

## **PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION OF BEGGAR**

**Rahmalia**

Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China  
Email: *lia\_04@ymail.com*

**Teuku Zulyadi**

Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, Indonesia  
Email: *teuku.zulyadi@gmail.com*

### **Abstract**

*The interpersonal communication of beggars involves the beggars' interaction with their donors, and interaction among beggars. This communication incorporates symbols that have been given meaning, both verbal and non-verbal. This study aims to determine the motives that encourage someone to become a beggar in Banda Aceh, the effectiveness of the city government's policy in handling the begging activities and to find out the process of interpersonal communication of the beggars. This study applies the descriptive qualitative method with phenomenology approach, to describe the meaning of some people's lives. The research subjects are the beggars who are willing and able to provide the required information in-depth. The result shows that the interpersonal communication process among the beggars and the beggars with the donors are conducted through symbolic interaction by using language and symbols, and role-play performance creating condition and atmosphere which gave certain meanings. The communities performing such interactions had the ability to utilise symbols to create an impression that attracted the attention of donors. The actions raised people's sympathy who will give charities to them in any expected feedback. The understanding of this issue is important for the realization of the implementation of the regulation but still maintaining the aspirations of the citizens who uphold Islamic values, the concept of giving to the people in need.*

**Keyword:** *Interpersonal communication, Beggar, Verbal-Nonverbal communication, Banda Aceh.*

### **Abstrak**

Komunikasi antarpribadi dari pengemis melibatkan interaksi pengemis dengan pendonor, dan interaksi sesama pengemis. Komunikasi ini menggabungkan simbol-simbol yang telah diberi makna, baik verbal maupun non-verbal. Oleh karena itulah, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui motif yang mendorong seseorang untuk menjadi pengemis di Banda Aceh, efektivitas kebijakan pemerintah kota dalam menangani kegiatan pengemis dan untuk mengetahui proses komunikasi antarpribadi para pengemis. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologi untuk menggambarkan makna kehidupan. Subjek penelitian ini adalah pengemis yang bersedia dan mampu memberikan informasi yang diperlukan secara mendalam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses komunikasi antarpribadi antara pengemis dan pengemis dengan para donator dilakukan

melalui interaksi simbolik dengan menggunakan bahasa dan simbol. Kemudian permainan peran juga menciptakan kondisi dan suasana yang memberikan makna tertentu. Komunitas yang melakukan interaksi seperti itu memiliki kemampuan untuk menggunakan simbol untuk menciptakan kesan yang menarik perhatian pendonor. Tindakan itu membangkitkan simpati orang-orang yang akan memberikan sumbangan kepada mereka dalam setiap umpan balik yang diharapkan. Pemahaman tentang masalah ini penting sebagai bentuk realisasi implementasi peraturan tetapi tetap dengan mempertahankan aspirasi warga negara yang menjunjung tinggi nilai-nilai Islam dan sekaligus konsep memberi donasi kepada orang-orang yang membutuhkan.

**Kata Kunci:** *Komunikasi antarpribadi, pengemis, komunikasi Verbal-Nonverbal, Banda Aceh.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The phenomenon of people with social welfare problems such as homeless people and beggars is often seen around intersections and road sections, traffic lights, overhanging shops, and even in mosques. Those places are considered as the most promising places to reside. It is not simply an eyesore to the environment, but instead becomes a serious issue in society.

Beggars are generally prompted by various factors, some of them are those who have "special needs" (Apdelmi 2006) or people deemed to be family demands since they are no longer able to work (old age). It is undeniable that some of them are begging because of compulsion to fulfill their daily needs, to make a living, and to fit the income, therefore, the 'profession' as a beggar become whether an option or a new trend in the Acehese society.

Policies and strategies taken by the government based on the *Government Regulation No. 31 / year 1980* on the homeless and beggar (Pemerintah, n.d.), *Presidential Decree No. 40 / year 1983* on coordination for countermeasures of the homeless and beggars (Presiden 2009), turned out that they are not to completely curb beggars, although they were often ensnared in raids carried out by the Social Service in cooperation with the related agencies.<sup>1</sup>

The results of policing and coaching from the officers of the Social and Manpower Office along with officers of Civil Service Police Unit of Banda Aceh towards homeless people / beggars in several main intersections of Banda Aceh Protocol Street and shopping centers showed a very significant amount. The homeless and the beggars who were netted for every paid was held ranged from 50 to

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<sup>1</sup> Syaparuddin, Dinsosnaker Banda Aceh.

