken on her.

*"I feel like I'm drowning in it all, like I'm losing myself. The stress and anxiety are just so overwhelming." She pauses, taking a deep breath. "I try to stay positive, to focus on my studies, but it's so hard when everything around me is in a state of upheaval."*

The adolescent interviews paint a vivid picture of the elevated stress and anxiety experienced by these young individuals, whose lives are shaped by the risky nature of their family's financial

situation and the constant pressure to generate income through begging. The uncertainty, the fear, and the overwhelming responsibilities thrust upon them at such a young age have taken a significant toll on their mental and emotional well-being, affecting their sleep, their focus, and their outlook on the future.

#### 4.2.4 Despair and Hopelessness

The researcher delved into the lived experiences of individuals and families facing the profound challenges of poverty, exploring the ways in which these circumstances shape their perceptions of the future and their sense of personal agency. Through in-depth interviews with both adolescents and their parents, a sobering picture emerged – one characterized by a pervasive sense of resignation, a dwindling of dreams and aspirations, and a profound feeling of entrapment within a relentless cycle of hardship.

The adolescent participants, once brimming with hopes and ambitions, now found them grappling with a profound sense of hopelessness. R1, a 16-year-old, expressed a deep-seated resignation, stating, "I used to dream of becoming a banker, of having a stable life and helping my family. But now, all I can see is this endless cycle of poverty and struggle."

Her words conveyed a profound realization that the obstacles before her seemed insurmountable, leaving her unable to envision a future beyond the relentless hardship she faced. R6, a 15-year-old, shared a similar sentiment, reflecting on his once-grand aspirations to become an engineer.

*"I used to have these big dreams, you know? I wanted to be an engineer, to build things that could make a difference in the world." However, the weight of responsibility and the lack of opportunity had taken a heavy toll, leaving him to lament, "But now, all I can think about is how I'm going to survive, how I'm going to help my family just get by."*

R2, a 17-year-old, poignantly described the shift in her outlook, from a vibrant determination to pursue higher education and a meaningful career, to a resignation that such dreams were now *"a distant fantasy, something that's not meant for someone like me."* The relentless struggle to survive had seemingly crushed the hope and agency that once fueled her ambitions.

The parents, too, grappled with the profound anguish of witnessing their children's dreams fade in the face of unrelenting poverty. Parent R1, adolescent R1 mother, expressed a profound sense of powerlessness, stating, *"I never imagined my children would have to face such a bleak future. We've worked so hard, sacrificed so much, but it's never enough."*

She lamented the hopelessness that had taken hold, the resignation that the cycle of poverty seemed inescapable. Parent R3, adolescent R10's father, echoed this sentiment, acknowledging the heartbreak of seeing his son's aspirations diminishes. *"I've always wanted my children to have a better life than I did, to break free from this endless struggle. But the truth is, the odds are stacked against us."* His words reflected a deep sense of resignation, a realization that the barriers to a better life were formidable and seemingly insurmountable. The pervasive sense of hopelessness and the erosion of personal agency observed among the participants point to the profound psychological and emotional toll of living in the shadow of constrained opportunities.

### **4.3 Social implications of adolescents**

This study has revealed that the social problems faced by those engaged in begging are among the most significant challenges they encounter. According to the respondents, the act of begging on the streets leads to the emergence of various social issues. The researcher identified high levels of competition and conflict amongst the beggars themselves. There appears to be a lack of cohesion and cooperation within the begging community, as they vie for limited resources and opportunities. Additionally, the study found that there are significant barriers to social interaction between the beggars and the broader community. The respondents reported a diminished sense of belonging and integration, indicating that they feel isolated and disconnected from the social fabric around them.

#### **4.3.1 Limited opportunities**

The researcher interviews with adolescent participants and gained valuable insights into their lived experiences and the profound impact of these limitations on their hopes and aspirations, the researcher also had the opportunity to engage with a group of adolescent beggars and gain a deeper understanding of the challenges they face in accessing equal opportunities for education and employment. Their stories shed light on the systemic barriers that perpetuate the cycle of poverty and hinder their chances for personal growth and upward mobility. 15-year-old R8 shared his frustrations,

*"I've always wanted to go to school and learn, but I can't because I live with my grandmother, so I have to get some money for our daily needs. Instead, I have to beg on the streets just to help provide for me and her. I see other children my age going to school, and I can't help but feel envious. They get to focus on their studies and have a chance at a better future, while I'm stuck out here, struggling to survive. I've tried to find a job, but no one wants to hire a beggar like me. They see me as untrustworthy and unskilled, even though I'm willing to work hard. It's so discouraging because all I want is a chance to prove myself and build a better life. But without access to education or job opportunities, I feel trapped in this cycle of poverty."*

The group participants unanimously agreed that the absence of educational opportunities was a significant barrier to their personal growth and upward mobility. The group shared their experience,

*"We've tried to find a job, but no one wants to hire us. They see us as untrustworthy and unskilled, even though we're willing to work hard. Without access to education or vocational training, how can we ever break out of this cycle of poverty? We have the same dreams and aspirations as everyone else, but the doors are always closed to us. It's so frustrating because all we want is a chance to prove ourselves and build a better life, but without the necessary support, it feels impossible."*

