

Realities of Begging in Pakistan

A Survey Report



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Personal Interactions with Beggars

- Nearly 2/3rd Pakistanis (63%) say they feel pressured or obligated to give money to beggars
- 1 in 5 Pakistanis (18%) give money to beggars almost all the time, while a majority (54%) give them money sometimes
- 7 in 10 Pakistanis (71%) say they gave money to a beggar within the previous week
- The average amount of money that people give to beggars is Rs. 20. This translates into 3780 million PKR given to beggars.
- 40% Pakistanis say they worry about their safety when giving money to beggars, while half (49%) are not concerned about their safety

Perceptions of Begging/Beggars

- An equal proportion (45% each) of Pakistanis believe that beggars are genuinely in need and those who believe they are not
- 7 in 10 Pakistanis (71%) agree that beggars are forced to resort to begging due to inflation
- A significant majority (84%) of Pakistanis believe that beggars tactics have changed to become more aggressive and pressurizing
- Two thirds of Pakistanis (66%) agree that there exist organizations which exploit beggars for money by forcing them to beg
- More Pakistanis are skeptical (44%) about whether giving money to beggars actually improves their lives, compared to Pakistanis who believe that the money would genuinely improve beggars' lives (37%).

Frequency of Public Interaction with Beggars

- 1 in 2 Pakistanis see beggars on a daily basis.
- 36% of respondents believe that most people give money to beggars, whereas 24% stated that very few people do this.

Topic 1:

Personal Interactions with Beggars

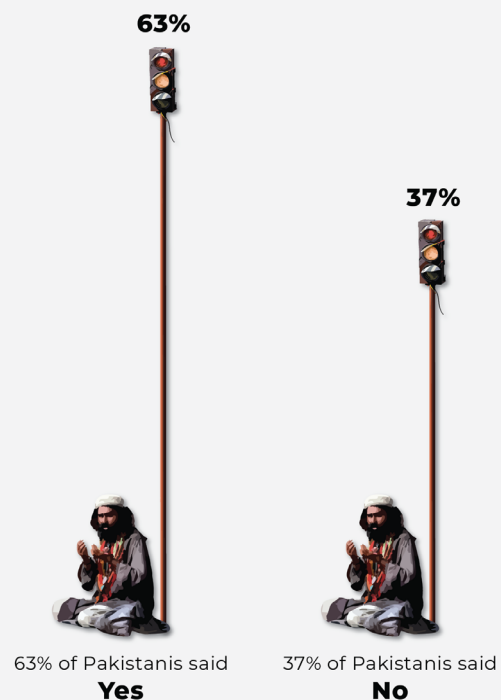
This Topic has 5 items. Key Findings and Statistical Analysis for each of them are provided ahead in this section



Item 1.1: Key Finding

Nearly 2/3rd Pakistanis (63%) say they feel pressured or obligated to give money to beggars

Do you ever feel pressured or obligated to give money to beggars, like you would feel bad if you didn't give it?



Older respondents (aged 50 and above) are least likely to feel pressured into giving money to beggars (49%), followed by respondents aged 30-50 (64%), who are trailed by respondents below 30 (68%). Women (66%) are 6% more likely to feel pressured compared to men (60%).

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 1.1: Statistical Analysis

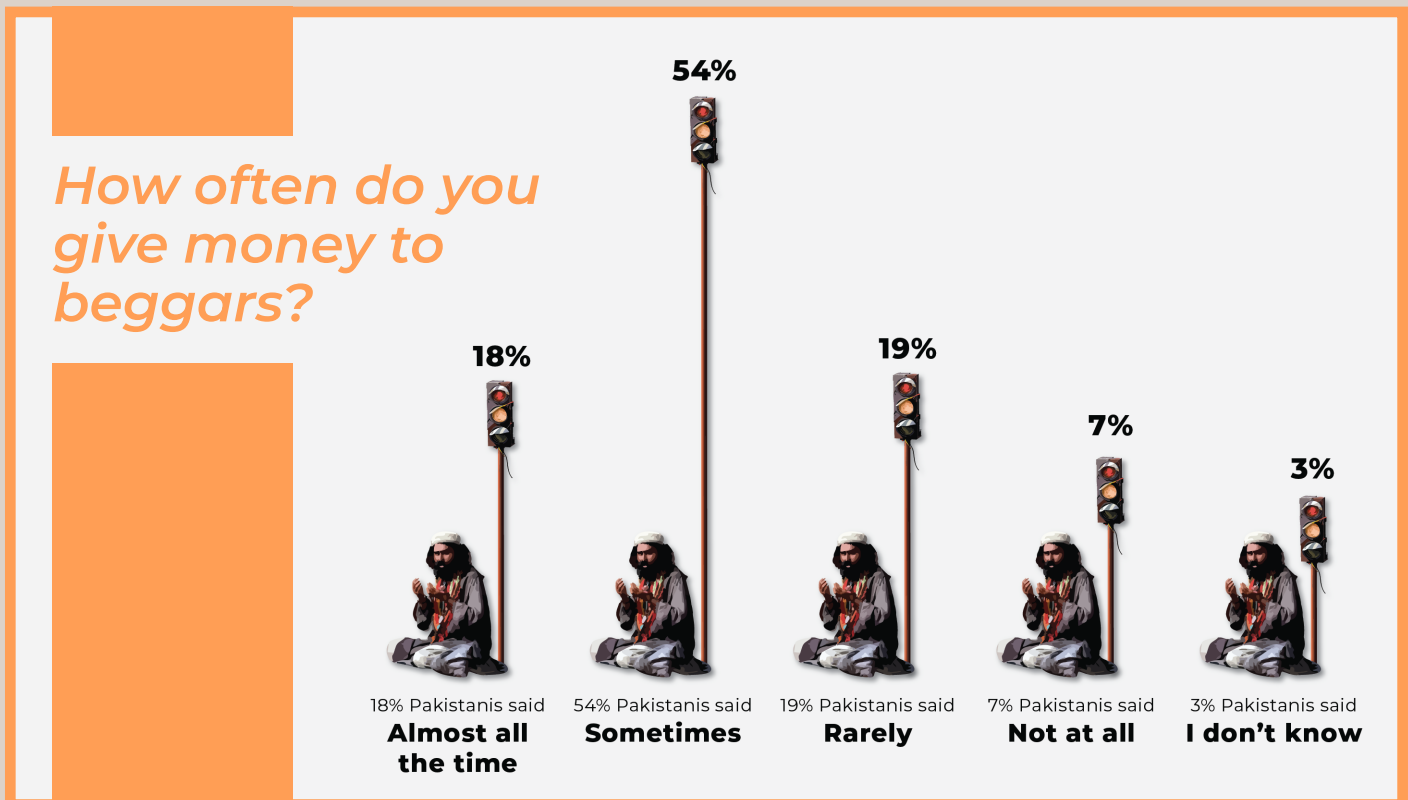
Do you ever feel pressured or obligated to give money to beggars, like you would feel bad if you didn't give it?