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150 people.<sup>2</sup> It is found that the beggars do not need special skills, only with showing the pity face they can earn from Rp. 5,000 to Rp. 10,000 IDR

In this case, we can observe the process of beggar communication through verbal or nonverbal language, where they create certain symbols. How do beggars interact with their generous candidates to continue to increase the income, start from how to dress up in tattered clothes, how to talk, how to deal with security officers (apparatus), appearing ragged to attract pity and pennies, with pity voice or pretending to be physically disabled, until bringing a rented baby.

In the context of Acehnese culture society which is very synonymous with the religion, the Slogan "Makmue Beusaree, Adee Beurata" is used. Equity and fairness should be equally distributed, but the motto seems to have not been realized because there are still many Acehnese people caught in poverty.

Islam does not support the act of begging, especially with lies and deceit. Narrated by Abdullah bin Umar: "... *That the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was on the pulpit, he said about alms and guarding himself from begging. He said: The upper hand (the hand that gives) is better than the lower hand (the hand that receives).*" (Muslim) ((Musthofa 1992).

Islam encourages its people to always do virtue in interacting with others. Regarding the issue of beggars, it turns out that there are misunderstandings in the community in understanding religion, so there are actions that are not in accordance with the Islamic teachings, but carried out in the name of "Islam" instead. This study aims to describe further about beggar activities in the place where sharia law is implemented.

## METHODS

This study used a qualitative method approach to describe begging activities in Banda Aceh City, policies related to begging activities, and its accordance with the Islamic concept. Taylor, S., Bogdan (2004) define "qualitative methodology as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or verbal words from people and observable behavior." This approach is directed at the background and individual or organization as a whole and provides opportunities which are great for participants to express their life experiences.

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<sup>2</sup> Dinsosnaker Banda Aceh, Reports on the results of homeless and beggars.

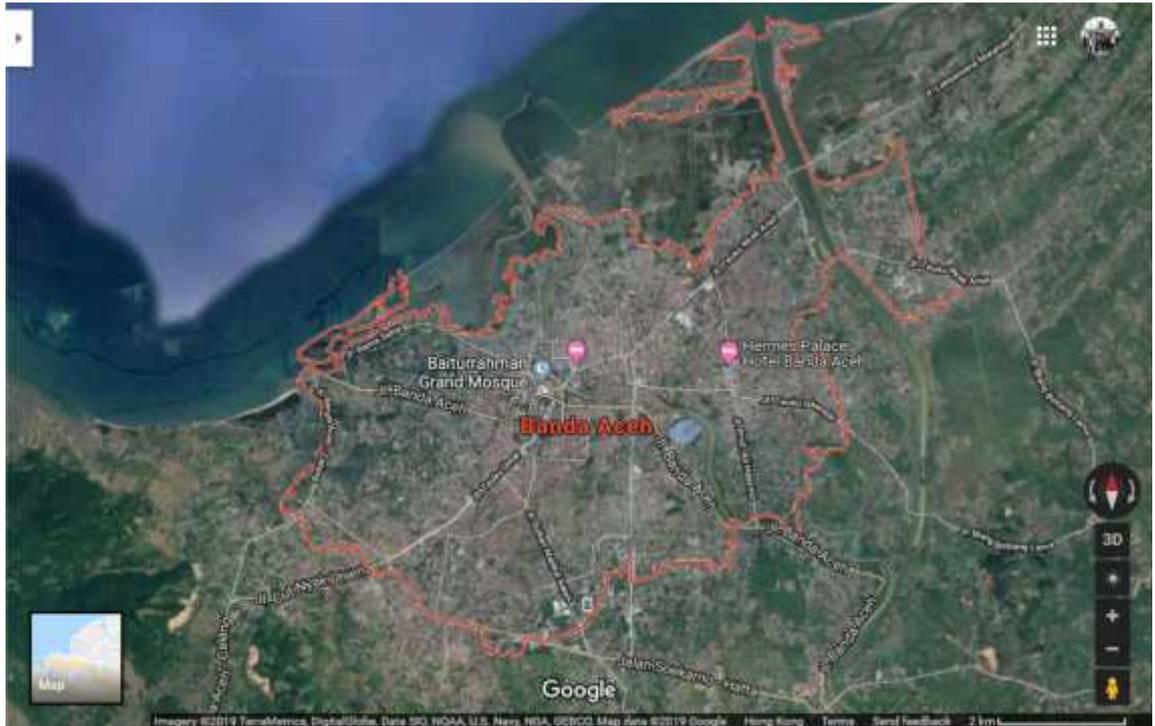
**a. Overview of Study Area and Informant**