The lack of educational and employment resources has a profound impact on the participants' sense of personal growth and upward mobility. Without the means to pursue quality education or secure stable employment, they find themselves consistently held back from realizing their full potential. Similarly, 16-year-old R5 expressed,

*"I used to be so hopeful and trying to change my life by selling tissue and gum on the street but the police wouldn't let me work, but now, I just feel defeated. I see all these opportunities out there, but they're not*

*for people like me. It's like the doors are always closed, no matter how hard I knock. I want to do something meaningful with my life, to have a chance at a better future, but without access to jobs, it's like my destiny is already sealed."*

The emotional toll of these systemic barriers is immense, contributing to feelings of frustration, hopelessness, and a diminished sense of self-worth. These young individuals are grappling with the realization that the path to a better life may be forever beyond their reach, despite their aspirations and determination. The participants engaged in rich dialogue, sharing their personal experiences and perspectives on the limitations they encounter in pursuing quality education and securing meaningful employment and expressed a deep sense of resentment towards the societal prejudices and discrimination they face, which further exacerbates the challenges they already confront and shared,

*"People look at us and see just a beggar, someone they can't trust or rely on. They don't see our potential, our dreams, or our willingness to work hard. It's like we're invisible, and no one cares about our struggles sometimes they accused as a theft of mobile and took us to the police station"*

Police officers stated that these adolescents are "*highly engaged in criminal activities*" such as petty theft, robbery, assault, harassment, and even rape. According to the police officer, a large number of adolescents are brought to the station on a daily basis for their alleged involvement in these types of crimes against the surrounding community.

#### **4.3.2 Isolation and marginalization**

The other forms social problems of begging were isolation and marginalization as stated by the participants. In fact, human being is a social animal and social interaction is one of the basic features of human being. A pre requisite and fundamental component for social interaction is social relationship. One of the most prevalent themes that emerged from these conversations was the profound disappointment and frustration the participants expressed regarding the lack of compassion and understanding from society towards their circumstances. During a one-on-one interview, R9 age 15 shared his experiences,

*"People look at us someone unworthy of their time or attention. They don't realize the struggles we face, the systemic factors that have led us to this situation. Instead, they judge us; treat us like we're less than human. It's so disheartening because all we want is a chance to break out of this cycle of poverty, but society keeps pushing us down."*

This sentiment was echoed during a focus group discussion, the group passionately expressed,

*"We're human beings that need to work just like everyone else. But society refuses to see that. They think we're lazy, that we choose this life, when in reality, we have no choice. The lack of access to jobs has trapped us in this situation and no one seems to care."*

The participants shared their deep disappointment in how society often fails to recognize the systemic factors and structural barriers that contribute to their family's situation. 17-year-old R2 described her frustration,

*"My parents didn't choose to be poor, and they didn't choose to have to send their children out to the street. It's the lack of resources, the lack of opportunities that has forced us into this position. But people don't see that, they just see us as a nuisance, someone to avoid or ignore. We feel like we're invisible, like society has forgotten about us. No one wants to hear our stories, to understand the challenges we face. We're just a problem to be solved, not human beings deserving of compassion and support."*

One interview that stood out was with key informants. When presented with the sentiments expressed by the adolescent participants acknowledged the systemic issues underlying the children's plight, but also conveyed a sense of frustration and limited capacity to address them.

*"I can understand the families; it's true that poverty and lack of opportunity are the driving forces that have pushed them into this situation, not any deliberate choice on their part. But the reality is, we're dealing with limited resources and an overwhelming number of people*

*in need. As a government, we simply can't provide the level of support and rehabilitation that would be ideal."*

The key informant also explains that the primary focus on managing the visible manifestations, such as public safety and hygiene concerns.

*"We get complaints from residents about adolescents begging, causing disturbances, even engaging in criminal activities. So our hands are tied we have to address those immediate issues, even if it means taking a more punitive approach at times."*

While acknowledging the "immense challenges" faced by adolescents and their families expressed frustration at the lack of resources and political will to implement comprehensive, long-term interventions.

*"We try to provide some basic services, like temporary shelter, food assistance, and referrals to NGOs. But the needs are so vast, and our capacity is so limited. We end up having to prioritize the most urgent, visible cases - the ones that pose the biggest public nuisance, if I'm being honest. The systemic reforms and family-centered support that's really needed, that's just not feasible given our current constraints."*

The interviews with these government key informants painted a picture of institutional inertia and a crisis of resources, where they lived realities of adolescents and their families become deprioritized in the face of immediate concerns and budgetary limitations. This dynamic serves to perpetuate the marginalization experienced by this vulnerable population, even as the root causes are acknowledged.

