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The Role of Satpol PP in Handling Buskers and Beggars in Batam City

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the role of the Batam's Satpol PP in handling buskers, vagrants and beggars from an administrative law perspective. The study focuses on operational actions, cross-agency coordination patterns, and implementation constraints that affect the sustainability of enforcement outcomes in public spaces. The study employed a qualitative approach with a case study strategy. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, field observations, and reviews of policy and administrative documents, analyzed using thematic analysis, strengthening trustworthiness through source and technique triangulation, audit trails, and adequate context descriptions. The results indicate that enforcement practices in Batam utilize a hybrid enforcement pattern, combining persuasive approaches, administrative actions, and situational enforcement according to the field context. Satpol PP plays a crucial role as a liaison between agencies, but its long-term effectiveness is limited by inconsistent referral channels, varying social service capacity, and a weak post-enforcement follow-up mechanism. The findings emphasize that the success of enforcement is not solely measured by the immediate restoration of order, but rather by the legality of actions, procedural proportionality, quality of coordination, and the sustainability of social impacts. The research contributes to strengthening administrative law studies by showing that effective handling requires integration between norm enforcement, social protection, and the design of more institutionalized cross-agency collaboration.

Keyword: Satpol PP, Buskers and Homeless People, Administrative Law, Collaborative Governance

INTRODUCTION

Batam, a rapidly expanding industrial and commercial metropolis, has significant public governance contradictions. On the one hand, these dynamics increase the appeal of investment and tourism; on the other hand, they also increase societal vulnerability due to the persistent prevalence of busking and begging in critical areas. According to Amirtha et al

(2024) and Putra et al (2022), this phenomenon is not coincidental, as the government's perception of beggars and vagrants remains an identifiable population, despite being heavily influenced by design of data collection mechanisms and intensity of outreach/enforcement activities.

This phenomenon cannot be regarded solely as a disruption of public order, but also as a manifestation of social vulnerability that intersects with poverty, limited employment opportunities, and a frail social service infrastructure. In this environment, dealing with buskers and beggars becomes a public governance issue, requiring a balance between the mandate to maintain public order and the obligation to provide social protection.

Mandala Putra & Abbas (2019) found that social policy arguments have erupted over the existence of buskers and beggars: whether they are primarily a public order issue requiring a regulatory response or a failure of social protection necessitating rehabilitation and empowerment. Amirtha et al.'s (2024) empirical study on poverty policing demonstrates that enforcement-focused solutions frequently merely move the problem without addressing structural underpinnings such as economic stress and family vulnerability. Meanwhile, social service-based initiatives risk failure due to limited institutional capacity, cross-sector coordination, and limited implementation resources.

Within the context of regional administrative law, the Satpol PP is more than just a field operational actor; it has a clear mandate to enforce regional legislation and maintain public order, security, and community protection. Government Regulation Number 16 of 2018 clarified the Satpol PP's tasks, powers and authorities, including non-judicial enforcement and administrative proceedings (Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 16 Tahun 2018 Tentang Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja, 2018). In reality, the same rule includes standards that emphasize the necessity of enforcing standard operating procedures (SOPs) and a code of conduct, as well as requirements for Satpol PP members to safeguard human rights, operate objectively, and without discrimination.

The literature on local law enforcement governance debates the nature of the Satpol PP: whether it is viewed as a coercive apparatus similar to the police, or as an implementer of administrative actions subject to the principles of legality, accuracy, proportionality, and accountability (Djidar et al., 2024). As a result, research on the treatment of street musicians and beggars must frame the Satpol PP as a street-level regulator whose discretionary authority is constrained by administrative law and human rights standards.

Traditionally, the treatment of homeless persons and beggars (*gepeng*) in Indonesia has been framed under a mitigation framework that includes preventive, repressive, and rehabilitative strategies. Government Regulation Number 31 of 1980 focuses on mitigation to prevent the rise in homelessness and begging, while also reintegrating them into society so they can achieve a fair standard of living consistent with human dignity. Batam also has a more sophisticated policy instrument at the regional level: Batam Mayor Regulation Number 60 of 2024 Concerning the Handling of Displaced People, Vagrants, and Beggars in Batam City (effective January 26, 2024) (Peraturan Wali Kota Batam Nomor 60 Tahun 2024 Tentang Penanganan Orang Terlantar, Gelandangan, Dan Pengemis Di Kota Batam, 2024).

