Dramaturgy and Its Effects on Beggar's Religious Life: An Islamic Education Perspective

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Abstract
This study aims to reveal the beggar's dual role at of Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Kudus tomb. The beggar's dual role is the behavior differences in front of the congregation or the community and behind it. This type of research includes qualitative field research with an ethnographic approach that emphasizes paying attention to the meaning of the beggar's actions. The results of this study indicate that on the front stage, beggars use symbols that can support their role, while backstage, they are people who do not experience economic problems. This contradiction shows that they are less grateful and need special education to strengthen Islamic education for the community, especially Muslim beggars.

Keywords: Beggar Behavior, Dramaturgical Analysis, Islamic Education, Religious Life.

Abstrak

Kata kunci: Analisis Dramaturgi, Kehidupan Keagamaan, Pendidikan Islam, Perilaku Pengemis.

Introduction
The beggar phenomenon in Indonesia's various cities seems very close to the poverty symptoms and the begging culture.1 Poverty in Indonesia has not seemed to
disappear, although it has decreased over the years. Although poverty has decreased, begging culture has yet to be felt. Beggars earn income by begging in various ways and reasons to expect mercy from others that can be used to fulfill their daily needs. Although by asking for the mercy of others, begging work is seen as a lawful job and livelihood.2

Beggars do various ways to get sympathy from other people. The beggar's attitude, behavior, and appearance will affect his income. Some wear unsuitable clothes; sometimes, they make fake scars or pretend to be pregnant with their hands and feet. The impression made by these beggars certainly generates profits for them, and it is not uncommon for people to give them money because they feel sorry for beggars. From that understanding, many beggars persist in their profession, even though they can work other than being beggars. Several research results informed three motives that underlie individuals who became beggars: social and cultural factors, economic factors, family factors, and education factors.3

Mustaqim's research results strengthen that poverty is the central factor in becoming a beggar.4 The beggar's existence is directly balanced by the increase in pilgrims to sacred graves; even though some sacred tombs prohibit the presence of beggars, they still exist around the tomb. Therefore, handling this problem requires continuing special treatment,5 such as cooperation with social services institutions and involving the role of Badan Amil Zakat Nasional (BAZNAS).6

From dramaturgical perspective, Erving Goffman states that life is like a theatre, a social interaction similar to a performance on a stage, which displays the roles played by actors. To play the role, the actor usually uses verbal language, displays certain nonverbal behaviors, and wears certain attributes, such as vehicles, clothes, and other

accessories that are appropriate for his role in certain situations. Individuals could present a show or any theatre for others, but the impression obtained from the actor on the show is different. A person can be very sure of the performance he has seen, but it can also be the other way around. Using the parable of theatrical performances, Goffman divided social life into two areas where the actor also plays two roles simultaneously, i.e., the front stage and the backstage. On the front stage, actors will play their roles impeccably as if they are on a big stage and seen by thousands of audiences. Instead, what happens backstage is the actual condition of the actor. In short, beggars are self-images on the front stage, while their authenticity as humans only appears backstage.

The ulama tomb is one of the favorite places that is used as a place to beg. That is because many people visit the ulama tomb, which is considered sacred, with various intentions and purposes. Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Kudus tombs are places that many beggars go to, especially on Fridays and Sundays. The behavior shown by the beggars included wearing a cap and praying for the congregation. Beggars in front of society as if they are helpless people and need to be pitied. The interview results with one trader at the tomb showed that the beggars at Sunan Kalijaga tomb rarely attend prayers in the mosque and the Al-Qur'an reading regularly. While at Sunan Kudus Tomb, the beggars are classified as old, some follow the congregation, and most do not go to the mosque when it is time for prayer. There are two apparent phenomena; on the one hand, the beggars show that they are pious people, experts in prayer, and use religious attributes so that many people sympathize and give alms to them. However, on the other hand, they show different things.

From this background, this study will focus on dramaturgy and its influence on beggars' religious life from an Islamic educational perspective. This study differs from several previous studies, which revealed various reasons, existence, and offers of handling the strengthening of beggars on the streets or in sacred places. The most notable difference lies in the choice of research location; in the two Sunan tombs, which are part of the nine saints (Wali Songo). Another difference is the use of dramaturgical

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8 Umiarso dan Elbadiansyah, Interaksionalisme Simbolik (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2014), 57.
10 Beggar 1, Interview in Sunan Kalijaga Tomb, July 1, 2022.
analysis to reveal aspects of beggars front stage and backstage and aspects of Islamic education, which are used as analytical instruments to formulate alternative offers to the problem.