The population is a common issue that exists in an area. Even though the population is one of the basic capitals of development, but if it is not equipped with adequate abilities and skills, it will create obstacles in the development process itself. The city of Banda Aceh has 9 sub-districts which are one of the regions that are the center of government, Banda Aceh City as the Capital of Aceh Province is one of the cities in Indonesia that has special autonomy rights.

The research location can be one place or spread, by paying attention to individuals who will be used as informants, either one person or more, as long as they can provide a good explanation (Deddy Mulyana 2001). In this case, this research was carried out in the place where most beggars were found (mosques, crossroads, red lights, public parks).

In deciding research informants, the researchers determined the desired informants by themselves. In this study, the number of informants was not taken as a whole, only those who wanted to and were able to provide the necessary information or those who could provide a good and in-depth explanation.

This research categorizes beggars in three categories: men, women, and children. Informants were selected based on their activities and their willingness to tell their experiences, beggars who occupy public spaces in Banda Aceh city, such as in the intersection of five (Simpang Lima) the most crowded intersection area, crossroads, traffic lights, shops overlays, Baiturrahman Grand Masjid, and other open spaces that are considered most 'profitable' for begging activities. For more details, the location map is presented in **Figure 1**.



Source: google map, 2019.

**Figure 1: Map of Banda Aceh**

The key informants in this study were beggars who begged with various modes. They came from various regions in Aceh, with varying levels of the age of both genders. There was also one informant from the Social Service, a Journalist, and a Communication Lecturer who had conducted a survey on the lives of beggars. In addition to conducting interviews, the researcher also did direct observations on the scene during the research period.

#### **b. Beggars in Numbers**

Beggars are a common problem in various cities including the city of Banda Aceh. The number of beggars in the city of Banda Aceh has increased every year.<sup>3</sup> Beggars are interested in coming to the city to make money because the city provided more complex social strata, economic and administrative structures.

Some of the beggars are male because they do not have a source of income to provide for their families, and families claim their responsibility as breadwinners, they make begging as a job. Whereas for women beggars, they are not motivated to

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<sup>3</sup> Drs. Syaparuddin, Dinsosnaker Banda Aceh, (data shown).

work, because it requires special skills and the money gained is not as much as the money they gain from begging. While parents often abuse their children by making them beg in the streets and then give them punishments or rewards based on the amount of money the children bring home. Begging for money is no longer just a matter of surviving life, but later developed into a profession involving men, women, and children.<sup>4</sup>

This is supported by the statement of the Head of Social Affairs and Employment office; "The number of beggars in our records is not an absolute number, it is only the number of beggars who were caught in raids and classified as permanent beggars. There are still many temporary beggars who have not been caught or escaped from raids.

### **Begging in Islam and the Phenomenon in Aceh**

Islam encourages its people to give charity. Nevertheless, there is guidance in Islam regarding groups of people entitled to be given alms. Islam is not suggested to distribute the alms to those who beg on the streets, in shops, offices, or from one house to another, which is uncertain whether they really need a helping hand. Beggar phenomenon or some people call it "Sprawl" Homelessness and Beggars are an inseparable part of the reality of social life which is a common sight in today's life.

