

Evaluating the Impacts and Repercussions of the Begging Phenomenon on the Social, Economic, and Security Dimensions of Society in the United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

This study analyses the phenomenon of begging in the United Arab Emirates and its social, economic, and security impacts. It investigates the main causes behind its spread, evaluates existing governmental policies aimed at limiting it, and assesses the effectiveness of these measures. The research addresses the growing prevalence of begging despite regulatory efforts, as well as its harmful consequences for social cohesion, economic stability, and public safety. Using an inductive approach, the study draws on governmental reports, academic literature, and field data, including questionnaires and structured interviews with community members and specialists. Statistical methods, including descriptive analysis and Analysis of Variance, are applied to examine the data. The findings show that begging negatively affects social structures by weakening family cohesion and reducing community trust. Economically, it increases public welfare expenditures and creates an unfavourable environment for investment. From a security perspective, the study indicates that begging is associated with higher crime risks and potential involvement in illegal activities, which threaten public safety and societal stability. The study emphasizes that begging is not merely a social concern but a multidimensional issue with serious economic and security implications. It highlights the need for more effective and comprehensive policy frameworks to address the root causes of the phenomenon. The research provides practical recommendations to strengthen current strategies, limit the spread of begging, and support decision makers in developing sustainable solutions.

Keywords: Begging, Social Dimensions, Economic Dimensions, Security Dimensions, Government Policies

Introduction

The phenomenon of begging has emerged as a growing social concern in the United Arab Emirates, particularly in Dubai, where it generates complex challenges across social, economic, and security dimensions. In the context of rapid urbanization and economic

diversification, Dubai has become increasingly vulnerable to such irregular social practices, which often intersect with broader regional and global dynamics. According to reports issued by Dubai Police, more than 2,500 begging cases were recorded in 2021 alone, reflecting the persistence and expansion of this phenomenon despite sustained governmental efforts to curb it (Dubai Police, 2021). This trend is further reinforced by data from the Dubai Statistics Center, which indicates a 15% increase in begging incidents over the past five years, underscoring the structural and contextual factors contributing to its proliferation (Dubai Statistics Center, 2022). Among the most salient drivers are poverty and unemployment, which push certain individuals toward informal and, at times, illicit means of income generation.

Within this broader context, begging exerts significant social implications by undermining social cohesion and weakening the fabric of community relations. It contributes to the erosion of shared values such as solidarity and mutual responsibility, as individuals engaged in begging are often stigmatized and perceived as a societal burden. This perception reinforces processes of marginalization and social exclusion. Empirical evidence supports this concern, as a public opinion survey conducted by Zayed University found that 63% of respondents reported heightened feelings of insecurity in areas where begging is prevalent, indicating a decline in social trust and perceived public safety (Zayed University, 2022).

Economically, the phenomenon imposes measurable costs on public resources and institutional capacities. Financial burdens arise from increased spending on social welfare services, law enforcement, and preventive interventions. The Arab Monetary Fund estimates that Dubai incurs annual losses of approximately 20 million dirhams due to activities associated with begging (Arab Monetary Fund, 2021). In addition, the visible presence of begging in key tourist areas negatively affects the city's global image and competitiveness, as maintaining a secure and attractive environment remains central to Dubai's tourism-driven economy (Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing, 2021).

From a security perspective, the issue extends beyond individual acts of solicitation to encompass potential links with organized criminal activities. Data from Dubai Police indicate that 45% of individuals apprehended for begging in 2021 were associated with illegal practices such as fraud and narcotics trafficking (Dubai Police, 2021). This highlights the need for more integrated and proactive enforcement strategies that address both the symptoms and underlying networks of the phenomenon.

Despite the growing body of descriptive reports on begging in Dubai, existing studies often lack a comprehensive, multidimensional analytical framework that systematically integrates social, economic, and security dimensions. Moreover, there remains a limited emphasis on evidence-based evaluation of policy effectiveness and the interconnections between structural causes and institutional responses.

In light of these gaps, the present study aims to provide a holistic and analytically grounded examination of the begging phenomenon in Dubai by employing a multidimensional framework that captures its social, economic, and security implications. The study's originality lies in its integrative approach, which bridges fragmented perspectives in the literature and advances a more comprehensive understanding of the issue. By drawing on

official statistics, governmental reports, and academic sources, this research seeks to generate empirically grounded insights and to propose actionable recommendations that contribute to the development of more effective and sustainable policy interventions within the field of social sciences.