#### **4.3.3 Discrimination**

The researcher delving into the lived experiences of adolescents and the opportunity to engage in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions that have shed light on the profound and far-reaching impact of stigmatization and discrimination. During a one-on-one interview, 16-year-old R1 shared her story with raw emotion,

*"People look at us and they see nothing but a failure, someone who is lazy and unwilling to work. They don't see the systemic barriers, the lack of opportunities that have forced us into this situation. Instead, they judge us; they make assumptions about our character and our worth."*

In focus group discussions, the participants expressed a deep sense of frustration and pain at the pervasive negative stereotypes they face. The group stated, "It's not like we chose this life, but that's how society sees us. We're labeled as lazy, as lesser than everyone else, and it hurts. It makes us feel like we're not deserving of respect or kindness." The participants shared how these biases and prejudices can significantly shape their self-perception and how they are perceived by others, creating formidable barriers to social integration. 17-year-old R2 also explained,

*"When everyone around you treats you like you're worthless, it's hard not to start believing it yourself. We constantly feel like we have to prove our worth, to show that we're not just beggars, but human beings. It's not just the way people look at us, it's the way they treat us. We're denied opportunities, we're treated with disdain, and it makes it so much harder to even imagine a way out of this situation. How can we ever succeed when the whole world seems to be against us?"*

The participants' stories painted a poignant picture of the profound isolation and marginalization they experience as a result of societal stigmatization. *"We feel like we're invisible, like no one sees us as anything more than a problem to be solved. We're not given a chance to show who we truly are, to prove that we're worthy of respect and support."* The researcher conducted an interview with a key government informant; the goal was to gain insight into the institutional perspectives and challenges surrounding the profound isolation and marginalization experienced by the adolescents. The sentiments expressed by the adolescent participants, key informant acknowledged the issue with a sense of resignation. "Yes, I'm aware that street children often feel invisible and dehumanized by society. It's a tragic reality, but one that we struggle to address effectively within the current system." The key informant went on to explain the underlying factors contributing to this dynamic.



*"There's a pervasive stigma and lack of understanding among the general public. Many people view street children as a nuisance, as criminals or delinquents, rather than recognizing them as human beings in dire circumstances. This societal attitude then gets reflected in the way institutions like ours operate."*

Key informants also admitted that the social welfare system is often ill-equipped to provide the holistic, empathetic support that street children desperately need.

*"Our resources are limited, our mandates are narrow, and we end up having to prioritize the most immediate, visible concerns. Addressing the profound isolation and restoring a sense of dignity - that's much harder to quantify and achieve within the constraints we face."*

The key informant further elaborated on the institutional barriers, stating,

*"There's also a lack of political will to truly tackle this issue head-on. Street children don't have a strong political voice or lobby, so they tend to get overlooked in favor of more visible, vocal constituencies. The funding and policy reforms needed to enact meaningful change just aren't there."*

The key informant's statements underscored the urgent need for a fundamental rethinking of how governments approach the issue of street children. Addressing the profound isolation and restoring a sense of dignity must be elevated as a priority, alongside the provision of comprehensive, rights-based services.

These insights underscore the urgent need to address the systemic issues that perpetuate the marginalization of adolescent beggars in Ethiopia. By challenging the negative stereotypes and biases that permeate society, and by fostering an environment of empathy, understanding, and social inclusion, we can empower these young individuals to overcome the barriers they face and unlock their full potential. Through the conducted interview participants' it becomes clear that beggars are often marginalized and excluded from any decision-making processes or discussions around issues that directly impact their lives and well-being. Despite the fact that many engage in

begging out of necessity, to meet their basic needs or as a source of income, they are often viewed by some community members as belonging to a lower social stratum. This perception of beggars as being of lesser value or importance leads to the perpetuation of discrimination and prejudice against them. In some cases, they are not even fully recognized or treated as fully human, further exacerbating their social marginalization and undermining their inherent dignity and worth.

#### 4.4. Strategy of begging

The findings from this study provide valuable insight into the complex psychosocial implications faced by adolescents who are raised in families engaged in begging. Through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the participants, as well as direct observations in the field, the research team was able to gain a nuanced understanding of the survival strategies and coping mechanisms employed by these young individuals.

During the in-depth interviews, one participant, a 16-year-old named R4, shared her personal experiences of being raised in a begging family. She described the constant pressure to perform and curate her appearance in order to secure donations from passersby.

*"It's not easy, you know," Fatima said. "I have to make sure my clothes are worn, my face looks sad, and I beg in the most crowded places, like outside the mosque. If I don't do it right, we won't have enough money for food."*

In the focus group discussions, the participants further elaborated on the various tactics they utilize to engage with the public.

*"We've learned that people are more likely to give if they see a child, or if we act like we're sick or hurt," shared Aisha, a 14-year-old participant. "So we'll sometimes hold a baby or pretend to faint on the street. It's not that we enjoy it, but we have to do what we can to survive."*

The finding was the multidimensional approach adopted by the adolescent beggars to garner attention and evoke empathy from passersby. This includes the deliberate use of facial expressions and even feigned illness or disability to convey a sense of vulnerability and need. The participants also reported employing various verbal tactics, such as sharing personal narratives and using emotive language, to appeal to the compassion of potential donors. Additionally, the use of visual aids, like signs, placards, or holding a child, was described as a means of more effectively communicating their circumstances and eliciting a stronger emotional response.

These strategies, while seemingly effective in securing financial contributions in the short term, point to the deeper psychosocial implications of being raised in a begging family. The findings suggest that these young individuals are often viewed through the lens of negative stereotypes and prejudices, rather than being recognized for their fundamental humanity and dignity. This lack of social acceptance and empathy can further exacerbate the challenges they face, undermining their ability to break free from the cycle of poverty and develop a positive vision for their future.