Method

This research is a type of field qualitative research (field research),11 directly understands the portrait of beggar's religious life at Sunan Kalijaga tomb, Kadilangu, Demak regency and Sunan Kudus tomb, Pejaten, Kauman, Kudus regency. This phenomenon is presented in a holistic descriptive manner. The research approach used was ethnographic.12 The ethnographic approach emphasizes the effort to pay attention to the meaning of the beggar's actions. This meaning can be known through language and actions conveyed indirectly through words and actions,13 namely, by examining the begging culture in the Sunan Kalijaga tomb and Sunan Kudus tombs.

The subjects of this study were beggars at Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Kudus tombs. In contrast, the research object that will be studied is the dramaturgy of beggars' behavior and its influence on their religious life. The beggar's behavior leads to a dramaturgical phenomenon, where beggars show different things in front of the community, called the front stage, and behind the community or backstage. Then, this phenomenon is studied more deeply by relating it to the religious behavior of beggars.

Results and Discussion

Beggar Behavior at Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Kudus Tombs

The ulama tomb is one of the favorite places that is used as a place to beg. That is because many people visit the ulama tomb, which is considered sacred with various intentions and purposes. The Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Kudus tombs are places that many beggars go to, especially on Fridays and Sundays.14

Sunan Kalijaga's tomb is located in a village called Kadilangu. Kadilangu is located about 1.5 km southeast of the city center of Demak and the Great Mosque of Demak. The Sunan Kalijaga tomb, known as the Kadilangu tomb, has become one of

12 Amri Marzali, Metode Etnografi James P. Spradley (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1997), xv.
14 Beggar 2, Interview in Sunan Kalijaga Tomb, October 11, 2022.
the religious tourism destinations for the Walisongo pilgrimage. Sunan Kalijaga is a *laqab* that is attached to Raden Syahid. In addition to the *laqab*, he was also nicknamed Sunan Kali. It is called so because, according to the story, Raden Syahid was appointed a guardian or *Sunan* because he could guard a stick on the river bank (Javanese: *Kali*). He was born in 1450. He is the son of the duke of Wilatikta Tuban and Dewi Nawangrum.

Likewise, Sunan Kudus' tomb is located in Pejanten, Kauman, Kudus. Sunan Kudus's name is Ja'far Shadiq. He came to Java in 1436 and broadcast and spread Islam in Kudus and surrounding areas. Sunan Kudus's special expertise is in fiqh, monotheism, hadith, interpretation, and logic, so he earned the nickname wali *al-ilm* (*wali*, who has broad knowledge). Sunan Kudus's *da’wah* methods include: 1) Approaching the community by allowing old customs that are difficult to change; 2) Embracing the Hindu community, for example, by prohibiting the slaughter of cows which are considered sacred or holy by the Hindu community; 3) Carrying Buddhist communities in the form of building *Padasan* (ablution places) and providing eight showers and on top of which a statue is given to Kebo Gumarang following Buddhist teachings; 4) Congratulations *mitoni*.

In the two tombs, many beggars use it to seek sustenance. They do various ways to get sympathy from others, where attitude, behavior, and appearance affect their income. Some wear unsuitable clothes; sometimes, they make fake scars or pretend to be pregnant with their hands and feet. This phenomenon in sociological theory is called dramaturgy.

Dramaturgy views social life as a series of stage performances or theatre performances. Social life is theatre that allows the actor to play various roles and project a certain self-image to the people present, as desired by the actor, in the hope that the audience is willing to accept the actor's self-image and treat it according to that self-image. The actor's appearance has a certain symbol used by standards to behave. Backstage performances allow for a degree of relaxation from standard front-stage performances.

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15 Solichin Salam, *Sekitar Walisongo* (Kudus: Menara Kudus, 1960), 42.
techniques. Backstage performances are separated from front-stage performances, among the dramaturgy that appears in the life of beggars at the Sunan Kalijaga and the Sunan Kudus tombs:

**How to dress**

Clothing for beggars is their identity as beggars carry out their work by begging so that they can benefit and can fulfill their daily needs. The beggars in Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Kudus tombs differ slightly from those in the streets or public places. In dressing, they are more polite by wearing clean and proper clothes even though they also look shabby.