Study Methodology

This study adopts the case study methodology to examine the phenomenon of begging in the United Arab Emirates, with particular emphasis on the Emirate of Dubai. The case study approach facilitates an in-depth investigation of a specific social phenomenon—in this instance, begging—to generate a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of its social, economic, and security implications. By situating the phenomenon within its real-world context, this methodological framework enables the researcher to interpret empirical evidence interactively while considering the distinctive socio-economic environment of Dubai and the surrounding circumstances that shape patterns of begging within the city.

Data Collection and Analytical Procedures

Conducting a case study on begging in Dubai necessitates the identification of accurate and reliable data sources related to the phenomenon. Multiple primary sources were utilized to obtain relevant information, including official reports issued by governmental institutions such as Dubai Police and the Statistics Center. These institutional publications provide up-to-date and credible data regarding the magnitude of the phenomenon and its spatial distribution across the city. In addition, media sources such as news articles and journalistic reports were consulted to trace the evolution of the issue and to document public campaigns and community initiatives aimed at addressing it.

The significance of previous academic literature cannot be overlooked, as these studies constitute an essential theoretical foundation for understanding the conceptual and analytical frameworks associated with begging. These works were systematically reviewed and interpreted within the local context of Dubai to develop deeper insights into the ways in which begging affects multiple sectors of society. Furthermore, questionnaires and interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders including citizens and residents of Dubai, as well as representatives of relevant authorities to collect both qualitative and quantitative data that reflect diverse perspectives on the consequences of begging.

Data Analysis

Following the completion of data collection, the information was analyzed using analytical techniques consistent with the case study methodology. The data were categorized according to social, economic, and security-related dimensions to facilitate systematic interpretation. Content analysis was applied to interview transcripts and media materials to derive qualitative insights into the broader implications of the phenomenon. With respect to quantitative analysis, descriptive statistical methods were employed to examine the distribution and prevalence of begging across different areas of Dubai. These analytical procedures contributed to the formulation of practical recommendations grounded in a comprehensive and empirically informed case study of begging in the city.

Study Population and Research Sample

The study population in this investigation comprises a diverse group of individuals within Emirati society, including representatives of governmental entities responsible for combating begging, members of the public, and specialists in social, economic, and security-related disciplines. The inclusion of these groups aims to present a holistic perspective on the multifaceted impacts of begging across different sectors of society.

The research sample was selected using a convenience sampling approach drawn from the targeted segments of Emirati society, following coordination with relevant authorities to facilitate the data-collection process. The total number of respondents reached 600 individuals, distributed as follows: 200 representatives from governmental institutions, 200 members of the public, and 200 experts in social, economic, and security fields. Data collection instruments were administered through electronic questionnaires and face-to-face interviews to ensure the acquisition of diverse and comprehensive information.

Design of the Research Instrument

Based on a review of several relevant previous studies—including those conducted by Al-Omari and Al-Zahrani (2021) and Al-Harbi (2021)—the researcher developed a questionnaire to measure the impacts of begging across social, economic, and security dimensions within Emirati society. The questionnaire consists of 30 items distributed across three principal dimensions: social impacts, comprising 10 items; economic impacts, comprising 10 items; and security impacts, comprising 10 items.

The Impact of Begging on the Social Fabric

The phenomenon of begging exerts a significant influence on the erosion of social trust among members of society. When citizens frequently encounter begging in streets and public spaces, a growing sense of insecurity and suspicion toward others may emerge. This decline in trust can widen the social divide between different societal groups, thereby reinforcing patterns of inequality and deepening divisions between affluent and disadvantaged populations (Al-Yousifi, 2020). Such diminished trust directly affects social cooperation and interaction, ultimately hindering collective efforts aimed at addressing community challenges and promoting social cohesion.

Disintegration of Family Relationships

Conversely, begging may contribute to the fragmentation of family relationships. Families in which one member resorts to begging often experience considerable psychological and social pressures, which intensify internal tensions and conflicts. These pressures may eventually lead to separation among family members or a deterioration in familial bonds, thereby undermining the stability of the household (Al-Obaidi, 2019). Moreover, children raised in environments associated with begging frequently suffer from psychological and social difficulties that impede their healthy development and social integration.

The Impact of Begging on Social Relations

The practice of begging can also reinforce patterns of exploitation and discrimination within society. Beggars often rely on appealing to the sympathy of others to obtain financial assistance, which may foster perceptions of manipulation and opportunistic behavior among different social groups. Consequently, such dynamics may intensify stigmatization and

discriminatory attitudes toward beggars and other marginalized populations, who are increasingly viewed as burdens on society rather than individuals deserving of support and assistance (Al-Hasani, 2018). This stigmatization can further deepen feelings of isolation and social exclusion among vulnerable groups.