#### 4.4.1 Conduct of Begging

Currently, it is common to young individuals who have a capacity to do any work but they were engaged in begging in different areas of town. Beggars were used different artful techniques and strategies to get attention and grant from the passerby to support them. During the interviews with parent R2 expressed,

*"I'll never forget the day I had to hold daughter in my arms as we begged passersby for help. She was so weak from malnutrition that she could barely keep her eyes open. I tried to keep my composure, but the tears welled up in my eyes as I pleaded for assistance. "Please, my daughter hasn't eaten in days. We need food and medicine for girl. Anything you can spare would make all the difference. The looks on people's faces ranged from indifference to pity, but few were moved to action. One woman paused and handed me a small amount of money, but it was nowhere near enough to cover our dire needs. I just wanted to break down and cry, but I had to stay strong for my daughter."*

Another participant described the painful decision to feign fainting in the street, hoping passersby would stop and offer assistance.

*"I knew it was risky and I hated having to do it, but we were out of options. I just hit the ground and laid there, pretending to be unconscious. A few people did stop, but most just hurried past, unwilling to get involved."*

The group also agreed that visual aids like signs, sick children, and staged medical emergencies were often their last resort to try to elicit an emotional response and secure the help they so

desperately needed. The anguish and frustration was palpable as they recounted having to resort to such undignified tactics simply to survive. It was clear that these adolescents were facing unimaginable hardships, and their pleas for assistance deserved to be heard.

#### **4.5. Discussion of Findings**

In this part of the paper, major findings of the study are discussed in line with theoretical frameworks stated in chapter two- review of literature and research questions posed in the previous sections. All through the discussion, the researcher have analyzed the psychosocial implications of adolescent raised in begging family, in the case of Arada sub city, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In the chapter the researcher discussed the psychological implication growing up in begging family, the social implication and strategy and conduct of begging.

##### **4.5.1. Psychological implications of adolescents**

The findings of this research underscore the profound psychological toll experienced by adolescents raised in begging families. These young people face a unique set of challenges that can have far-reaching implication and future life outcomes.

The challenges faced by participants in forming and maintaining healthy attachments and trusting relationships due to the absence of consistent emotional support and security within their family units. This finding aligns closely with the principles of attachment theory, as developed by Bowlby and Ainsworth (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1978).

Attachment theory posits that the quality of early caregiving relationships serves as a foundation for an individual's ability to engage in secure, reciprocal relationships throughout their lifespan (Ainsworth, 1978; Bowlby, 1969). When adolescents lack the experience of a stable, responsive, and emotionally available attachment figure, they may struggle to develop the necessary internal working models and skills to navigate the complex social landscape of their peer relationships.

When individuals are subjected to social stigma and derogatory perceptions, they may internalize these negative attitudes, leading to a diminished sense of self-worth and reluctance to engage with their broader community. When children are deprived of the stable, responsive caregiving necessary for developing secure attachments, they often internalize a negative self-image and struggle to develop a sense of trust and belonging within their broader social environment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Sroufe et al., 2005). This dynamic is reflected in the participants'

expressions of deep-seated mistrust and anticipation of abandonment or betrayal, as captured in the group discussion statement: "When you grow up in a begging family, you learn very quickly that you can't rely on anyone but yourself, our parents were so focused on scraping together enough money to survive."

The absence of secure attachment figures during adolescence can have particularly profound consequences, as this developmental stage is a crucial period for the consolidation of self-identity, emotion regulation, and the formation of healthy peer relationships (Sroufe, 1996; Bernier et al., 2012). Without the foundation of a stable, nurturing relationship, these young individuals may struggle to internalize positive models of attachment, leading to the difficulties in forming and maintaining trusting bonds with peers that were observed in the study.

To address the complex challenges faced by these adolescents, interventions grounded in attachment theory may be particularly beneficial. By focusing on cultivating a sense of safety, acceptance, and belonging, these approaches can help foster the development of secure attachments and empower the participants to overcome the debilitating effects of mistrust and social withdrawal (Bowlby, 1973; Ainsworth, 1979). Additionally, incorporating elements of emotional regulation and social skill-building can further support these adolescents in navigating the developmental tasks of this crucial life stage. This lack of empathy and compassion from their peers and community members can further compound the emotional burden these adolescents face, exacerbating their feelings of shame and social alienation. (Link & Phlan, 2001).

The attachment theory also sheds light on the participants' heightened feelings of shame and social stigma. When individuals are unable to form secure attachments, they often internalize a negative self-image and struggle to develop a sense of belonging within their broader social environment (Bowlby, 1973; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). This dynamic can lead to social withdrawal, low self-esteem, and reluctance to engage with their community – patterns that are reflected in the participants' experiences. Interventions grounded in attachment theory may focus on fostering a sense of safety, acceptance, and belonging to help these youth overcome the debilitating effects of shame and stigma.

The adolescent respondents illustrated that not all community members have a positive outlook or respond favorably when beggars solicit alms. Some have been insulted, degraded, and humiliated

for engaging in street begging. The degree of negative feelings expressed by the almsgivers varied based on their own state - some insulted the beggars while intoxicated, others in a normal state, and some simply upon seeing the beggars. Due to this treatment, the adolescents have developed a sense of inferiority, hopelessness, and trauma. They have even evaluated themselves negatively for being found in this situation.

These negative experiences have taken a profound psychological toll on the adolescents. Some have developed a severe sense of inferiority and have begun to view themselves in a profoundly negative light, perceiving their situations as the "wrong place" to be. The interviews with these adolescents and their parents paint a harrowing picture of the psychological consequences of verbal abuse and social marginalization.