Batam constitutes a unique case compared with many other Indonesian regions because the city is not merely an administrative municipality, but also an industrial growth centre, an investment gateway, and a high-mobility urban space where public order, social vulnerability, and economic circulation intersect more intensely. This makes the handling of displaced persons, vagrants, and beggars in Batam analytically different from routine local-order cases in less dynamic regions, because policy implementation occurs in strategic public spaces that are directly linked to the city's image, investment climate, and cross-sector governance pressures.

This context also strengthens the novelty of the present study. Rather than examining Batam through an older general framework of public order control, this study situates the

analysis within the implementation of Batam Mayor Regulation No. 60 of 2024 as a newer and more specific policy instrument for handling displaced persons, vagrants, and beggars. Accordingly, the study captures an early implementation phase of the regulation, making it possible to assess how the integration of enforcement, referral, and rehabilitation is being translated into practice in a recently updated local regulatory setting.

The discussion becomes more heated when oppressive measures are deployed through frequent raids with no appropriate rehabilitative pathways. Research on social rehabilitation in Batam emphasized the need for programme openness and accountability, as well as government competence, in ensuring actual social restoration rather than temporary shelter (Mahendra & Lodan, 2024). As a result, policy concepts combine enforcement and rehabilitation must be examined at the cross-agency level, especially in the collaboration between the Satpol PP and the Social Services Agency.

Previous research on the treatment of beggars has found that policies and field practices frequently alternate between a regulatory and social welfare approach. This is evident in research conducted by the Ministry of Social Affairs, which emphasized the need to map root causes, service capacity, and rehabilitation referrals to ensure that treatment does not end with short-term outreach (Maryatun et al., 2022). Other regional studies highlight the role of the Satpol PP in enforcing regional regulations, which is frequently regarded as adequate in terms of operational routines but is not always accompanied by adequate public understanding or resource support for ongoing development (Marif, 2022; Maryolinda, 2021). These issues revolve around how success is defined as clean public areas and permanent changes in social situations. As a result, there is still an opportunity for research focused on Batam, particularly considering the implementation of Mayoral Regulation No. 60 of 2024, which examines the integration of enforcement and rehabilitation as a system rather than merely a policy phrase.

Although previous studies have discussed social rehabilitation, public order enforcement, and the role of Satpol PP in Batam and other regions, they generally do not explain how these functions are being reconfigured under the specific framework of Mayor Regulation No. 60 of 2024. In particular, the existing literature has not sufficiently addressed why Batam's distinctive urban-administrative setting may shape implementation outcomes differently from other local governments.

This is the research gap addressed by the present study. The study does not merely revisit the issue of handling beggars in general terms; instead, it examines how a newly reinforced local regulatory framework is implemented in a city with strong investment pressures, dense urban mobility, and continuing social vulnerability. In this sense, the contribution of this research lies in connecting administrative order, cross-agency coordination, and social rehabilitation within a uniquely Batam-specific governance context.

Based on this context, this study focuses on the Public Order Agency's (Satpol PP) role in dealing with buskers and vagrants—beggars in Batam—including the types of actions (data collection, enforcement, and guidance); coordination patterns with relevant agencies (e.g., the Social Services Agency/UPT); and implementation challenges such as limited facilities, perpetrator economic factors, and a low deterrent effect.

In this context, this study examines Satpol PP's role in addressing buskers and beggars in Batam, specifically the types of operational actions (data collection, enforcement, guidance, and referrals), cross-agency coordination patterns, and implementation challenges that affect the long-term sustainability of response outcomes. A study vacuum exists in the small number of studies that evaluate handling techniques from perspectives: administrative order (legality, proportionality, procedural consistency) and social sustainability (service referrals, follow-up, and rehabilitation effectiveness). Thus, this study not only details the operations of the Satpol PP but also assesses how the order mandate is applied equitably, in a coordinated manner and in line with social management goals in Batam's public places.