The word *(as-sail)* in the Arabic language means someone who asks / questions or someone who asks/begs. It is derived from the word which means to beg, to ask for alms, to ask questions or to give questions.<sup>5</sup> While in English, *beggar* is one that begs, (especially) a person who begs as a way of life.<sup>6</sup> In another reference, beggar is a person who lives by asking people for money to afford food.<sup>7</sup> Beggars here are people who beg, whether in the form of money or food to continue their lives. Terminologically, begging is asking for help, charity, and donations to either individuals or institutions. Begging is identical to the appearance of shabby clothes, which are used as a means to express needs, and several other methods.

Basically, beggars consist of two groups; (1). A group of beggars who really need help, but do not have the ability to express or reveal their real condition. (2). People who fake their condition by playing skits and carry out various tricks. Abu

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<sup>4</sup> <http://rehsos.depsos.go.id/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=312>

<sup>5</sup> Kamus Al-Munawwir, hal. 600.

<sup>6</sup> Merriam-Websters's Dictionary, hal. 92.

<sup>7</sup> Oxford advanced learner's dictionary, hal. 105.

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Hurairah, Rasulullah (peace be upon him) mentioned that "... *He who begs from someone else to increase his wealth, then it means he asks for embers (as if he is consuming coals of fire). Therefore, it's up to him to want to reduce or multiply*" (Musthofa 1992).

It means that anyone who begs not because of his incapability to provide for himself, but solely because he wants to accumulate his wealth, will be condemned. Strictly speaking, the person who begs for this reason means he asks for embers of Hellfire.

Another hadith from the prophet Muhammad Saw., Narrated from Hamzah bin Abdullah bin Umar r.a., that he listened from his father, "*From Hamzah ibn Abdullah (ibn Umar), from his father, the prophet said: a beggar, later in the day of the resurrection, will meet Allah with no flesh on his face.*" (Muslim) (Rahimy 2007).

This hadith shows the punishment for people who during their lifetime did not have the shame to ask for the mercy of others. They are considered to be ungrateful for God's grace and give up trying even when they have a healthy body and strong energy to work.

### **a. Verbal and Nonverbal Communication**

As social beings, human always wants to connect with other humans beings. One of the ways people build a relationship with others is by communicating. Communication is a basic and urgent need for every social being who needs each other.

When people communicate with others, they try to get the same meaning as the other party about a particular object. This is what indicates there is communication between one party and the other party. According to (Karim 2016) communication as a process of understanding and sharing meaning. Communication as a process because communication is an activity characterized by action, change, exchange and movement, and there is continuity of each element.

The primary communication process is the process of conveying one's thoughts or feelings to others by using symbols as media (Effendy 2003). Symbols as primary media communication process are languages, cues, images, colors and so forth. To convey what is in his heart (feeling) or in his head (mind), a source must change that feeling or think into a set of verbal or nonverbal symbols that are ideally understood by the recipient of the message.

Communication is generally defined as a process of exchanging messages between individuals with one another using certain symbols. Likewise in nonverbal communication, it occurs through symbols such as cues, facial expressions, and eye contacts. It also makes use of objects such as clothing, accessories; and ways of speaking such as voice intonation, and speaking style. The symbols will interpret and explain the meaning behind the message sent.

Communication does not only involve verbal processes in the form of words that are spoken and heard, how the language sounds (smooth, rough, or intellectual), but also involves nonverbal behavior which can find out the emotional atmosphere of a person (happy, confused or sad). While listening to someone speaking, at that time the other person can send messages nonverbally using hand signals, facial expressions, or eye contacts, and artifacts to the speaker.

As we know, humans tend to rely on nonverbal signals to obtain information about the meaning of verbal messages. They often interpret these nonverbal cues unconsciously, which cause them to get a different message from what the speaker initially means (Tubbs, Stewart L., and Sylvia Moss 2001). Nonverbal communication systems differ from culture to culture as well as verbal systems.

In simple terms, nonverbal messages are all non-word signals. According to (Porter and Samovar 1998): "Nonverbal communication includes all stimuli (except verbal stimuli) in a communication setting, which are produced by individuals and the use of the environment by individuals, which have a potential message value for the sender or recipient; so this definition includes intentional and unintentional behavior as part of the overall communication events; we send many nonverbal messages without realizing that these messages are meaningful to others".