**Language and Physical Movement**

Symbols make beggars not need to inform the community that they are beggars. This symbol can be in the form of language and physical movement. The language symbol used by beggars is to say, "ask for alms, mother/father, sincerely." He completes the symbol by slowing down and smoothing his words as if they are helpless. Words like that are a characteristic used by a beggar. Many beggars use the words "ask for alms, mother/father, for eat." The point is that they have no money to buy food and must be given alms. Some say "ask for alms mother/father; I have not eaten for two days." They stated that they had not eaten for two days. With words like that, many people will feel pity. If they do not give money, they will give food.

Another symbol conveyed by beggars is in the form of physical movement. A beggar in Sunan Kalijaga's tomb also stays silent and looks up at his attribute as an Aqua glass while lowering his head. Although not with words of asking, his behavior shows that he is a beggar who hopes and asks for gifts from pilgrims. Unlike what happened at Sunan Kudus Tomb, where the beggars used the word forcing a little, "It is okay to divide two thousand," said one of the beggars at the tomb.

**Looks flawed**

Beggars take advantage of these physical deficiencies to be able to earn income. With less physique, they felt they could benefit at the mercy of the pilgrims. One of the beggars in Sunan Kalijaga stuck nails in his feet. That is horrendous behavior. If at the Sunan Kudus tomb, then this condition is not visible.

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22 Local Society, Interview in Sunan Kalijaga Tomb, October 11, 2022.
Pray for pilgrims

Beggars always try to make a good impression to get sympathy and compassion from the pilgrims. Pray for pilgrims is an effective strategy because it is rooted in the broader community that the prayers of the wimpy and persecuted will be answered quickly, as well as the pilgrims' understanding. The beggar who prays for the pilgrims as if he is diligent and devout is the front view, but the back does not look like that. Entering prayer time, they are not seen in the mosque and occasionally do not pray.

Carrying the baby

Carrying babies is also done by beggars to get sympathy from the pilgrims. Some of them seemed to be carrying babies in their arms, whether it was beggars at Sunan Kalijaga tomb or Sunan Kudus. The pilgrims claim they feel sorry for the child or baby brought by the beggar, so they give alms to him. As said by one of the pilgrims: "I feel sorry for his son, yes I intend to give alms to his son." So holding a baby is also a way for beggars to gain the trust of pilgrims.

Complementary attributes

This attribute is looked up to as a place for pilgrims to spend money. Some beggars hold it, and some put attributes on the ground. Although not with words of asking, the pilgrims already understand that those who carry attributes are beggars by giving alms to them. The beggar shows that the money container is always in an open position. If it is quite a lot, they keep the money in their shirt pocket or the small bag they have prepared. Raise hands or use an object that can put money in. Raising a hand or raising a place for money to be entered is an agreed symbol that this meaning can replace the position of interaction. Beggars can convey meaning and interact with the community with the symbol of the raising of the hand that replaces the words or the words "this is me, and I am a beggar." This method is a strategy, so the pilgrims think that no one has been merciful and gives them alms.

Dramaturgy theory cannot be separated from the actors who play their roles on the front and back stages. Goffman argues that the front side tends to be symbolized by performances that can influence the audience to sympathize and be attracted to him. Actors get a certain front built for the show when playing established roles. Mastery of drama beggars on the front stage is manifested in the selection of characters according

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23 Beggar 2, Interview in Sunan Kalijaga Tomb.
to their profession. It includes setting and personal front, further divided into appearance and style.

Refinement of the backstage is shown by hiding a few things for the smooth running of their show as beggars. In this case, Goffman discusses backstage, where facts or real things are emphasized on the front stage to show some everyday things such as disability and helplessness. The actor fully hopes that the audience members are not present backstage. That means the actor hopes the audience does not know the side of the actor behind the stage. Performances are often hard to do when knowing the actor's side backstage. Backstage is where beggars fully hope that the public does not attend. That is, beggars hope that people do not know the side of beggars behind the stage. Performances tend to be difficult when beggars find it difficult to prevent people from entering the backstage.

It is proven that they are workers in their respective areas apart from Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Some work was looking for used goods, selling leaves, snacks, and growing crops in the garden. The clothes they wear when begging differ from those they wear when they are not begging. Beggars change their clothes with more decent and neat clothes when they return to their area. That is a strategy or management of the beggar's impression so that what he plays on the front stage is more convincing to the pilgrims.