Research conducted by Teweldeberhan (2011) revealed that begging has significant psychological consequences for those involved. Beggars in Addis Ababa reported experiencing fear, depression, loneliness, hopelessness, identity crisis, anxiety, stress, low self-confidence, low self-esteem, shame, guilt, and various forms of abuse. The double layer of rejection, both on the streets and within their own communities, has exacerbated their feelings of isolation and worthlessness, profoundly impacting their mental health and sense of self. Furthermore, the financial struggles faced by their families contribute to increased levels of anxiety and stress, which can have long-lasting effects on the adolescents' mental health, potentially leading to conditions such as anxiety disorders and depression. The act of begging, although necessary for survival, was seen by the participants as a compromise to their human dignity, leading to feelings of shame and self-doubt.

The adolescent interviews paint a vivid picture of the elevated stress and anxiety experienced by these young individuals, whose lives are shaped by the precarious nature of their family's financial situation and the constant pressure to generate income through begging. The uncertainty, the fear, and the overwhelming responsibilities thrust upon them at such a young age have taken a significant toll on their mental and emotional well-being, affecting their sleep, their focus, and their outlook on the future.

The findings from these interviews align with the stress Lazarus and Folkman (1984). This theory posits that individuals appraise stressful situations based on their perceived ability to cope with the demands, and the resulting stress can lead to adverse psychological and physical outcomes. Recent

research has provided further support for this theory, emphasizing the role of cognitive appraisal and coping strategies in mediating the relationship between poverty and adolescent mental health (Wadsworth et al., 2020).

The feelings of stress and anxiety outlook on the future repeated exposure to uncontrollable and unavoidable negative situations, such as the financial instability faced by their families, can lead to a belief that their actions have no impact on the outcomes, resulting in a sense of helplessness and a diminished motivation to improve their circumstances. This phenomenon has been further explored in recent studies, highlighting the link between poverty, perceived control, and adolescent mental health outcomes (Moilanen & Shen, 2022). The research also reveals limited future orientation and feelings of hopelessness expressed by some participants, suggesting a sense of resignation about their prospects and a perceived lack of agency to envision or pursue alternative life paths (Bandur, a. 1977).

This finding can be understood through the lens of Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes the role of observational learning and modeling in the development of human behavior (Bandur.a, 1977). The absence of secure attachment figures and stable, nurturing role models during adolescence may deprive these young individuals of the crucial opportunities to observe and internalize healthy behaviors, including the ability to envision and work towards a positive future. According to social exchange theory, people tend to enter in a relationship if they believe that they will get some reward or benefit that matches with what they do. People engaged in interactions are rationally seeking to maximize the profits or benefits to be gained from those situations, especially in terms of meeting basic individual needs. Social exchange differs in important ways from strictly economic exchange. Melaku, 2022

#### **4.5.2. Social integration of adolescents**

The findings from these interviews can be examined through the lens of social exchange theory. Social exchange theory, as developed by sociologists such as George Homans (1958) and Peter Blau (1964), posits that individuals engage in social interactions based on an implicit cost-benefit analysis, seeking to maximize their rewards and minimize their costs (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964).

The social exchange perspective can shed light on the challenges they face in accessing educational and employment opportunities. The participants' perceived inability to offer valuable "social

currency" to potential employers or educators, such as educational credentials, work experience, or social connections, may lead to these institutions viewing the adolescents as less desirable exchange partners (Lin, 1999; Granovetter, 1973; Bourdieu, 2018). As highlighted by the police officer's in the findings, can be understood the adolescents are viewed as "untrustworthy" and "engaged in criminal activities." This negative perception can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, as the adolescents may internalize these labels and engage in behaviors that perpetuate the cycle of marginalization and exclusion (Rosenfeld, 2003; Wacquant, 2009; Pager, 2003). The lack of access to educational and employment opportunities, despite their aspirations and willingness to work hard, can lead to a sense of futility and disengagement from the system (Seligman, 1975; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Honneth, 2012).

The lack of educational and employment resources has a profound impact on the participants' sense of personal growth and upward mobility. Without the means to pursue quality education or secure stable employment, the participants find themselves consistently held back from realizing their full potential. This lack of access to the necessary resources to develop their skills and capabilities severely limits their opportunities for advancement and personal fulfillment.

The participants expressed a deep desire for societal attitudes to shift, for people to recognize the systemic nature of the issues they face and to approach them with empathy and understanding. The participants' experiences illustrate that their social contact and interaction with the host community is severely limited. The relationship between the beggars and those who give them alms is simplistic, revolving solely around the act of giving and receiving alms, rather than any deeper social connection or attachment. Consequently, the participants face a sense of profound disconnection of feeling conflicted with their previous life and separated from their beloved family and relatives. The lack of meaningful social ties and integration within the host community exacerbates the sense of isolation and marginalization experienced by the beggars.

The participants' desire for societal attitudes to shift and for people to recognize the systemic nature of the issues they face aligns with the principles of social dominance theory. Scholars like Mia Tuan (2020) and Patricia Hill Collins (2019) have emphasized the importance of critical analysis of social structures and power dynamics in addressing systemic inequalities. The participants' call for empathy and recognition of structural barriers reflects this theoretical perspective, which is crucial for promoting social justice (Tuan, 2020; Collins, 2019).