Decline of Cooperative and Altruistic Values

Furthermore, the spread of begging may contribute to the weakening of values associated with cooperation and mutual assistance within society. When public compassion is repeatedly exploited as a means of acquiring money through begging, individuals may become less willing to provide help or support to those who are genuinely in need. This decline in cooperative values can ultimately weaken social solidarity and reduce the level of community support available to the most vulnerable segments of the population (Al-Hamdani, 2021).

Table

Statistical table on the impact of begging on the social fabric of the United Arab Emirate

Indicators	The impact %	Description	The source
Erosion of social trust	62	Increased suspicion and insecurity among individuals due to begging.	Survey study, 2023
Disintegration of family relationships	55	The impact of begging on family stability and a rise in the rate of family conflicts.	Social study, 2022
Exploitation of sympathy	70	Begging and the exploitation of people's actions by beggars to obtain money.	Social report, 2023
Discrimination against beggars	67	Increased social discrimination against beggars and vulnerable groups.	Analytical study, 2023
Decline in the values of cooperation and assistance	50	A decreased willingness to offer support and assistance because of begging.	Community analysis, 2023
Isolation of beggars	58	Increased feelings of isolation among beggars and affected groups.	Social report, 2023
Impact of begging on children	52	Negative impact on children raised in begging environments, including anxiety and developmental delays.	Field study, 2023
Impact of begging on public security	60	Increased burden on security agencies and the promotion of illegal activities.	Security study, 2023

Analysis

The data indicate that begging exerts multifaceted effects on the social fabric of the United Arab Emirates. Approximately 62% of respondents reported an erosion of societal trust, reflecting a growing climate of suspicion and apprehension among community members. Furthermore, 55% identified a deterioration of family cohesion, suggesting that begging negatively influences household stability and interpersonal relationships within families. The exploitation of public sympathy and the discrimination directed toward beggars were reported at rates of 70% and 67%, respectively, highlighting a significant escalation in social exploitation and stigmatization. In addition, a decline in the values of cooperation and mutual

assistance was recorded at 50%, indicating a weakening of communal solidarity. Social isolation among beggars reached 58%, while the perceived impact of begging on children was reported at 52%, reflecting adverse consequences for younger members of society. Finally, the influence of begging on public security reached 60%, underscoring the increasing pressures placed on law enforcement and security institutions.

Economic Dimensions of Begging

The phenomenon of begging generates tangible economic losses at the local level. Individuals engaged in begging are frequently economically inactive, meaning they do not contribute productively to the local economy but instead rely on others as their primary source of income (Al-Nuaimi, 2020). This dependency can exert a detrimental effect on local economic dynamics by diminishing individuals' purchasing capacity and intensifying pressure on social welfare systems.

Social Welfare Expenditures

Conversely, the prevalence of begging contributes to rising social welfare expenditures. Governments are often compelled to allocate additional resources to provide services for beggars and for groups affected by the phenomenon, including shelter programs, food assistance, and healthcare services. These expenditures may impose a substantial burden on public budgets and restrict the financial resources available for other developmental initiatives (Al-Saadi, 2019).

The Impact of Begging on the Macroeconomy

Begging also undermines the overall economic productivity of society. Individuals who resort to begging are frequently either unable or unwilling to participate effectively in the labor market or to actively pursue employment opportunities, thereby reducing the aggregate level of economic productivity (Al-Ali, 2018). Moreover, the visibility and persistence of begging may weaken individuals' motivation to work and innovate, as begging can appear to provide a comparatively easier albeit limited source of income.

Effects on Investment

In addition, the prevalence of begging may adversely influence the investment climate. Investors tend to avoid areas where begging is widespread due to concerns related to security, social stability, and the broader urban environment. Such conditions can contribute to a decline in both domestic and foreign investment flows, ultimately constraining economic growth (Al-Suwaidi, 2021). An unstable environment associated with persistent begging can therefore hinder efforts to attract capital and achieve sustainable development.

Security Dimensions of Begging

The phenomenon of begging is widely regarded as a factor that may contribute to the escalation of crime rates within society. Individuals engaged in begging are frequently vulnerable to exploitation by organized criminal networks, which may lead to the expansion of illicit activities such as theft, fraud, and financial scams (Al-Sharif, 2020). Moreover, when begging fails to provide sufficient financial returns, some individuals may resort to criminal conduct as an alternative means of securing income.