Nonverbal messages have a great influence on communication. There are a lot of delivered nonverbal messages, both consciously and unconsciously, which are given meaning by others, such as gestures, facial expressions, and attributes used.

When messages are exchanged, the interaction between verbal and nonverbal messages will be carried out simultaneously. When a symbol is present, there will be meaning and then what matters is how to respond to it. Voice intonation, facial expressions, words, and images as symbols represent a meaning. For instance, high intonation is interpreted as anger, a smile portrays happiness, and so forth.

Human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols. Interpretation or understanding of the meaning of others' actions in social interactions can change during the interaction, which allows humans to exchange and interpret meanings.

### **b. The Government Policy**

Banda Aceh is the capital city of Aceh Province. As the provincial capital, Banda Aceh has the authority to regulate the government under the leadership of the mayor. One of these authorities is to regulate the social welfare of the community. *Regulation Number 11 of 2006* concerning the Aceh Government (Nomor, Undang-undang 2006), the handling of social problems is a mandatory affair which is the authority of the Aceh Government and the Regency/City Government for the realization of social welfare for the community.

Social welfare problems in Aceh, one of the regions with the possible autonomy right in the Republic of Indonesia, continues to increase and has become more complex. Therefore, social welfare is needed to overcome social problems in a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable way by utilizing the potential sources of social welfare optimally.

*Regulation Number 11 of 2013* (Qanun Aceh 2013) states that social welfare is a condition of fulfilling the material, spiritual and social needs of every citizen in order to live a properly and be able to develop themselves in order they can carry out their social functions.

Meanwhile, a social welfare venture is a process. The system of social welfare activities and services to improve the quality of life of individuals, groups, and communities, carried out by the Aceh Government, Regency / City Government, institutions and or other social bodies.

The implementation on social welfare improvement is a direct, an integrated and sustainable effort carried out by the Government of Aceh, Regency / City Government and the community in the form of social services to fulfill the basic needs of every citizen, which includes social rehabilitation, social security, social empowerment, and social protection.

Persons with Social Welfare Problems, hereinafter abbreviated as PSWP (PMKS), are individuals, families or groups of people who are experiencing social, moral and material obstacles both from inside and outside of themselves so that they

cannot carry out their functions (inability to fulfill basic needs, solve social problems, and run social functions and roles).

The two regulations are sufficient to become the basis of reference for the Government of Banda Aceh in regulating the existence of beggars. This policy further strengthens the the establishment of the Trampling and Fostering Team for beggars and other social handicaps in Banda Aceh. The policy adopted by the Government of Banda Aceh is to control the homeless, beggars and social handicaps in Banda Aceh City area to realize the orderliness, peace, and comfort as well as the beauty of the city.

To reinforce these regulations, the regional leaders (Muspida) of Banda Aceh conducted socialization by installing appeal boards in several strategic spots around Banda Aceh which contained an appeal to the citizens of Banda Aceh not to give the money and largesse to homeless people and beggars in public places.<sup>8</sup>

The Strategy and socialization used by the City Government's in dealing with beggars, besides the raids, is also the installation of banners appealing for the prohibition on giving at some waypoints. As a result, there was a slight decrease in the number of donors from the community who read the directive and 5% of beggars disappeared. 90% of these beggars do not beg because of unfortunate circumstances, but they are aiming for more wealth since they can get the minimum income about Rp. 200,000 a day.<sup>9</sup>

Although the government has appealed not to donate the beggars begging on the streets because they will continue to exist and the number may even increase. In an effort to solve social problems, the government is required to cooperate with various parties in order the Potential Social Welfare Sources in the form of potential natural & human resources, institutions, and social resources.

Another way is to collaborate with universities and community organisations involved in mentoring people with social welfare problems. Social organisations are social association formed by the community, whether it is a legal entity or not as a means of community participation in carrying out Social Welfare work.

In the Qanun, it is stated that the homeless is someone who does not have a permanent and decent place to live either a feasible livelihood income or they frequently move from one place to another or roam in the city and eat and drink in any place. While beggar is someone who earns money by begging in public places or other places through various ways and reasons in expecting the mercy from others.

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<sup>8</sup> Appeal from the Dinsosnaker Kota Banda Aceh

<sup>9</sup> Drs. Syaparuddin, Dinsosnaker Banda Aceh.