	Yes	No
All Pakistan	63%	37%
Location		
Rural	65%	35%
Urban	60%	40%
Age of the Respondent		
Under 30	68%	32%
30-50	64%	36%
50+	49%	51%
Gender		
Male	60%	40%
Female	66%	34%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 1.2: Key Finding

1 in 5 Pakistanis (18%) give money to beggars almost all the time, while a majority (54%) give them money sometimes



Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 1.2: Statistical Analysis

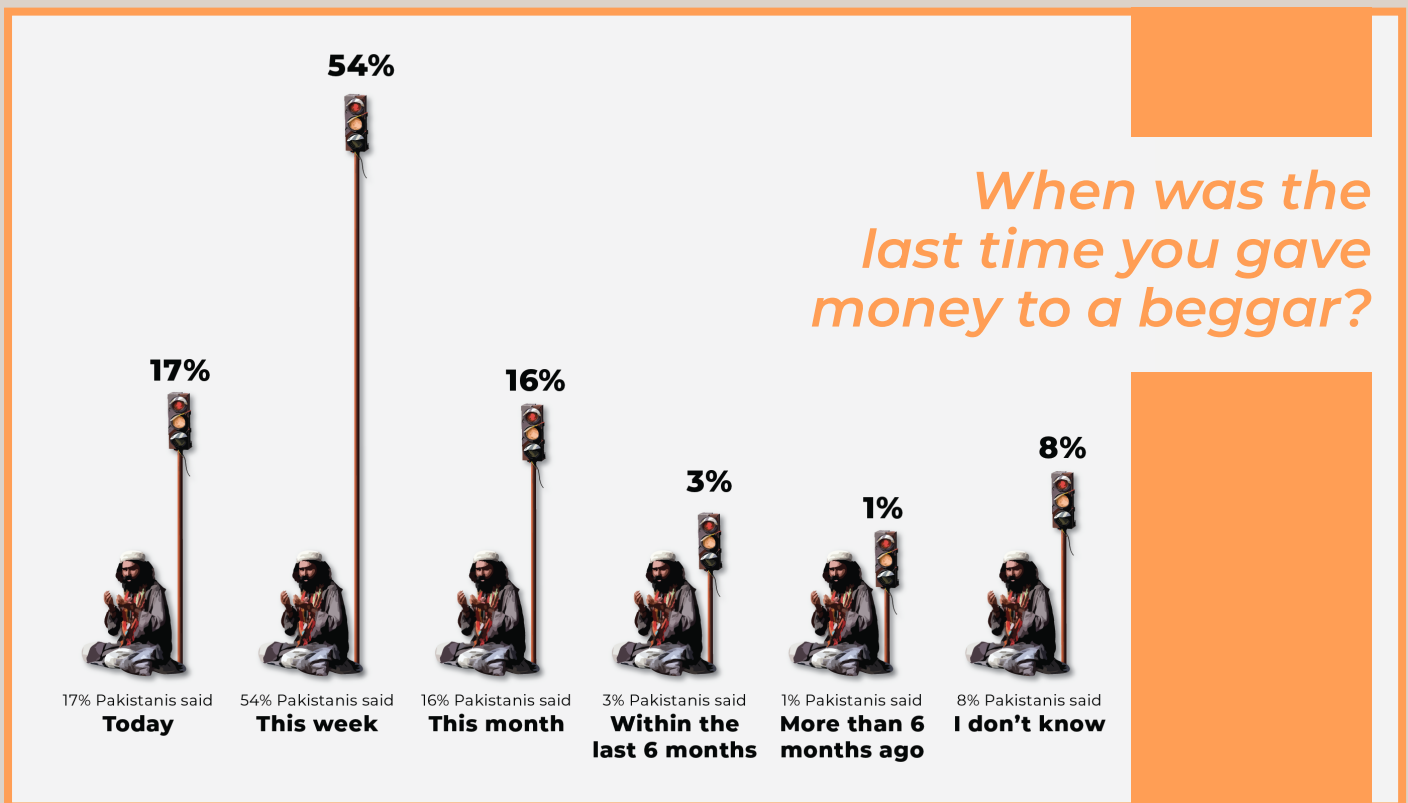
How often do you give money to beggars?