Literature Review

The phenomenon of street performers, vagrants, and beggars (gepeng) continues to be a source of contention due to the interconnectivity between public space administration and structural poverty. One school of thought views them as an order issue that requires enforcement actions to protect citizens' safety and comfort, as well as the city's reputation (Haliim, 2016). Another school of thought holds that the logic of order can disguise the underlying problem because social protections are fragile. As a result, recurrent enforcement enhances the vulnerability of the street poor (Beck et al., 2005; Yang, 2020). As a result, a pattern of criminalizing poverty has arisen, evolving into a regulatory norm that does not always take the form of permanent confinement. The result is widespread punishment through eviction, property confiscation, and termination of access to living space. To develop thorough empirical information, strategic plans must be implemented in conjunction with more realistic urban spatial and social planning, as well as local actor configurations and mandates.

The literature on dealing with street musicians, street children, vagrants, and beggars reveals a conceptual divide between public order and social welfare measures. The presence of vulnerable groups in public settings is positioned as a public order issue that must be monitored and enforced. However, from a social welfare standpoint, handling procedures that rely too much on raids or repeated evictions are deemed dangerous, resulting in false solutions that fail to address the underlying reasons of socioeconomic vulnerability or the sustainability of rehabilitation services. As a result, evaluations of beggar management strategies must consider not only the intensity of enforcement actions but also the capability for referrals, guidance, and cross-agency coordination.

This normative discussion becomes more quantifiable when the public investigates the consequences of sweeps and campsite clearings. According to Goldshear et al (2023), forced displacement is associated with poor health outcomes and unstable access to resources for vulnerable groups, thereby significantly increasing the likelihood of problems rather than resolving them. In line with this, Barocas et al (2023) argue that even news of significant sweeps might disturb ontological security and heighten worry among people living without shelter. This suggests that enforcement activities lead to better service delivery, highlighting the hidden social costs of coercive approaches (Zwick et al., 2025). As a result, enforcement efficacy must be examined not only through urban spatial indicators but also by considering its consequences for well-being and the burden on public services.

At the governance level, the literature demonstrates that officials' responses to street poverty are not a singular entity, but rather a range of discretionary choices (Herring et al., 2019). A typology of government responses to homelessness specifies several kinds, ranging from service referrals, outreach, mediation, and coercive enforcement, each having its own implications for conflict, legitimacy, and long-term effects (Hipple et al., 2025). In this discussion, coercive measures are sometimes perceived as quick since they immediately modify the landscape of public space, but they are prone to relocation and recurrence. Service-oriented approaches, on the other hand, are praised for their ability to increase stability but are called into question when service capacity is limited or coordination is poor, leading to inconsistent implementation (Herring et al., 2019). As a result, local research is critical for mapping the actual response mix on the ground, including the rationale for its selection and its impact on target groups.

Because the issue of street musicians/beggars intersects with public order and welfare, the literature on collaborative governance and legislation emphasizes the importance of cross-sectoral and mandated collaboration. The integrative collaborative governance paradigm views discussion, trust, commitment, and shared ability as conditions for cross-organizational policies to have an impact, rather than simply parallel operations (Emerson et al., 2012). According to Ahmad et al (2025), dealing with street musicians and beggars involves communication challenges, field resistance, resource limitations, and differences in inter-

agency procedures, all of which affect outcomes. As a result, the research gap encompasses not only what is done, but also how collaboration is conducted, where bottlenecks arise, and which mechanisms are most critical for the transition from public order to rehabilitation/empowerment.

Based on a literature synthesis, this study positions the handling of street musicians and beggars as a cross-sectoral governance practice that can be analyzed through four dimensions: legality and enforcement procedures, officer discretion and operational response patterns, cross-agency coordination for referrals/guidance, and sustainability of enforcement outcomes in public spaces. This framework is used to assess whether the enforcement efforts carried out by the Batam's Satpol PP focus solely on short-term enforcement outcomes or are linked to more sustainable social enforcement mechanisms. Thus, the literature review not only maps the debate but also provides a conceptual basis for the research's empirical analysis.

