



Policy & Practice

UNRAVELING THE COMPLEXITY OF URBAN VULNERABILITY: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN ADDRESSING SOCIAL URBAN PROBLEM IN SOUTH SULAWESI

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Keywords: *street children;
homeless individuals; beggars;
urban issues*

Abstract

Street children, homeless individuals, and beggars are intricate societal issues that predominantly manifest in urban regions, especially the urban areas of South Sulawesi. The South Sulawesi Provincial Government and the district/city governments in urban areas have implemented policies to address the issue of street children, homeless individuals, and beggars. However, these policies have not been effectively implemented and have not had a significant impact on addressing the problem in urban areas of South Sulawesi. The provincial and district/city administrations in South Sulawesi have four problems in addressing this social issue: family dysfunction, program limits, community involvement, and limited institutional capability. In South Sulawesi, the provincial and district/city administrations in metropolitan areas oversee inter-regional coordination plans and implement preventive, curative, and rehabilitative program strategies to address the issue of street children, beggars, and homeless individuals.

INTRODUCTION

Socioeconomic disparities, together with the process of urbanization, contribute to the proliferation of street children, beggars, and homeless individuals, rendering them more susceptible to becoming pressing social issues that warrant government attention (Purwoko, 2013; Bahfiarti et al., 2019). The Central Statistics Agency's (2021) data indicates a deceleration in the progress of poverty alleviation in South Sulawesi Province. The poverty rate in 2019 stood at 8.56%, rose to 8.99% in 2020, and subsequently down to 8.53% in 2021. In March 2022, the percentage increased once more to 8.63%. According to the BPS data from 2021, there is a notable disparity in economic conditions between villages and towns in South Sulawesi Province. The poverty rate in rural is higher than in cities, as indicated in Table 1. This phenomenon promotes the process of urbanization, particularly in sub-urban areas around City of Makassar, such as: Maros, Pangkep, Takalar, and Gowa regions.

Table 1. Percentage of South Sulawesi Poor Population by Region

Year	Urban	Rural	Urban + Rural
2017	4,48	12,59	9,38
2018	4,61	12,24	9,06
2019	4,44	11,95	8,69
2020	4,49	11,97	8,72
2021	4,77	12,05	8,78

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, South Sulawesi Province (2021: p.7)

The study conducted by Rijal and Tahir (2022) confirms that urbanization resulting from poverty in rural areas is evident. The study cites data from the Makassar City Population and Civil Registry Service, which indicates that in 2020, a total of 5,175 individuals migrated to Makassar. These individuals were distributed across 15 sub-districts, with the highest number of migrants observed in the Biringkanaya sub-district (912 individuals) and the Manggala sub-district (609 individuals) from outside the area. The lack of suitable skills and resources among migrant families who move to urban regions compels them to engage in informal employment, such as street work. The prevalence of this situation is shown in the presence of 375 street children and 139 beggars observed in Makassar City between January and September 2022, as reported by the Makassar City Agency of Social Service (2022).

The South Sulawesi Provincial Government and the Makassar City Government have implemented regional regulatory policies (Perda) in order to address the social issues of

street children, homeless individuals, and beggars. The South Sulawesi Provincial Government enacted Regional Regulation Number 6 of 2015, which pertains to the maintenance of public order and peace. Additionally, the Makassar City Government has enacted Regional Regulation Number 2 of 2008, which addresses the welfare of street children, homeless individuals, beggars, and street performers in Makassar City. The South Sulawesi Provincial Government and the Makassar City Government faced difficulties in implementing these two policies, leading to the presence of street children, homeless individuals, and beggars in the Makassar, Maros, Sungguminasa and Takalar regions, known as Mamminasata urban area. This situation caused public unrest as these individuals disrupted traffic order. As reported by iNewsSulsel.id (2022) that “This control was carried out because of the many reports from residents who were worried about the presence of beggars and street children. This is because some beggars often damage residents' vehicles if they are not given money”