## DISCUSSION

### a. Beggar

When begging is no longer simply to fulfill the *basic needs*, but to increase income and it becomes the main job, then it is prohibited in Islam because it forces people to give their alms. *Begging activity is also considered to defile good deeds and undermine the good image of poor people who actually need help, but they choose not to beg.*

Most beggars, regardless of age, wherever they are in charge, and wherever they came from, they have almost given same answers and reasons when someone asks about the reason why they choose a job as a beggar. It of course dues to economic reason, even 'begging' indirectly has become a profession.

The beggars in Banda Aceh operate in a variety of ways; some begging privately, some were in groups and allegedly organised. Begging activity is first carried out individually move, from mapping out the operation area to set out for the operation. They do it a full day, leave early and go home after the income target achieved. The trip to the begging place is taken on foot if the distance is near. However, if it was quite distant, they usually stay in public places such as in mosques front of shops, either rent room or house, even a room in a hotel.<sup>10</sup>

There were two modes of begging used by beggars, first, the conventional mode: (1) stretching out their hands, (2) pretending to be physically handicapped, hanging in one place equipped with attributes (charity box, bowl, stick, wheelchair), (3) carrying babies or bringing blind people, This mode is usually carried out in groups or privately as it is formed naturally. Each individual in the group was responsible for his own safety, and each had full right to spend the money he gained. Nevertheless, relationships among individuals were well maintained, and they knew the situation and conditions of each other.

Secondly, unconventional mode, using envelopes on behalf the name of a foundation or a traditional Islamic school (Dayah). The beggars dressed neatly appearance (wearing pants or *sarong* and *peci* (traditional Indonesian skullcap). Everything has been prepared carefully by carrying official documents as proof, such as a letter of assignment, the official letter from the institution/foundation, proposals

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<sup>10</sup> Serambi Indonesia, February 19, 2011.

and other equipment. One example of the modus is by asking alms for Islamic schools, orphans or the poor by handling envelopes and letters from the schools.

The high income earned from begging in the city of Banda Aceh was one of the reasons why a lot of beggars moved to this capital city of Aceh. They claimed that in one day they could receive a different amount of income ranging between Rp. 100.000 to Rp. 300.000. Some admitted having not received a lot, only ranged from Rp. 50.000 to Rp. 150.000, or between Rp. 100.000 and Rp. 200.000.<sup>11</sup> That means the beggars monthly income ranged between three and nine million Rupiahs. These beggars tend to move places to places get a lot of income which is still in the Banda Aceh area.

The beggars started their operation at various time, mostly between 8 am to 10 am, and then they took a break around 12 pm to 13 pm. Meanwhile, finishing begging is not determined by the time. Some of them prepared for going back home at 9 pm because their houses located is quite far, while Some others stopped begging activity depends on the target of income.

Another data emerged from the researcher's dialogue with some of the beggars. They asserted that their main reason for begging was that they simply "claiming" their right which was in the wealth of "the riches". According to them, it was better to beg rather than stealing and doing other immoral acts.<sup>12</sup> They did not feel guilty for what they were doing, because they think of themselves as the poor or the needy.

It is no doubt, there are still many people who like to give and have generous hearts. Anytime they meet the beggars on the streets or even who come to their places, they will help by giving money, rice, food or even clothes.

#### **b. Almsgiving in Islam**

Feeling of compassion most of the time becomes the reason for people to donate and help beggars. It is difficult to ignore their pitiful face and appearance. Even though Sometimes people have their suspicions think that the beggars are pretending, but they don't want to leave them intolerant. This is one of the logical reasons for donors to give their money away, although it is a small amount.

In Islam, it is taught that wealth is a temporary possession entrusted by the Almighty, and in which it is the right of the poor. Islam greatly encourages its people

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<sup>11</sup> Interviewed with some beggars 2017.