As a novel research issue, a prominent gap is the lack of studies linking field practices to socio-health outcomes and collaborative performance within an integrated analytical design. Therefore, research on the handling of street musicians and beggars by the Batam's Satpol PP is worthwhile, as it aims to generate recommendations that go beyond assertive or humanistic slogans and offer evidence-based, proportionate, and sustainable policy models.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative design with a case study strategy to gain a deeper understanding of the legal practices and role of the Batam's Satpol PP in handling street musicians, vagrants, and beggars in public spaces in Batam, Indonesia. The case study design was chosen because it allows researchers to fully explore the process, context, and inter-actor dynamics of legal action, rather than simply measuring the frequency of action. Therefore, this design is robust in generating findings that are positioned as concept testing, explanations of mechanisms, and enrichments of theoretical arguments based on field evidence (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The case study is limited to handling practices involving the Batam's Satpol PP at vulnerable points in public spaces during the 2025 period, with attention to actions, referrals, and social follow-up. The research framework aims to explain why and how policies for handling street social problems are implemented, as well as the consequences of their governance for effective handling.

The unit of analysis is the handling of street musicians/beggars by law enforcement officers at the operational level, which includes a series of vulnerable point mapping, patrols/outreach, guidance or enforcement, data collection, referrals to social services, and post-action follow-up. The object of study is understood as policy-in-action, supported by internal procedures, cross-agency coordination, and resource utilization. This approach stems from the argument that successful enforcement is not always synonymous with sustainable enforcement performance; therefore, the study examines performance as a combination of visible outcomes in the public sphere and process quality (e.g., procedural consistency, communication, and follow-up), thereby avoiding assessments that are limited to short-term achievements.

Data sources include primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews and limited field observations. Interviews aimed to explore the rationale for actions, work standards, discretionary considerations, communication strategies with target groups, coordination patterns, implementation constraints, and perceptions of success. Observations were conducted to capture the actual practice of action sequences, officer-community interactions, the use of data collection documents, and forms of follow-up, ensuring that findings do not rely solely on informant narratives (Guest et al., 2006). Secondary data included organizational documents and administrative records, such as activity reports, outreach/enforcement recap data, coordination minutes, and internal standard operating procedures (SOPs), used to verify consistency, strengthen chronology, and assess recurring

work patterns. This combination of methods is relevant because qualitative research is susceptible to perceptual bias without cross-corroboration; therefore, triangulation of sources and techniques is used to increase the accuracy and reliability of findings (Bloch & Bugge, 2013; Creswell, 2009).

Informants were selected using purposive sampling, targeting those with direct involvement and substantive knowledge of response practices. Internal informants included heads of relevant units/divisions, field coordinators, implementing personnel, and officers responsible for data collection or operational administration. External informants included regional officials, service providers, community leaders, and business actors in areas near vulnerable communities. The purpose of this strategy was to strengthen the argument that the findings are not dependent on a single organizational perspective.

The research instrument comprised interview protocols based on a conceptual framework for public-sector legal handling, operational responses, and cross-sectoral governance. The interviews were semi-structured, with an emphasis on analytical indicators that examined context, policy changes, and variances in practice. To ensure scientific traceability and quality reporting, the study followed the principles of transparent qualitative study reporting, including context, informant characteristics, recruitment processes, and adequate data collection techniques, to allow readers to assess the validity of the findings (Tong et al., 2007).

Data were analyzed using systematic thematic analysis. All interview data, observation notes, and documents were read multiple times to ensure a thorough comprehension. Initial coding was then used to determine meaningful units relevant to the research topic. These codes were then organized into provisional themes, examined for internal consistency and relevance to the study topics, and described as themes representing legal handling practices, coordination patterns, and implementation restrictions. Thematic analysis was chosen because it allowed researchers to generate organized interpretations from complex qualitative data while keeping them inside the research conceptual framework.

Data validity was maintained through a trustworthiness framework comprising credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Credibility was increased by triangulating sources and methodologies, cross-checking information amongst informants, and comparing with administrative documents. An audit trail was used to improve dependability and confirmability by documenting analytical judgments, code development, and category changes throughout the analysis process. The explanation of the case scenario also helped support transferability by allowing readers to judge the findings' applicability to similar contexts.