	Almost always	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all	Don't Know /No Re-sponse
All Pakistan	18%	54%	19%	7%	3%
Location					
Rural	16%	56%	20%	5%	3%
Urban	19%	51%	15%	11%	3%
Age					
Under 30	18%	58%	18%	5%	1%
30 – 50	18%	51%	19%	8%	4%
50+	16%	54%	17%	7%	7%
Gender					
Male	22%	52%	18%	6%	2%
Female	13%	55%	20%	8%	5%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 1.3: Key Finding

7 in 10 Pakistanis (71%) say they gave money to a beggar within the previous week



Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 1.3: Statistical Analysis

When was the last time you gave money to a beggar?

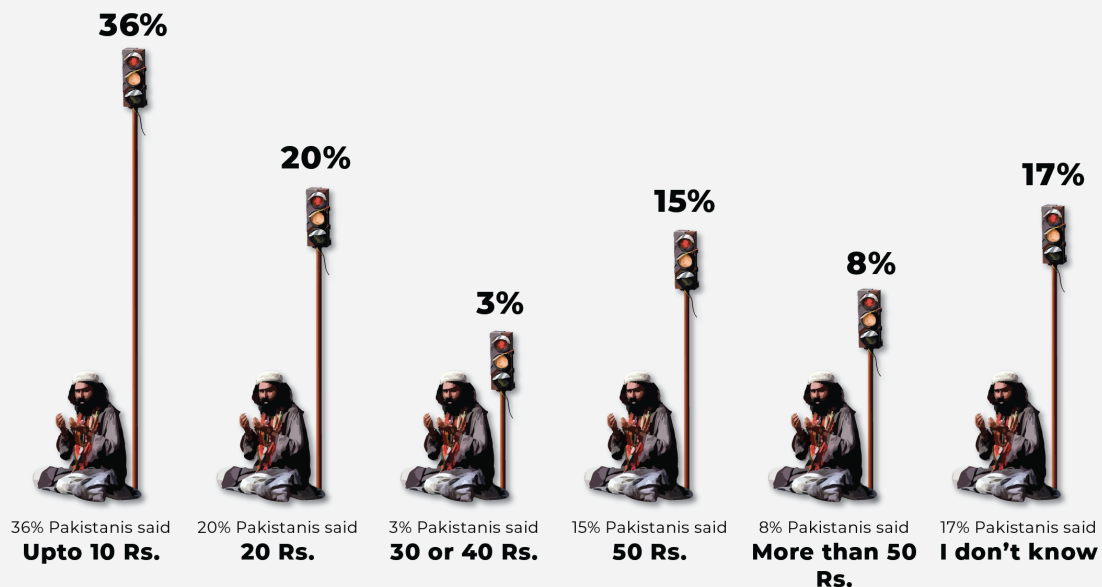
	Today	This Week	This Month	Within last 6 months	More than 6 months ago	Don't Know	No Response
All Pakistan	17%	54%	16%	3%	1%	8%	1%
Location							
Rural	16%	54%	17%	4%	1%	7%	1%
Urban	19%	53%	15%	2%	0%	9%	1%
Age							
Under 30	17%	56%	12%	2%	0%	13%	1%
30 – 50	18%	52%	18%	5%	0%	6%	1%
50+	14%	59%	20%	1%	4%	1%	0%
Gender							
Male	24%	55%	12%	2%	1%	4%	1%
Female	10%	52%	21%	5%	0%	11%	1%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 1.4: Key Finding

The average amount of money that people give to beggars is Rs. 20. This translates into 3780 million PKR given to beggars.