The participants' experiences of severely limited social contact and integration with the host community can be understood through the lens of social learning theory. Recent research by Nan Lin (2017) and Alejandro Portes (2018) has highlighted the significance of social networks and connections in accessing resources and opportunities. The participants' lack of meaningful social ties and integration within the host community exacerbates their sense of isolation and marginalization, as they are unable to leverage social capital to improve their circumstances (Lin, 2017; Portes, 2018).

The participants' feelings of being torn between love and loyalty towards their families and the resentment they feel towards their circumstances can be analyzed through the framework of emotional labor and emotional management. Scholars like Jasmine Rault (2021) and Stef Craps (2020) have explored how individuals navigate and manage their emotions in various social contexts, particularly when they experience conflicting emotional states. The participants' struggle to manage these emotions, as well as the stigma and social marginalization they face, contributes to their sense of isolation and loneliness (Rault, 2021; Craps, 2020).

The participants' reluctance and emotional difficulty in asking for loans or material assistance, even from those close to them, can be understood through the lens of social exchange theory and the concept of reciprocity. Recent studies by Yongren Shi (2022) and Guangzhi Huang (2021) have explored how individuals engage in social interactions based on a perceived cost-benefit analysis. The participants' inability to offer perceived valuable "social currency" in exchange for assistance may create a sense of imbalance and discomfort in seeking help, even from their social networks (Shi, 2022; Huang, 2021).

These young individuals find themselves in a difficult position, torn between their love and loyalty towards their families and the resentment they feel towards the circumstances that have led them to a life of begging. Feelings of isolation and loneliness are common among the participants, as the stigma attached to their begging family background often results in social marginalization. The prospect of asking for a loan, whether in the form of cash or material goods, from someone they know can be an incredibly difficult and emotionally taxing experience for these adolescents. The act of reaching out and making such a request, even to those close to them, likely evokes a range of complex emotions. Through the conducted interview participants' it becomes clear that beggars are often marginalized and excluded from any decision-making processes or discussions around

issues that directly impact their lives and well-being. Negative social conditions such as conflict, early marriage, divorce, segregation, discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice contribute to individuals resorting to begging and other means of earning a living (Balan, 1981; Beyer lee et al., 1976; as cited in Teweldeberhan, 2011). The experiences described in this study shed light on the debilitating emotional and psychological impact of the pervasive social stigma surrounding begging families, particularly on adolescents (Asfaw & Yigzaw, 2022). The overwhelming sense of shame and feelings of being viewed as inferior or unworthy by their peers and community members can profoundly undermine the self-worth and confidence of these young individuals (Goffman, 1963).

The participants' accounts reveal how this stigmatization can lead to a retreat from social interactions and disengagement from their broader community, further exacerbating their isolation and feelings of low self-esteem (Crocker et al., 1998). This pattern of social withdrawal is a common coping mechanism employed by those facing severe stigmatization, as they seek to avoid the judgment and exclusion they anticipate from others (Link & Phelan, 2001).

The study also emphasizes the discrimination, marginalization, and restricted participation in the mainstream that the adolescent beggars face due to their engagement in begging. These experiences of social exclusion and stigmatization can further be understood through the lens of social learning theory. Discrimination is one of the social problems that beggars have been encountered while conducting begging on the street. Some respondents expressed that they have been discriminated from different activities in their home region and in the study area who engaged in begging activity (Teweldebrhan, 2011).

Recent studies by Schonert-Reichl (2017) and Juvonen (2018) have highlighted how social rejection, discrimination, and marginalization can negatively impact an individual's self-concept, motivation, and social skills development. The adolescent beggars' limited access to positive social interactions and reinforcement from the mainstream community can perpetuate a cycle of social exclusion, further entrenching their isolation and marginalization (Schonert-Reichl, 2017; Juvonen, 2018).

#### 4.5.3. Strategy and Conduct of begging

Attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980), posits that the early childhood experiences of an individual, particularly the quality of their attachment to primary caregivers, significantly shape their social-emotional development and ability to form healthy relationships later in life. In the context of adolescents raised in begging families, the disruption or absence of a stable, nurturing attachment figure can have profound consequences.

R4, as shared in the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, suggested that the constant need to perform and curate their appearance for the purpose of securing donations may hinder their ability to form secure attachments with their parents or guardians. The lack of consistent and responsive caregiving, as the family's focus is solely on survival, can lead to the development of insecure attachment styles, which may be manifested in difficulties with trust, emotional regulation, and the formation of healthy relationships (Ainsworth, 1979; Bowlby, 1969). Furthermore, the social stigma and negative stereotypes faced by these adolescents can further exacerbate their sense of isolation and undermine their opportunities for positive social connections and support outside the family unit. This can perpetuate a cycle of attachment-related challenges, as insecure attachment patterns are often passed down across generations (Siegel, 1999).

Complementing the attachment theory perspective, the social exchange theory, as developed by George Homans (1958) and Peter Blau (1964), provides additional insights into the dynamics at play. This theory suggests that individuals engage in social interactions based on a perceived cost-benefit analysis, seeking to maximize their rewards and minimize their costs.

In the case of adolescents raised in begging families, the constant need to perform and curate their appearance can be viewed as a form of social exchange, where the perceived "reward" of securing financial donations outweighs the "cost" of compromising their sense of identity and well-being. This dynamic, however, comes at a significant psychological and emotional price, as the adolescents are forced to prioritize survival over their own developmental needs and self-actualization.