This study also addressed ethical issues in research, including obtaining informed consent for interviews, maintaining confidentiality, and using data for educational purposes. Informant names and possibly identifying information were concealed in the reporting of results. Finally, the validity of the data and research findings was addressed using a framework of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability for reliable thematic analysis, which emphasizes process consistency, transparency of analytical decisions, and traceability of interpretations (Nowell et al., 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that the handling of buskers, vagrants, and beggars in Batam City does not occur as a single field enforcement action, but rather as a series of operational processes encompassing monitoring of vulnerable areas, outreach, administrative action, cross-agency coordination, and social follow-up, with varying degrees of sustainability. Based on interview, observation, and document data, the empirical findings cluster into three main themes: (i) the operational action patterns of the Satpol PP in public spaces, (ii) cross-agency coordination in referrals and guidance, and (iii) implementation constraints affecting

the sustainability of enforcement outcomes. These three research findings demonstrate that enforcement effectiveness is determined not only by the intensity of field operations but also by the quality of coordination after enforcement is implemented.

Operational Patterns of Satpol PP in Public Spaces

Field findings indicate that Satpol PP actions against buskers/beggars are implemented in a phased, situational manner. In high-activity areas, officers often prioritize outreach and early warning to reduce potential conflict with the surrounding community and businesses. Meanwhile, at points where the same groups recur, action shifts toward more assertive enforcement, particularly when there are public complaints, traffic disruptions, or activities deemed to be causing unrest. This pattern indicates significant operational discretion at the field level, particularly in determining when to maintain a persuasive approach and when to take administrative action.

Another notable finding is the differences in handling across locations. In commercial areas and intersections, the focus of action is on restoring order and ensuring the smooth flow of public activity. In culinary areas and nightlife centers, officers tend to consider the dynamics of interactions between buskers, visitors, and business owners, thus taking more cautious action to avoid escalation. Thus, the role of the Satpol PP in practice is not merely executive but also involves understanding the social context on the ground, which influences the form of intervention.

Overall, field interactions always consider the impact and prioritize the legal certainty of actions. This ensures that the presence of buskers, vagrants, and beggars can be addressed in accordance with applicable laws and regional regulations. The findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of Batam Public Order Agency Operational Actions

Main Themes	Focus of Findings	Empirical Indications that Emerge
Satpol PP Operational Action Patterns	Stages of handling from outreach to enforcement	Early warnings, monitoring of vulnerable points, situational administrative actions
Cross-agency Coordination	Referral mechanisms/post-enforcement guidance	Communication with social services, follow-up is not always uniform
Implementation Obstacles	Factors inhibiting the sustainability of handling	Repetitive occurrences, limited follow-up, variations in field capacity

Coordination Across Stakeholders in Referrals and Guidance

The research also shows that cross-agency coordination is a key element, but it does not always operate with the same level of consistency in every case. In practice, the Satpol PP plays the leading role in the initial contact phase and restoring public order, while the need for social guidance and service referrals requires the involvement of other agencies, particularly the social services office and relevant technical implementation units. Data shows that coordination tends to be more effective when there are clear communication channels, inter-agency response readiness, and a shared understanding regarding follow-up for target groups.

However, this study found the continuity of treatment often weakens after the enforcement phase is complete. In some situations, the referral process does not continue optimally due to limited service capacity, a mismatch between the profile and available guidance scheme, or the absence of a systematic post-referral monitoring mechanism. As a result, treatment produces a short-term effect of order at the site of operation, but is not always followed by a sustained reduction in recurrence. These findings emphasize that success cannot be measured solely by the number of operations or outreach, but rather by the linkage between field actions and social rehabilitation mechanisms.

Table 2. Coordination Pattern of Actions, Handling and Follow-up

Handling Stages	Dominant Actors	Types of Action	Critical Points Identified
Detection and Monitoring	Satpol PP	Patrols, mapping vulnerable areas, responding to complaints	Field information is not always uniformly documented
Initial Contact and Outreach	Satpol PP	Warnings, persuasive approaches, early identification	Target responses vary, with some returning to the same location
Administrative Ordering	Satpol PP	Security, data collection, relocation from disturbance areas	Field decisions are highly situation-dependent
Referrals and Advanced Guidance	Social Services and related agencies	Social assessment, guidance, follow-up	Service capacity and post-referral monitoring are not always consistent

Implementation constraints and the sustainability of action outcomes

The third theme focuses on the key research challenge: the gap between immediate operational outcomes and long-term societal effects. At the field level, the Satpol PP is reasonably capable of restoring order in public places during operations. However, issues beyond field officers' direct control, such as informal economy dynamics, target group mobility, insufficient social service support, and a weak inter-agency follow-up mechanism, all affect the ability to sustain stability post-operation. In this scenario, recurring instances reveal not only police failure but also the problem's complexity, which extends beyond the duty of establishing order.