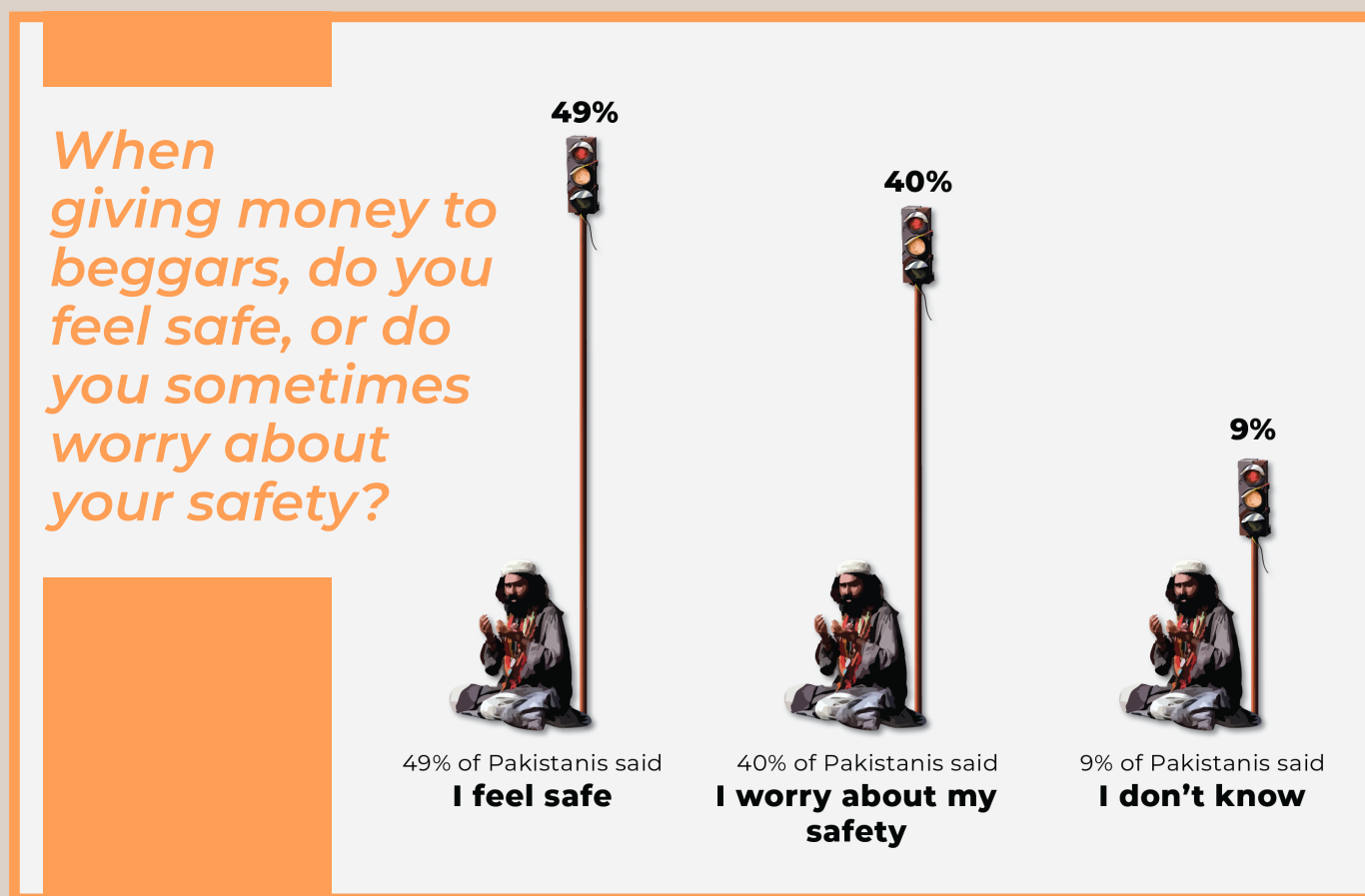
How much money did you give to a beggar the last time?



Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 1.5: Key Finding

40% Pakistanis say they worry about their safety when giving money to beggars, while half (49%) are not concerned about their safety



Women are more likely than men to feel unsafe when giving money to beggars. Women were 13% more likely to report feeling unsafe when giving money to beggars and 11% less likely to report feeling safe.

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 1.5: Statistical Analysis

When giving money to beggars, do you feel safe, or do you sometimes worry about your safety?

	I feel safe	I worry about my safety	Don't Know	No Response
All Pakistan	49%	40%	9%	2%
Location				
Rural	51%	41%	6%	2%
Urban	44%	40%	14%	2%
Age				
Under 30	50%	42%	7%	2%
30 – 50	49%	41%	8%	2%
50+	46%	37%	17%	1%
Gender				
Male	54%	34%	9%	3%
Female	43%	47%	9%	1%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Topic 2:

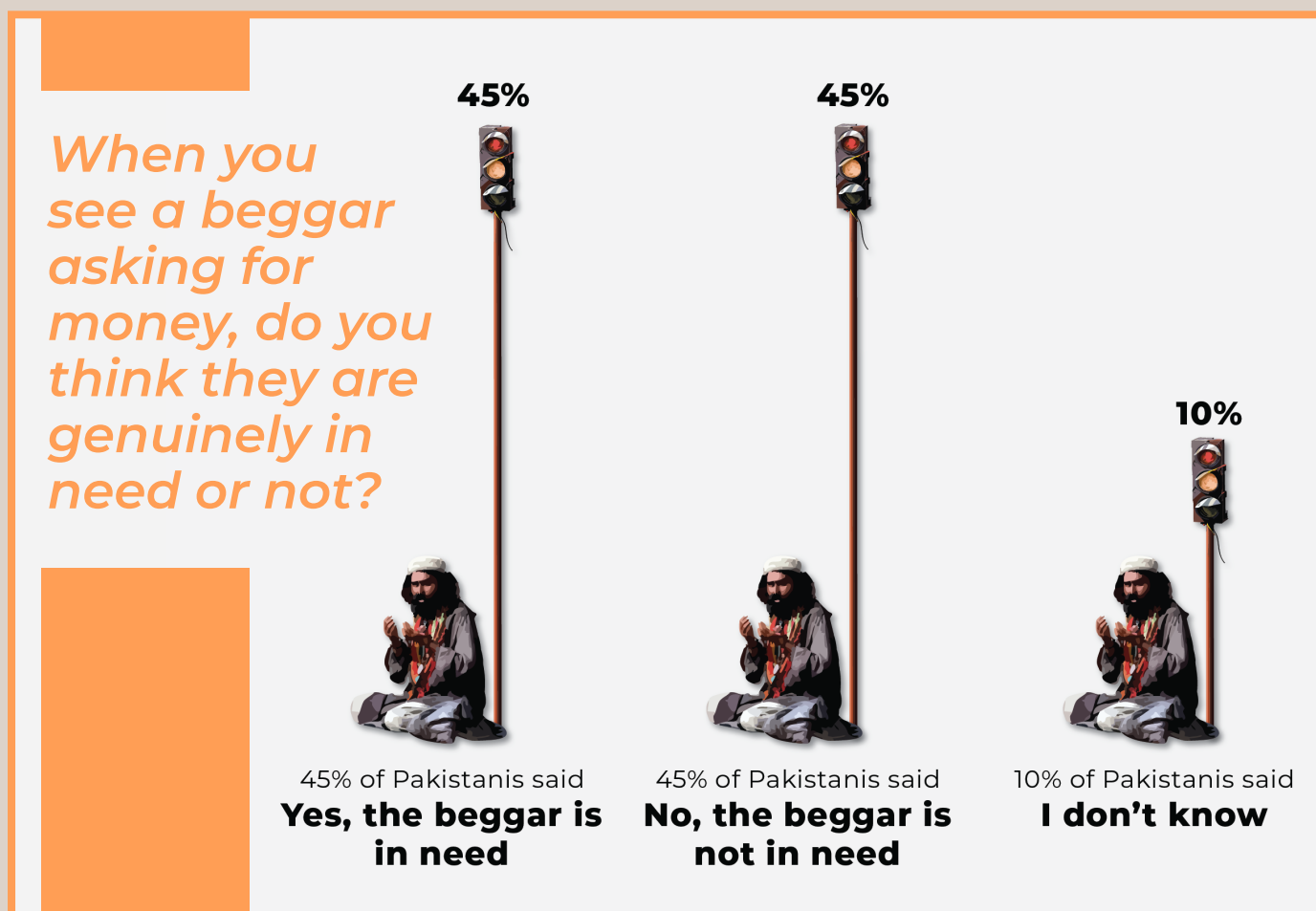
Perceptions of Begging/Beggars

This Topic has 5 items. Key Findings and Statistical Analysis for each of them are provided ahead in this section



Item 2.1: Key Finding

An equal proportion (45% each) of Pakistanis believe that beggars are genuinely in need and those who believe they are not.



Residents of rural areas are 12% more likely than residents of urban areas to believe that beggars are genuinely in need.

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.1: Statistical Analysis

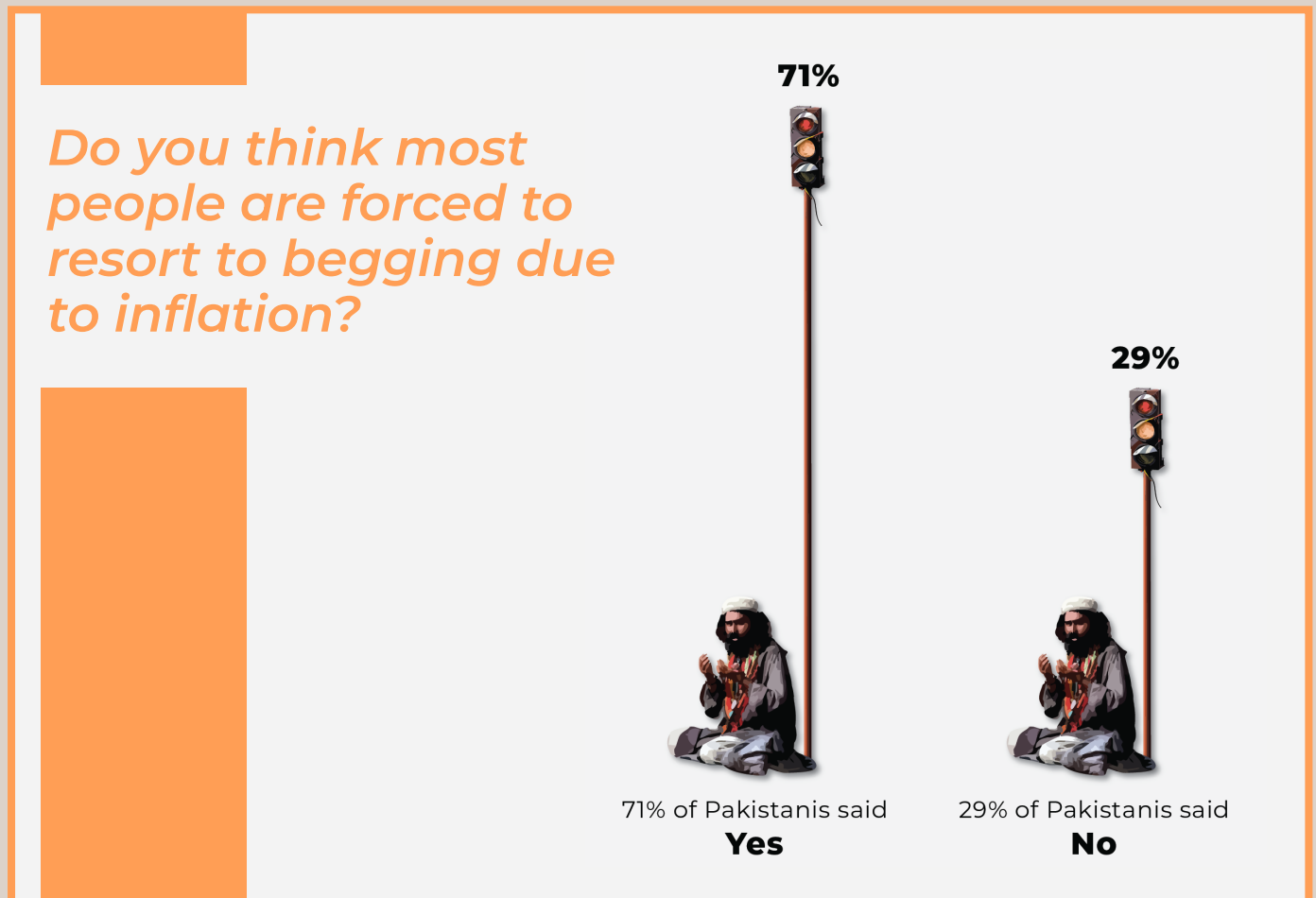
When you see a beggar asking for money, do you think they are genuinely in need or not?