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The inadequate handling of street children, homeless people and beggars in South Sulawesi is caused by four main factors

1. Family Dysfunction

The family, as the most basic and initial unit of society, should foster individuals to fulfill their roles and promote personal growth. Regrettably, it is the families that provide a hindrance to initiatives aimed at addressing the issue of street children, homeless individuals, and beggars. This occurs due to the families themselves exerting pressure on youngsters to engage in street begging. Previous research has identified familial factors as the primary causes for the emergence of street children (Mugianti et al., 2018; Purwoko, 2013). This issue is further corroborated by a study conducted by Bahfiarti et al. (2019), which asserts that the primary reason why most youngsters engage in street jobs and activities is due to their parents' encouragement to generate income, with the aim of contributing to the family's financial well-being. This situation is confirmed by Informant IK, which stated that

“...Regarding the anjal [street children-translated] issue, we are in a dilemma, because on the other hand, the mindset of the parents is definitely economic. That's why their children are [ordered] to go out onto the streets to beg.” (Interviewed on September 7, 2022).

2. Program Limitations

The City Agency of Social Service is primarily responsible for addressing the issue of street children, homeless individuals, and beggars in South Sulawesi Province and the districts/cities in the Mamminasata region. However, these efforts are often conducted in a limited and superficial manner, and are primarily reactive in nature. They rely on control measures and raids, with the assistance of the Civil Service Police Unit. The

Makassar City Government Social Service is the only active organization that offers aid through the Technical Unit of Trauma Center Shelter House (RPTC). They are capable of offering support to street children, beggars, and homeless individuals for a duration of three days, with the guidance of experienced social workers. This phenomenon is absent in other parts of the Mamminasata region, particularly in Maros Regency, Gowa Regency, and Takalar Regency. This condition was confirmed by Informant IF as stated that:

"The coaching [was only carried out] for only 3-7 days, [this action certainly] didn't have much of an effect. "If you want to do coaching, for street children you can't do it after [just] being coached, not really, because they [have] been [acting] on the streets for years, for years in that environment, it feels impossible [to make changes in a short time]" (Interviewed on September 23, 2022)

3. Lack of community engagement

The management of street children, beggars, and homeless individuals in South Sulawesi is significantly impacted by the active participation of the community in addressing these issues. Citizen involvement mostly entails providing monetary support to individuals as an expression of compassion or as a religious act of charity. This circumstance is well manipulated by specific factions that coordinate the labor of street children and beggars in public spaces. This phenomenon suggests that the systematic organization of street children and beggars is a type of human exploitation. It involves taking advantage of public compassion to collect money for the benefit of specific groups. Such actions are clearly in violation of human rights and legal rules. As Informant N confirmed that:

"... the number of our social workers in Gowa Regency is not as large as in Makassar. This makes us unable to provide good assistance to street children, homeless people and beggars..." (Interview on 26 September 2022)

This situation was also echoed by Informant S, who stated:

"We have collaborated with the Government on several specific programs. However, for handling street children, we do not yet have a specific cooperation program or MoU... [For this reason] the government needs special seriousness to pay attention to this problem by involving stakeholders from community organizations" (Interview on September 14 2022)

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance the efficacy of managing street children, homeless individuals, and beggars in South Sulawesi, the subsequent measures are suggested:

1. The provinces and districts/cities in South Sulawesi should establish regional policies to address the issue of street children, homeless people, and beggars. These policies should focus on coordinating efforts between different regions and implementing

strategies for prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of street children, beggars, and homeless people.

2. The provincial government and district/city government should collaborate on a public awareness campaign that emphasizes the importance of channeling aid through social institutions, zakat institutions, and religious organizations, rather than giving donations directly to street children and beggars.
3. The south sulawesi provincial government and the regency/city government should work together to establish and manage social welfare camps. These camps should provide rehabilitation programs and comprehensive mentoring for street children, homeless people, and beggars.

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