Involvement in Illegal Activities

Conversely, begging may also facilitate the involvement of beggars in unlawful practices. In certain cases, individuals use begging as a façade to conceal illegal operations, including drug trafficking or the promotion of other illicit enterprises (Al-Otaibi, 2019). Such practices further complicate the phenomenon and intensify the challenges encountered by law-enforcement authorities in addressing and regulating it.

The Impact of Begging on Public Security

Begging represents a potential threat to social stability. The presence of beggars in public spaces may evoke feelings of anxiety and insecurity among citizens, thereby undermining the overall perception of safety and social order (Al-Mheiri, 2018). These sentiments may gradually erode public trust in security institutions and widen the gap between the community and governmental authorities.

Increased Burden on Security Institutions

Furthermore, the persistence of begging imposes additional pressures on security institutions. Addressing the phenomenon and managing individuals involved requires considerable resources and sustained efforts from police forces and specialized agencies, which may divert attention from other pressing security priorities (Al-Hashmi, 2021). Such institutional strain can reduce operational efficiency and intensify the difficulties faced in maintaining public safety and order.

Government Report on Assessing the Impacts and Repercussions of Begging on the Social, Economic, and Security Dimensions of Society in the United Arab Emirates

Begging constitutes a social phenomenon that warrants particular attention in the United Arab Emirates. This issue encompasses a range of implications and repercussions affecting the social, economic, and security dimensions of the community. The present report provides a comprehensive examination of these impacts, drawing upon field-based and empirical data. It specifically investigates the ways in which begging influences the societal fabric, economic performance, and public security within the UAE.

Social Dimensions of Begging

Empirical findings indicate that begging generates clearly adverse consequences for the social cohesion of Emirati society. These consequences include the erosion of communal trust and the weakening of family structures. Analytical evidence suggests that the prevalence of begging fosters perceptions of insecurity and contributes to heightened social tension, which in turn undermines patterns of cooperation and interpersonal interaction among members of the community.

Economic Dimensions of Begging

From an economic perspective, the phenomenon of begging indirectly affects the financial resources of society. Its proliferation may intensify the burden on social welfare programs and public services while simultaneously diminishing revenues derived from formal economic activities. Moreover, begging contributes to the expansion of the informal economy, a sector that operates outside regulatory frameworks and therefore offers limited contribution to national economic development.

Security Dimensions of Begging

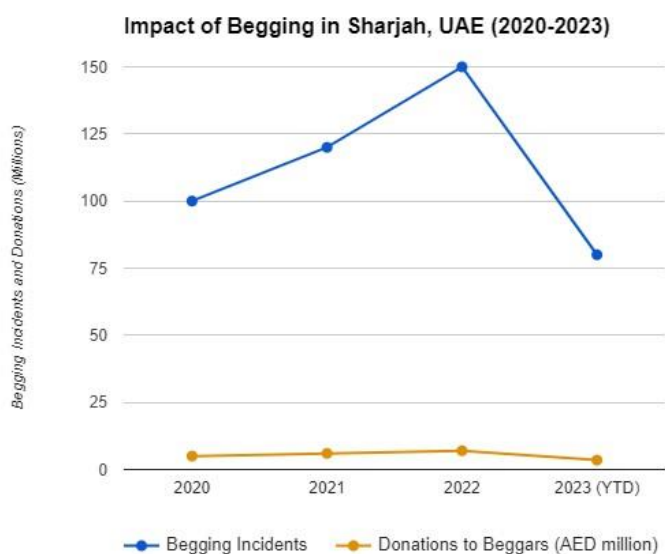
Regarding the security dimension, begging increases pressure on law-enforcement institutions due to the necessity of monitoring potentially illicit activities associated with this practice. In certain instances, begging may also intersect with other forms of criminal behavior, thereby requiring strengthened security measures and more robust institutional efforts to mitigate and control this phenomenon.

Table

Statistical table on the impact of begging

Indicators	The impact %	Description	The source
Erosion of social trust	62	Increased suspicion and insecurity among individuals due to begging.	Survey study, 2023
Disintegration of family relationships	55	The impact of begging on family stability and a rise in the rate of family conflicts.	Social study, 2022
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A graph analyzing the effects of begging



The graph indicates that the most pronounced consequences of begging manifest in the forms of exploitation and discrimination against individuals who beg, recording notably high proportions of 70% and 67%, respectively. Additionally, the influence of begging on the erosion of social trust and the intensification of social isolation appears significant, reflecting its considerable adverse impact on social cohesion. Although the economic and security-related implications of begging are also evident, their magnitude remains slightly lower when compared with the broader social repercussions.