	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Response
All Pakistan	45%	45%	10%	1%
Location				
Rural	49%	40%	10%	1%
Urban	37%	53%	9%	1%
Age				
Under 30	52%	34%	11%	3%
30 – 50	43%	48%	9%	1%
50+	34%	59%	8%	0%
Gender				
Male	42%	47%	8%	2%
Female	47%	42%	11%	0%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.2: Key Finding

7 in 10 Pakistanis (71%) agree that beggars are forced to resort to begging due to inflation



Residents of rural areas are 14% more likely to agree that beggars are forced to resort to begging due to inflation. 76% of rural residents agreed with the prompt compared to 62% of urban residents.

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.2: Statistical Analysis

Do you think most people are forced to resort to begging due to inflation?

	Yes	No
All Pakistan	71%	29%
Location		
Rural	76%	24%
Urban	62%	38%
Age		
Under 30	79%	21%
30 – 50	69%	31%
50+	61%	39%
Gender		
Male	69%	31%
Female	73%	27%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.3: Key Finding

A significant majority (84%) of Pakistanis believe that beggars tactics have changed to become more aggressive and pressurizing.

In your opinion, have the methods of begging changed? For example, beggars now use more aggressive or pressurizing tactics?



Men and women's responses were completely equal, with 84% each of men and women agreeing with the prompt. Older Pakistanis (50+) were most likely to agree with the prompt (92%), followed by younger (under 30) Pakistanis (87%) and middle aged (30-50) Pakistanis (81%).

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.3: Statistical Analysis

In your opinion, have the methods of begging changed? For example, beggars now use more aggressive or pressurizing tactics?

For example, beggars now use more aggressive or pressurizing tactics like invoking God, saying things like “Give charity for the sake of your children, parents, etc.” or “May God bless you?”

	Yes	No
All Pakistan	84%	16%
Location		
Rural	82%	18%
Urban	87%	13%
Age		
Under 30	87%	13%
30 – 50	81%	19%
50+	92%	8%
Gender		
Male	84%	16%
Female	84%	16%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.4: Key Finding

Two thirds of Pakistanis (66%) agree that there exist organizations which exploit beggars for money by forcing them to beg



Men are 7% more likely than women to believe in the existence of organizations which force beggars to beg for purposes of economic exploitation. 69% of men agreed with the prompt compared to 62% of women. Those aged 50 and above were also very likely to agree with the prompt (79%) compared to middle aged (62%) and younger (67%) respondents.

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.4: Statistical Analysis

Do some organizations exploit beggars, forcing them to beg for money?

	Yes	No
All Pakistan	66%	34%
Location		
Rural	65%	35%
Urban	67%	33%
Age		
Under 30	67%	33%
30 – 50	62%	38%
50+	79%	21%
Gender		
Male	69%	31%
Female	62%	38%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.5: Key Finding

More Pakistanis are skeptical (44%) about whether giving money to beggars actually improves their lives, compared to Pakistanis who believe that the money would genuinely improve beggars' lives (37%).



Younger respondents (under 30) were most likely to claim (39%) that giving money to beggars actually improves their lives. This figure is 2% higher than the proportion of middle aged (30-50) respondents who provided the same response, and 9% higher than older respondents (50+) who answered similarly.

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 2.5: Statistical Analysis

When you give beggars money, do you feel it genuinely improves their lives or do you doubt where the money actually goes?

	Improves their Life	Doubtful	Don't Know	No Response
All Pakistan	37%	44%	18%	1%
Location				
Rural	37%	44%	19%	0%
Urban	36%	44%	17%	3%
Age				
Under 30	39%	40%	21%	0%
30 – 50	37%	45%	16%	2%
50+	30%	49%	20%	1%
Gender				
Male	38%	45%	15%	1%
Female	35%	42%	21%	2%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Topic 3:

Frequency of Public Interaction with Beggars

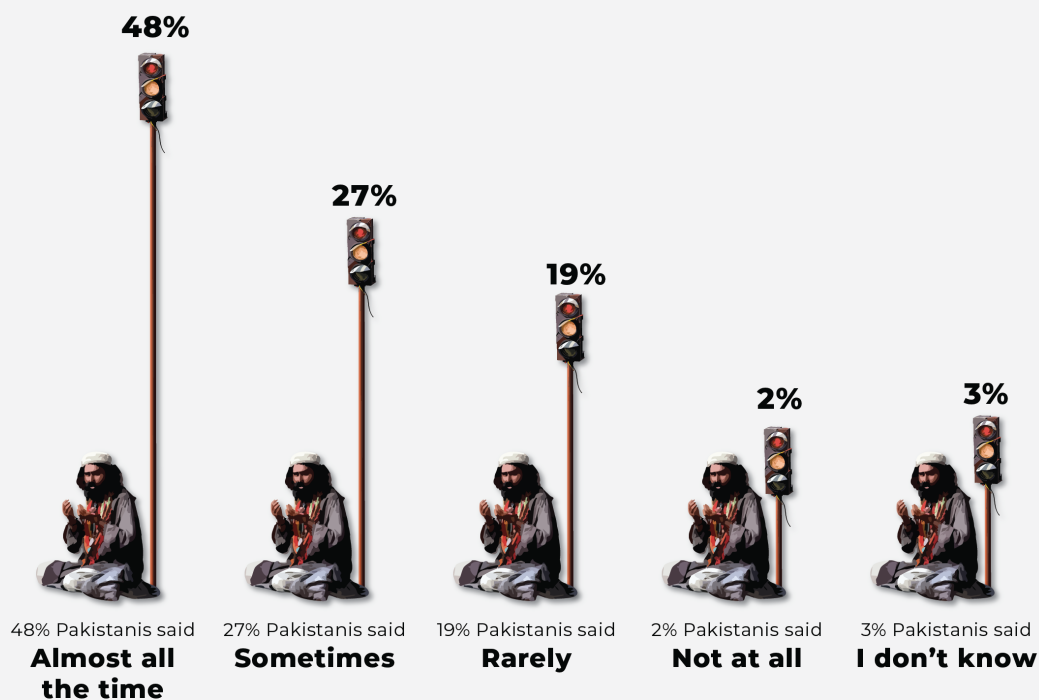
This Topic has 2 items. Key Findings and Statistical Analysis for each of them are provided ahead in this section