Furthermore, the study identified an adaptable workload for Satpol PP personnel, who must balance strict enforcement with social sensitivity in the field. On the one hand, officers must demonstrate state presence and respond rapidly to public concerns. On the other hand, they face situations that necessitate persuasive communication, contextual assessment, and the avoidance of behaviors that may elicit public opposition. These factors produce dynamic implementation techniques, but they also cause variations in response quality across occurrences. Thus, the role of Satpol PP in dealing with street musicians/gepeng in Batam can be viewed as a field governance practice that sits at the confluence of the responsibility to preserve order and the necessity for continuing social coordination.

Table 3. Implementation Constraints and Advanced Operational Implications.

Obstacles Found	Impact on Handling	Implications for Sustainability
Recurring cases at the same location	The effects of surgery tend to be temporary	Need post-enforcement monitoring and a case database
Cross-agency follow-up is not yet uniform	Referrals/coaching are not always ongoing	Need clearer SOPs for coordination and escalation processes
Variations in field context (location/time/crowd size)	Officer action patterns are highly situational	Need operational guidelines based on location typologies
Limited social service capacity	Handling stops at the restoration of order	Need integration of enforcement with social intervention schemes

Overall, the research findings show that the Batam Satpol PP's role in dealing with buskers, vagrants, and beggars stems from its capacity to respond swiftly, maintain public order, and serve as the first point of contact for these cases. However, empirical data show that the strength of the relationship between field activities and cross-agency referral and coaching systems significantly impacts substantive handling success. In other words, the research findings put the Satpol PP as the initial coordinating node inside a larger handling system, rather than just an order enforcer.

To summarise the findings, the study shows that the relationship between operational decisions and the institutional architecture that supports them significantly affects the quality of field handling. Field data show that seemingly similar actions, such as outreach, removal

from congested areas, or data collection, can have different outcomes depending on the clarity of the follow-up process, the readiness of supporting actors, and the continuity of coordination after the operation. Thus, the research findings not only detail the Satpol PP's activities but also highlight the institutional factors that make an activity more effective, limited, or only have a short-term influence.

Furthermore, the study's findings suggest that enforcement techniques should be interpreted in a multi-layered manner, as a combination of administrative activities, social interactions, and implementation decisions made in changing field settings. This finding is significant because it highlights the limitations of judging enforcement performance solely on indicators of operational quantity or frequency.

Instead, a more meaningful assessment takes into account the process's quality, the consistency of responses across cases, and the interconnection of public order and social enforcement aims. Building on these empirical trends, the findings' analytical importance positions them within the context of enforcement governance, implementation discretion, and cross-agency coordination in addressing vulnerable groups in public areas.

Discussion

The research discussion emphasizes that the role of the Satpol PP in handling street musicians, vagrants, and beggars in Batam cannot be interpreted narrowly as an operation to regulate public spaces, but rather as an administrative law practice that operates in a gray area between the mandate of public order and the demands of social protection. The research focuses on the forms of Satpol PP's actions (data collection, enforcement, and guidance), cross-agency coordination patterns, and implementation obstacles—particularly limited facilities, economic factors among the target group, and the low deterrent effect.

Therefore, an appropriate discussion should not simply assess whether the operation is effective, but whether it meets the principles of legality, proportionality, and procedural justice, while also achieving continuity of action from the enforcement stage to guidance or rehabilitation. In line with the problematic framework in the introduction and literature review, the emphasis on success should not be reduced solely to the appearance of order in public spaces, without examining more enduring social outcomes.