Another impression management is with words. When the interview with the beggar took place, he showed that he was clear in speaking and loud. Even though his profession was beggar, when he was in his area or community, he had already left the profession. Even if there are neighbors who are in trouble, he also often assists. The beggars came from various regions, including Jepara, Pati, and Semarang. By being away from his territory, no one will recognize him and how he is carrying out his role as a beggar. They admit that they are ashamed and maintain their self-image in their environment by not wanting anyone to know that their profession outside their territory is a beggar. Likewise, when he plays his profession as a beggar, he does not want to be seen by the pilgrims as he is in his area.

Some of these things prove that beggars have pretended to maintain their profession. In the Islamic view, this pretense makes the money they receive as beggars

25 Ritzer and Goodman, 400.
26 Beggar 3, Interview in Sunan Kalijaga Tomb, September 18, 2022.
illegal.\textsuperscript{27} Islam does not allow begging, except beyond his ability, for people affected by disasters lose all their wealth and are destitute.\textsuperscript{28} It has implications for the need for Islamic education for beggars because they may not know about the law of being beggars in Islam. In this way, it is possible to solve the problem of alleviating beggars as Murdan's research results show that religious education for beggars significantly impacts beggars' religious and social behavior.\textsuperscript{29}

Dramaturgy and Its Influence on the Religious Life of Beggars at Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Kudus Tomb

Religious life is all forms of behavior with the practice of religious rituals that are rooted in religious values. Thus, religious values are used as guidelines for the behavior of a person or group. The forms of religious behavior carried out by individuals include prayer, fasting, zakat, reading the Al-Qur'an, and knowledge of the Islamic religion.\textsuperscript{30} Dramaturgy carried out by beggars, as described previously, has an influence on their religious life, including religious life which is shown as follows:

First, prayed for pilgrims. The thing that attracts pilgrims to alms to beggars is when they pray for pilgrims. It can be seen that the prayer given by beggars to pilgrims depends on the number of alms given. If the alms given are large, the beggar will also pray with long prayers and great enthusiasm. This phenomenon is seen in beggars in Sunan Kalijaga, Demak. Meanwhile, beggars who offer prayers to pilgrims are rarely seen at the Sunan Kudus Tomb. From these conditions, it can be understood that the spiritual level of beggars cannot be said to be high or still relatively low.

Second, holding a baby. Carrying babies is one strategy to attract the mercy of pilgrims. It needs to be a concern for beggars so that babies or children should not need to be invited or brought because what a child experiences as a child will be a valuable education when he grows up. Likewise, habits, or what is seen by his parents, will also be imitated by him when he grows up. So parents need to be careful in setting an example for their children.

Third, wear shabby clothes. Wearing shabby and dirty clothes is one of the

\textsuperscript{29} Murdan, “Pendidikan Keagamaan Di Kalangan Pengemis Di Banjarmasin Timur Kota Banjarmasin.”
characteristics of the appearance displayed by beggars. The beggars admitted that they rarely attend prayers alone or in the mosque congregation. That is because the clothes they wear are inappropriate or dirty, as said by the beggar at the Sunan Kalijaga tomb.

At the Sunan Kudus tomb, sometimes some beggars join the prayer in the mosque near the tomb. There are also those whose houses are not far from the tomb so they can go home first. This phenomenon shows that beggars have a good understanding of religious law.

Begging behavior is not liked in Islamic law. As stated in the hadith of Muslim history, "the hand above is better than the hand below." The hadith shows that Allah and the Messenger of Allah prefer those who like to give rather than beg.31 Judging from the historical appearance of the hadith, that hadith was a response and protest against a friend who often begged. Begging is an attitude that is not commendable and even shows a weak and lazy mental attitude, and depends on other people for their needs. This lazy and weak attitude is essentially not grateful for the favors of Allah that have been given to him. Because those who beg are people who close and waste their potential,32 Muslims must be grateful for the blessings given by Allah by optimizing their potential by working hard and earnestly. So Muslims must work to get sustenance from the results of their sweat. By getting sustenance, Muslims can also fulfill their daily needs and as a provision to worship Allah Swt. Working well includes good deeds. So that people who are active and diligent in work will also get a reward.

Conclusion

The beggars show a dual role in front and behind the stage. In front of the stage, they use symbols that can support their role as beggars, namely pleading language, holding babies, looking disabled, discussing physical movements, and praying for the pilgrims. Although backstage, they are the same people as others regarding ability and economy. The dramaturgy that is carried out impacts the religious life of beggars; for example: by wearing shabby and dirty clothes, it is difficult for them to carry out prayers. In addition, other symbols seem to indicate a lack of gratitude for the favors given. Because, in essence, Allah loves people who like to give and do not like people who beg and encourage people to work hard.

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References


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