<sup>12</sup> Interviewed with Nek Aisyah, Baiturrahman Grand Masjid

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to help the poor, orphans and other weak people. It is mentioned in the Qur'an:<sup>13</sup> *“And in their wealth, there is a rightful share of the beggar and the deprived.”* (Adz-Zhariyah: 19)

In this verse, it is explicitly Allah clearly mentions that the poor, whether they beg or not, has the rights of the rich's wealth. Therefore, it is obliged for Muslims who have enough money to donate some of their wealth to help the poor. In another Surah of Al Qur'an, it is mentioned:<sup>14</sup> *“(Alms are) for the poor who are straitened for the cause of Allah, who cannot travel in the land (for trade). The unthinking man accounts them wealthy because of their restraint. Thou shall know them by their mark: They do not beg of men with importunity. And whatever good thing you spend, indeed, Allah is knowing of it.”* (Al-Baqarah: 273).

In his interpretation of the ayah above, Ismail Ibn Kathir (a renowned Muslim scholar) commented: “Allah desires them not beg from others miserably, and not to force other people for something that is not needed. Because anyone who begs even though he has something that can prevent him from begging, then he really is among those who beg forcefully”.<sup>15</sup> One of the things that encourage someone of giving mercy (donors) to beggars due to one form of socialisation in the form of advice to religious people to give infaq, zakah, grants, and other forms of alms.

### c. Verbal and Nonverbal Communication of Beggars in Banda Aceh

Based on the observation and interaction of the researcher (acting as a donor) with the beggars, it turned out that verbal communication was a significant element in presenting an impression expected by the opponent of interaction. It is the efforts to get mercy or charity from prospective benefactors.

Beggars used the local language, Acehese language, with a variety of accents, both when interacting with prospective donors and with other fellow beggars. Some beggars used verbal communication to attract prospective donors, through the recitation of *shalawat*, *zikir*, remembrance or even prayers for the donors. There were also those who only gave greetings ‘Assalamu’alaikum’ or immediately asked for alms like their real purpose. Some others said their thanks or *Alhamdulillah* (praise

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<sup>13</sup> QS. adz-Dzariyat ayat 19.

<sup>14</sup> QS. al-Baqarah ayat 273.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.rahasisunnah.com/352/hukum-meminta-minta.htm>

be to Allah) when given alms and there were some who just kept quiet without any expression.

Besides interacting with verbal communication, beggars also interacted with symbols of nonverbal communication. Verbal communication uses persuasive words to influence, while nonverbal symbols to attract attention. Beggars emphasise nonverbal communication by using symbols, gestures and facial expressions when interacting with prospective donors. They usually showed pleading face, stretched their hands, pretended to be injured or physically disabled, carried babies, benefited their pregnancy, wore ragged clothes, and brought equipment (box for money, stick, and wheelchair).

The things carried out by beggars are symbols of nonverbal communication, which contain elements of symbolic interaction. To be more particular, beggars and people who feel compassion towards them (prospective donors) would interact through the symbols given by beggars, who wished to get alms from the prospective donors.

The nonverbal behavior carried out by Homelessness and beggars (Gepeng) in symbolic forms. It can be seen that the various nonverbal message behaviors delivered are an expression of the feelings and behaviors that arise through verbal and nonverbal symbols used by beggars to be expressed to those who give mercy (towards those who showed their compassion).

#### **d. Motivation Leading To Activities on Behalf of Islam**

Donating charity reaches its peak on good days and good months, such as on Fridays and the month of Ramadan, because in this month the practices of worship of a servant will be multiplied in reward. On Fridays and in the month of Ramadan, the number of beggars increases dramatically (Apdelmi, 2007). This can be seen from the number of people who sit in a row at the door of the mosque and some stood carrying a charity box.

Among the texts that recommend charity are contained in Al Qur'an are Surah At-Taubah verse 103 and surah Al-Baqarah verse 77.<sup>16</sup> There is also clear argument mentioning that wealth is a possession entrusted by the Almighty in which there is a rightful share for the poor. The great attention that Islam gives in encouraging its

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<sup>16</sup> In this verse explicitly Allah SWT mentions that poor people beg for their rights to some of our assets.

people to help the weak, orphans and other deprived people, unexpectedly forms some kind of "motivation" for people who live in poverty to act as beggars.