Item 3.1: Key Finding

1 in 2 Pakistanis see beggars on a daily basis.

How often do you see beggars in your area/ neighborhood?



Residents of urban areas are 17% more likely to see beggars on a daily basis. 42% of rural residents see beggars on a daily basis compared to 59% of urban residents.

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 3.1: Statistical Analysis

How often do you see beggars in your area/neighborhood?

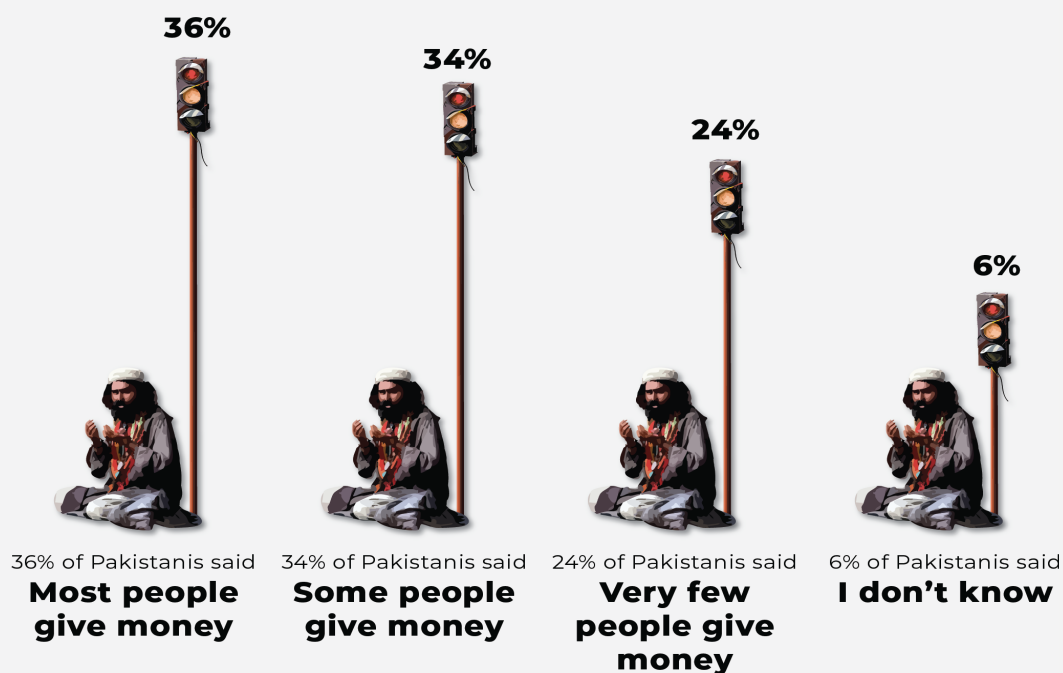
	Daily/ Almost Always	Sometimes	Barely	Not at All	Don't Know	No Response
All Pakistan	48%	27%	19%	2%	3%	0%
Location						
Rural	42%	31%	23%	1%	3%	0%
Urban	59%	22%	13%	4%	3%	0%
Age						
Under 30	47%	36%	13%	2%	3%	0%
30 – 50	47%	23%	24%	2%	3%	0%
50+	54%	28%	9%	6%	2%	2%
Gender						
Male	49%	27%	18%	3%	2%	1%
Female	47%	27%	21%	1%	4%	0%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 3.2: Key Finding

36% of respondents believe that most people give money to beggars, whereas 24% stated that very few people do this

Do you think people in your area/neighborhood generally give money to beggars?



Men were far more likely (43%) than women (28%) to report that 'most' people give money to beggars.

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

Item 3.2: Statistical Analysis

Do you think people in your area/neighborhood generally give money to beggars?

What would you say: most people give money, some people give money, or very few people give money?

	Most	Some	Very Few	Don't Know	No Response
All Pakistan	36%	34%	24%	6%	0%
Location					
Rural	34%	38%	25%	4%	0%
Urban	39%	29%	22%	10%	0%
Age					
Under 30	35%	36%	23%	6%	0%
30 – 50	36%	32%	26%	5%	0%
50+	38%	41%	13%	7%	1%
Gender					
Male	43%	31%	22%	4%	1%
Female	28%	38%	26%	8%	0%

Source: Powered by Gallup Pakistan, January 17, 2025 – January 22, 2025

The Economics of Begging in Pakistan: A Ballpark Estimation

1. The study estimates that nearly **90%** of adults in Pakistan report giving money to beggars. With an adult population of approximately **120 million**, this translates to around **110 million** individuals who participate in this practice.
2. On the day the survey was conducted, approximately **17%** of respondents reported giving money to beggars. Based on this, it is estimated that an average of **18.7 million** Pakistanis give money to beggars each day.
3. When asked about the typical amount they give, respondents reported a median contribution of **Rs. 20** per interaction.
4. Using these figures, it can be estimated that roughly **Rs. 374 million** are given to beggars across Pakistan on a daily basis.
5. Extrapolating this daily figure across the year—while acknowledging this may be a conservative estimate due to increased giving during Ramadan and other religious events—the total annual revenue generated through begging is projected at approximately **Rs. 136 billion** (equivalent to around USD 456 million).