The social learning theory, as proposed by Albert Bandura (1977), sheds light on the role of observational learning and modeling in the development of the adolescents' begging behaviors.

The participants' accounts suggest that they have learned and internalized the tactics and strategies employed by their family members, often from a young age. This process of observational learning and the subsequent reinforcement of these behaviors through their effectiveness in securing donations can further entrench the adolescents' reliance on begging as a survival mechanism, potentially hindering their ability to envision and pursue alternative pathways for their future.

## Chapter-Five: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1 Summary of the major findings

The study attempted to investigate “the psychosocial implications of adolescents raised in begging family” three major thematic were identified in line with the major objectives of the study. To achieve the intended objectives primary data were collected, analyzed and interpreted. The researcher included 10 participants were selected for semi-structured interview and 5 participants took part in a focus group discussion. This study aimed to examine the psychological and social problems faced by the adolescent beggars. The researcher categorized all the responses into relevant themes and analyzed them in relation to the study's objectives.

When summarizing the finding the following major points identified

- ✓ The study found that Disrupted Attachment and Trust Issue Participants described family dynamics characterized by constant upheaval, emotional unavailability, and a profound sense of insecurity.
- ✓ The study explored the emotional toll of the societal stigma and shame experienced by adolescents from begging families. The participants expressed a deep sense of shame, feeling like pariahs and being viewed as inferior or burdens on society. This led to social withdrawal, disengagement from school and social activities, and difficulty forming meaningful relationships.
- ✓ The adolescent interviews paint a vivid picture of the elevated stress and anxiety experienced by these young individuals, whose lives are shaped by the precarious nature of their family's financial situation and the constant pressure to generate income through begging.
- ✓ Expressed feelings of powerlessness, shame, and anxiety over their precarious living situations.
- ✓ The conditions associated with begging, such as exposure to harsh environments, lack of proper nutrition, and potential substance abuse, can negatively impact the physical and mental health of adolescents. This can further exacerbate the challenges they face in improving their economic situation.

- ✓ The research examines the limited opportunities faced by adolescent participants, particularly those living in poverty and forced to beg on the streets. The participants expressed frustration at being unable to access education and employment due to systemic barriers, societal prejudice, and discrimination.
- ✓ The research examines the profound impact of stigmatization and discrimination on the lived experiences of adolescent beggars. Participants shared stories of being viewed as failures, lazy, and unworthy, with society failing to recognize the systemic barriers they face.
- ✓ The finding was the multidimensional approach adopted by the adolescent beggars to garner attention and evoke empathy from passersby. This includes the deliberate use of facial expressions and even feigned illness or disability to convey a sense of vulnerability and need.

## 5.2 Conclusions

The researcher's interviews with the participants reveal that while there are various factors that individuals engaging in begging, there are also certain aspects of the act of begging itself that serve as "attractors" for potential beggars. Despite the fact that begging is widely viewed as a social evil and a taboo practice throughout the country, the number of adolescents involved in this activity continues to increase over time. This suggests that for many, the perceived benefits of begging outweigh the social stigma associated with it. Begging is currently viewed as a profession and a source of income for many individuals, enabling them to sustain their own lives and support their families. At the same time, the adolescents themselves, as well as society in general, understand begging in a highly negative light, considering it a shameful, degrading, dehumanizing, and humiliating activity. As a result, the adolescent beggars experience and grapple with a multitude of psychological, emotional and social problems associated with their involvement in begging. Problems faced by the adolescent beggars include: trust issue, feelings of shame, identity crisis, stress, depression, and anxiety, hopelessness and low self-confidence, fear and suspiciousness, loneliness and social isolation, and strained relationships, isolation and limited social interactions, a diminished sense of community and belonging. These social problems further exacerbate the psychological distress experienced by the adolescents, trapping them in a cycle of marginalization and vulnerability.

Despite the negative perceptions and personal hardships, many individuals have been compelled to resort to begging as a last-ditch effort to survive and support their families. This paints a complex and multifaceted picture of the begging phenomenon, underscoring the need for a nuanced understanding and a compassionate approach to addressing the deep-seated psychological and social challenges faced by this vulnerable population. In general there is a lack of coordinated and systematic strategies among the different stakeholders, from the Federal government down to the Woredas level, to effectively address and curb the issue of begging. This lack of a cohesive and proactive approach by the relevant authorities has resulted in a low emphasis being placed on preventing and reducing this social problem within Ethiopia. Consequently, the adolescents and their peers view begging not as a social ill, but rather as a viable job or livelihood option. The general public's acceptance and normalization of this phenomenon, as evident in the common practice of providing alms to beggars on the streets, further reinforces the perception that begging is a socially accepted and even encouraged activity.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

#### **I. Recommendation for Policymakers**

Policymakers should expand social protection programs to ensure reliable access to food, clean water, and other essential resources for adolescents from begging families. Strengthen community structures by expanding mentorship programs that pair at-risk youth with respected elders or religious leaders as role models. Empower teachers and community centers to provide counseling, support groups, and stress management workshops tailored to these adolescents' experiences. Collaborate with faith-based organizations to incorporate traditional healing practices and cultural values into the support services. Combat the stigma surrounding mental health by conducting public awareness campaigns and fostering community dialogues to build understanding and empathy. Implement social welfare programs offering financial assistance, job training, and family counseling to help families transition away from begging.