Every beggar had his own motive that was different from another. The motivations including:

### **1. Forced To Beg Because of Unfortunate Circumstances**

Someone who begged because of his helpless situation, due to lack of material aspects, physical limitations/disabilities, not being educated, having no home, old age, suffering from an illness, being abandoned by his children, and having no relatives at all. For him, begging became a necessity, because there was no other choice. His initial motives for begging were indeed because of the needs he had to fulfill, to pay for medical expenses and daily living expenses.

Lack of family harmony and resilience is one of the reasons someone becoming a beggar or homeless since family is the most important institution in socialising a value to build one's personality and characteristics. Slowly but surely, the begging habit has become a tradition and a part of life, as said by Syaparuddin:<sup>17</sup>

"It is important to increase social awareness in the environment, be it family background, the environmental community, or local government. Family's harmony and resilience are also very important. If there is no early action, a child is likely to be a street child (roaming the streets begging for money or doing any work to gain money). Why is he on the street? It is because there is no family resilience. Meanwhile, beggars over 50 years old do not want to be quarantined (nursing homes or social care institutions) because they know they can gain more by begging."

On another occasion, the researcher found a child who begged during school hours. *the background of the child begging to increase family income*, without considering that he had sacrificed his study time at school which will prepare him for a better future.

### **2. Begging as a Profession**

Beggars in this category had complete body parts but suffered from laziness to work and try. For them, begging had become a lucrative economic opportunity. They initially begged because of financial shortages, but after possessing assets - home and land - from the results of begging, they still begged, without feeling shame and without a moral burden before other people.

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<sup>17</sup> Dinsosnaker Banda Aceh. In this case there is a connection with street children who are homeless.

Besides the generous amount of income earned and cheaper transportation costs, the beggars commended that the people living in Banda Aceh had a big concern and compassion towards beggars. They cared for people who they consider needed a helping hand and had limitations, both financial and physical limitations.

There has been a shift in the beggar's behavior (nowadays) at the time. In the 1990s, 1980s, and in previous years, only people who really needed someone else's help to fulfill their needs. Whether they were having a disability or living in poverty, they accepted whatever was given by donors, in the form of money, rice, clothes,<sup>18</sup> but nowadays, however, beggars are not only disabled or old people. On the contrary, a lot of them look healthy and young.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Beggar is a phenomenon does not only exist in many developing countries but also in developed ones (Andriotis 2016). The city as the center of numerous activities raises various speculation, especially for the economic sector. It is a similar case for the beggars in viewing the city of Banda Aceh. The amount of money turnover becomes one of their reasons to strive and survive in the middle of the busy lives of the capital of Aceh province.

In carrying out the begging activities, the beggars communicate in various ways. Most of them sort to non-verbal communication since it is the easiest to be executed. It does not require special skills or articulate speech, instead, the message is delivered through some simple gestures. In some certain contexts, they also use verbal communication, for instance, reciting prayers, scriptures (Surahs of Al-Quran), and singing some songs. Feeling inadequate with these two communication methods, the beggars also use additional communication tools in different contexts, they are reference letters asking for donations, either for social needs or even religious occasions.

The methods and means of communication used are leading to begging activities, they are activities carried out by certain people either individually or in groups of varying age levels and genders aiming to obtain compassion in material form. They generally expect to attract people to give donations.

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<sup>18</sup> Hasni, Interviewed with a housewife.

## PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION OF BEGGAR

The activities of beggars which disrupted the city's orderliness of the city have caused the government of Banda Aceh to force control. Several policies were made to foster and prevent the growing numbers of beggars in Banda Aceh. However, those policies are not fully obeyed by the citizens of the city. Whereas, the government has directed the people to give their donations to formal/official institutions, such as orphanages and other similar non-governmental organizations related.

As people who uphold Islamic values, the residents of Banda Aceh put much empathetic towards the existence of beggars. Although there is a prohibition on giving charity informally, this is not properly obeyed by the people. The growing number of beggars carrying out activities in densely populated areas signifies the existence of donors in Banda Aceh.

Each policy requires community support to be implemented. Likewise, the prevention and regulating policy of the beggars also requires encouragement and supported by residents of Banda Aceh. The Understanding of this matter is important for the application of the rules made as well accommodate the aspirations of citizens who uphold Islamic values about the concept of providing assistance to people in need.

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