The findings of this report synthesize the multifaceted impacts of begging across social, economic, and security dimensions within the United Arab Emirates. The analysis demonstrates that begging undermines the social fabric by weakening communal trust and contributing to the fragmentation of family relationships. It further highlights the economic repercussions associated with increased pressure on public resources, alongside security challenges related to monitoring and addressing illicit activities. In light of these findings, the report recommends strengthening social and economic policies aimed at combating begging while ensuring adequate support for vulnerable populations, thereby promoting greater social stability, economic resilience, and public security within the state.

Statistical Treatment

Descriptive statistics are employed to summarize the collected data and characterize the features of the study sample. This includes calculating measures such as means, standard deviations, percentages, and frequency distributions. These statistical indicators provide a foundational understanding of how responses are distributed and reveal the general patterns and tendencies within the dataset.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is utilized to compare mean differences across multiple groups for instance, examining the effects of begging across different social or economic categories. This analytical technique determines whether statistically significant differences exist among the groups under investigation.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is applied to examine the relationship between the independent variable (such as the social and economic determinants of begging) and the dependent variable (including the social, economic, and security consequences associated with begging). Depending on the number of explanatory variables included in the study, either simple linear regression or multiple regression models may be implemented.

Presentation of Impact Analysis Results Across Different Categories

A table illustrating the effects of the begging phenomenon on the social, economic, and security dimensions according to the different categories.

Table 3

Effects of begging on social, economic, and security dimensions by category

Category	Dimension	Average impact	Standard deviation	Number of respondents
Social	Male	3.2	0.7	100
Social	Female	3.5	0.6	120
Economic	Male	3.8	0.8	100
Economic	Female	4.0	0.7	120
Security	Male	3.7	0.9	100
Security	Female	4.1	0.8	120

Notes:

- Mean Effect: Measured on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents a *very low effect* and 5 indicates a *very high effect*.
- Standard Deviation: Reflects the extent of variability in respondents' answers.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics facilitate an understanding of how the data are distributed across different categories and assist in identifying prevailing patterns and general trends. For instance, it can be observed that the economic consequences of begging are relatively higher among females (mean = 4.0) compared with males (mean = 3.8). This difference may reflect distinct economic realities and structural disparities between genders.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) is employed to determine whether statistically significant differences exist among the mean scores of begging-related impacts across various groups. For example, ANOVA can be applied to compare the effects of begging on the security dimension between males and females in order to ascertain whether the observed differences in their mean values are statistically meaningful.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is utilized to examine the relationships between the potential determinants of begging such as unemployment, poverty, and family disintegration and their implications for the social, economic, and security dimensions. This analytical approach enables the identification of the most influential factors contributing to the proliferation of the phenomenon and supports the formulation of appropriate policy interventions to address it.

Conclusions

Through the application of these statistical procedures, a comprehensive understanding can be achieved regarding the impacts and repercussions of the phenomenon of begging on the social, economic, and security dimensions within Emirati society. Such insights contribute to the development of effective strategies aimed at mitigating this phenomenon and enhancing social, economic, and security policies within the state.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the phenomenon of begging represents a significant challenge that affects the social, economic, and security dimensions of society in the United Arab Emirates. A comprehensive examination of these three dimensions reveals that begging contributes to the erosion of social trust and the weakening of family cohesion. It also fosters exploitation and social stratification among different groups, thereby undermining the values of solidarity and mutual support that sustain social harmony. From an economic perspective, begging demonstrates a clearly adverse impact on the local economy and overall productivity, while simultaneously increasing the financial burden of social welfare systems and negatively influencing the investment climate. In terms of security, the persistence of begging is associated with higher crime rates and greater involvement of individuals in illicit activities, which ultimately threatens social stability and places additional pressure on law-enforcement institutions.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be proposed to effectively address the phenomenon of begging. It is essential to strengthen both governmental and community-based initiatives aimed at supporting individuals engaged in begging through structured rehabilitation programs and vocational training opportunities, in addition to providing psychological and social assistance to affected families. Furthermore, enhanced coordination between security authorities and social institutions is necessary to confront crimes associated with begging and to promote a safer and more stable environment that encourages investment and economic growth. Finally, raising public awareness about the multidimensional consequences of begging and emphasizing the importance of collective responsibility will contribute to developing comprehensive and sustainable solutions to this societal issue.

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