#### **II. Recommendation for Social work education**

Social work education should incorporate cultural values and traditions to foster culturally-responsive interventions for adolescents from begging families. Students should be trained in trauma-informed care and equipped with evidence-based techniques to address mental health and relational challenges. Interdisciplinary collaboration and community partnerships are crucial for

comprehensive support. Curricula should also emphasize advocacy, policy engagement, and community-based research to drive systemic change. Immersive field placements and reflective practices should enable students to apply their skills and continuously improve their cultural competence when working with this population.

### **III. Recommendation for Social work practice**

Social workers should utilize culturally-responsive interventions and provide trauma-informed care to address the psychosocial implications and relational challenges faced by this population. A holistic, integrated approach that coordinates services across sectors is crucial, alongside active community engagement and partnerships. Social workers must also advocate for policy changes to address the systemic drivers of child begging, while continuously reflecting on their own biases and enhancing their cultural competence through ongoing learning and supervision.

### **IV. Recommendation for future Research**

Finally, I would suggest that further research is needed to more deeply explore the psychosocial implications for adolescents involved in begging. This future research should utilize a diverse array of methodological approaches and techniques, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complex challenges faced by these young individuals.



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## **Informed Consent Form for the Researcher**

I, Amaha Teshome, a postgraduate student at St Marry University, as a researcher of the study, have informed the study participants about the nature, purpose, risks, benefits and procedures of the study. I have also explained the ethical guidelines to be followed in the process. The issue of confidentiality, privacy, anonymity and participant's self-determination were given due emphasis in the introduction session. My signature below signifies that I have provided the above information for the study participants.

Name of the Researcher: Amaha Teshome

The Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendices

### Appendix-1: Informed Consent Form for the Participants

My name is Amaha Teshome, currently a Master of Social Work student in the graduate program of St Marry University. I am here hoping to collect data for my research titled “The psychosocial Implications of adolescents raised in Begging families”.

The study will provide a significant knowledge in understanding the psychosocial implications of adolescents raised in begging families. Hence, I am kindly requesting you to participate in the study.

If you decided to participate in the study, you will be asked questions whose answers will be input to the study. The interview will take not more than fifty minutes. Finally I will be thankful if you could participate in the study.

Signature of the participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Interviewer: Amaha Teshome

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix - 2: In-depth Interview Guide for Adolescents

### Demographic Information

- Name\_\_\_\_\_
- Age\_\_\_\_\_
- Sex\_\_\_\_\_
- Educational status \_\_\_\_\_

1. How has being raised in a begging family affected your mental health and emotional well-being?
2. In what ways has your family's situation impacted your sense of self-worth and identity?
3. What coping strategies do you use to manage the stress of your family's financial struggles?
4. Have you ever felt ashamed or stigmatized because of your family's involvement in begging?
5. How has the begging lifestyle influenced your educational goals and performance?
6. Are you concerned about the long-term psychological effects of growing up in a begging household?
7. Describe your experiences with social inclusion and acceptance within your community.
8. How have you developed meaningful friendships and relationships outside your family's begging context?
9. What social barriers or discrimination have you faced due to your family's begging activities?
10. Have you found any supportive social networks that have helped you feel more socially integrated?
11. Can you explain the techniques your family uses when begging for alms?
12. What motivates you to continue participating in begging, and how do you feel about it?

Thank you for your participation!

### **Appendix - 3: Focus Group Discussion Questions**

1. How did growing up in a begging family shape your sense of identity, self-worth, and emotional well-being during your adolescent years?
2. What were the psychological challenges you faced, such as shame or isolation, and how did you cope with them?
3. In what ways did your family's begging activities impact your educational aspirations and performance, and what factors helped you navigate these obstacles?
4. Describe your experiences with social acceptance and integration within your community?
5. What social stigma, discrimination, or exclusion did you face, and how did this affect your relationships and social participation?
6. What strategies or support systems helped you overcome social barriers during your adolescent years?
7. Can you share the strategies you or your family used to obtain financial support, and how did these strategies impact your daily life?

Thank you for your participation!

#### **Appendix - 4: In-depth Interview Guide for Parents**

1. How did growing up in a begging family shape your adolescent child's sense of self, identity, and overall well-being?
2. What specific psychological challenges, such as shame or trauma, did your child face, and how did they cope with these issues?
3. In what ways did your family's begging activities impact your child's educational aspirations and performance?
4. Describe your child's experiences with social acceptance and integration within the community?
5. What social stigma, discrimination, or exclusion did your child face, and how did this affect their relationships and social participation?
6. What strategies or support systems helped your child overcome social barriers?
7. Can you share the strategies your child or family used to obtain financial support, and how did these strategies impact their daily life?

Thank you for your participation!

### **Appendix - 5: In-depth Interview Guide for Key Informants**

1. What are the common psychological and emotional challenges faced by adolescents in begging families?
2. What interventions have you found effective in supporting the development of these adolescents?
3. How do the financial insecurities of begging impact the educational and economic prospects of these adolescents?
4. In your experience, how does societal stigma affect the social integration of adolescents from begging families?
5. What systemic barriers prevent these adolescents from accessing necessary social services and support?

Thank you for your participation!