Summary Methodology

Sample size: 785 Respondents

Sampling Method: Random Digit Dialing

Error Margin: +3-5% at 95% confidence level

Interview Mode: Phone Interview using CATI software

Field Dates: Jan 17, 2025 - Jan 22, 2025

Gallup Pakistan adheres to ESOMAR/WAPOR Code of Ethics of Opinion and Marketing Research (*form more details please see detailed methodology*)

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Gallup Pakistan has conducted this poll according to the ESOMAR Code of Ethics and internationally recognized principles of scientific polling. The results in this Report do not represent views held by the authors or Gallup Pakistan. The results only represent public opinion, computed on the basis of views expressed by anonymous respondents selected through the procedure outlined in the Methodology section of this Report. Gallup Pakistan has provided this data in the public interest and gratis. It cannot be held liable, contractually or otherwise, to the users of this data

Demographics

Profile of Respondents

(n=785)

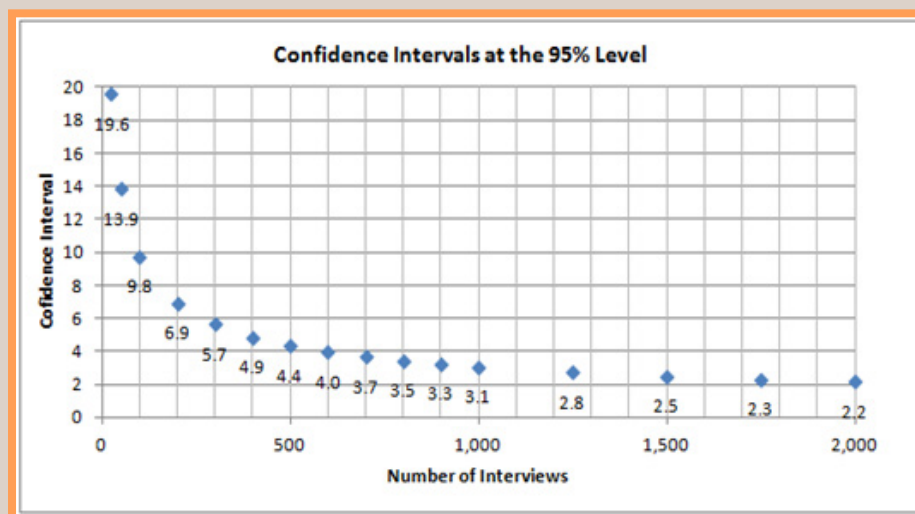
		Weighted
		Col%
BASE: All		100%
Gender		
	Male	51%
	Female	49%
Location		
	Rural	64%
	Urban	36%
Age Groups		
	Under 30	30%
	30 - 50 years	58%
	Older than 50	12%
Province		
	Punjab	54%
	Sindh	23%
	KPK	17%
	Balochistan	6%

Detailed Note on Methodology

Note on Sample Size

The sample size used in this survey is quite adequate even in comparison to international standards. Gallup US Daily poll is 500 and the Gallup Poll Social Series is 1000, both having track record of reliable predictability for USA (a country nearly 100 million larger in population of Pakistan).

According to Five Thirty-Eight, one of the most credible sources on polling in the US: “Surveying 2,000 voters substantially reduces error compared with surveying 400 of them but surveying 10,000 voters will produce only marginal improvements in accuracy compared with the 2,000- person survey”. Obviously, choosing a higher confidence interval will give greater accuracy to the survey results, however, as the chart below shows, at a certain point the benefits of conducting more surveys begins to tail off:



25 interviews have a confidence interval of 19.6 and 100 interviews has a confidence interval of 9.8, whilst it falls to 4.4 at 500 interviews and 3.1 at 1000 interviews. However, a further 1000 interviews only lower the confidence interval by 0.9 to 2.2. A confidence interval of 1 (not shown on the graph) would require a massive 9604 interviews.

Is a larger sample always better than a smaller sample?

Larger samples are generally more precise, but sometimes not. The important rule in sampling is not how many poll respondents are selected but, instead, how they are selected. A reliable sample selects poll respondents randomly or in a manner which ensures that everyone in the area being surveyed has a known chance of being selected.

How do you interpret Error Margins?

How do you interpret a margin of error? Suppose you know that 51% of people sampled say that they plan to vote for Mr. X in the upcoming election. Now, projecting these results to the whole voting population, you would have to add and subtract the margin of error and give a range of possible results in order to have sufficient confidence that you're bridging the gap between your sample and the population. Supposing a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points, you would be pretty confident that between 48% ($= 51\% - 3\%$) and 54% ($= 51\% + 3\%$) of the population will vote for Mr. X in the election, based on the sample results. In this case, Mr. X may get slightly more or slightly less than the majority of votes and could either win or lose the election. This has become a familiar situation in recent years when the media want to report results on Election Night, but based on early exit polling results, the election is "too close to call."

What Error Margins do not mean:

The margin of error measures accuracy; it does not measure the amount of bias that may be present. Results that look numerically scientific and precise don't mean anything if they were collected in a biased way

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