The research findings demonstrate a hybrid enforcement pattern, in which Satpol PP employs a combination of persuasive, administrative, and coercive measures tailored to the field context. This pattern is theoretically important because it confirms that local public order officers operate as street-level regulators, not only enforcing norms but also making discretionary decisions in fast-paced, open, and socially stressful situations. This argument aligns with the debate that the nature of the Satpol PP is often perceived ambiguously; while being required to maintain order firmly, they are also constrained by administrative legal standards, standard operating procedures (SOPs), codes of ethics, and the principle of non-discrimination as stipulated in Government Regulation No. 16 of 2018. From a legal perspective, the crucial point is not the existence or absence of discretion, but rather whether it can be procedurally accounted for, based on a mandate, is measurable, proportional, documented, and provides a bridge to social services. This is where the study's contribution is strong, as it seeks to shift the discourse from firmness and humanism to legitimate, proportional, and effective administrative assertiveness.

Read through a street-level bureaucracy lens, this hybrid pattern shows that Satpol PP officers do not implement rules mechanically. They continuously translate formal norms into situational decisions under conditions of time pressure, public visibility, limited shelters, incomplete data, and resistance from target groups. In practice, discretion becomes the mechanism through which legal mandates are adjusted to social stress: officers decide when to prioritize persuasion over coercion, when to record identities, when to release individuals, and when referral is still feasible despite weak downstream capacity. This helps explain why

implementation gaps in Batam should not be interpreted simply as non-compliance, but as evidence that frontline governance is shaped by institutional scarcity and the need to reconcile order, humanity, and practicability in real time.

Substantively, the findings of limited deterrent effects and the potential for recurrence of buskers, vagrants, and beggars at strategic locations reinforce criticism of a management model that relies too heavily on repeated enforcement actions. The literature cited warns that predominantly coercive enforcement risks displacement—problems that persist despite only partial resolution and can prolong social vulnerability.

This is closely related to the assertion by Herring et al (2019), the criminalization of poverty as a pervasive penalty mechanism, and the typology of official responses that demonstrate that coercive options are visually quick but fragile in terms of sustainability (Hipple et al., 2025). This means that performance indicators rely solely on operational intensity and the elimination of vulnerable points in the short term, thereby making governance easily fall into the illusion of effectiveness. It is important to emphasize that the policy problem is not solely a lack of operational effectiveness, but rather the design of success indicators that are too narrow and do not integrate social follow-up.

When confronted with the international literature, Batam's recurring pattern does not appear as an isolated implementation failure, but as part of a broader governance tendency in which visible enforcement displaces, rather than resolves, urban marginality. The repeated return of buskers, vagrants, and beggars to strategic locations suggests a displacement effect: enforcement temporarily redistributes the presence of vulnerable groups across space, yet the underlying drivers - economic precarity, weak family support, mobility, and limited rehabilitation absorption - remain intact. In that sense, Batam reflects the logic of pervasive penalty, where repeated low-level interventions produce continuous control over poverty in public space without generating stable exit pathways. The contribution of the Batam case is therefore comparative: it shows that even within a different legal and welfare setting from the cities discussed in international studies, the same enforcement-recurrence cycle can emerge when coercive visibility outpaces social follow-up.

In the legal-administrative dimension, the research findings can be debated through the principles of proportionality and procedural fairness. The Public Order Agency (Satpol PP) has the administrative authority to conduct non-judicial enforcement, but the exercise of this authority must still be tested by the quality of procedures, clarity of rationale for actions, consistency of standard operating procedures (SOPs), non-discriminatory treatment, documentation of data collection, and coordination of referrals after enforcement. If these processes are weak, formal actions can lose social legitimacy and undermine public trust.

Therefore, legality is a minimum requirement and indicates the need for better communication, and post-action follow-up demonstrates the primary challenge not only in enforcing norms but also in enforcing legitimate norms. This position aligns with contemporary Satpol PP literature, which highlights the need to view Satpol PP as an implementer of administrative actions subject to the principles of accountability and accuracy, and not simply a coercive instrument of local government (Djidar et al., 2024).

Another prominent aspect of this finding is the problem of disconnection between agencies in the transition from enforcement to rehabilitation/development. Here, the study findings reinforce the integrative collaborative governance framework, which emphasizes that dialogue, trust, commitment, and shared capacity determine whether collaboration produces impact or simply involves parallel activities. Empirically, coordination between the Satpol PP and the Social Services Agency (Dinas Sosial), Technical Implementation Units (UPT), and other actors often occurs, but has not been institutionalized through shared data mechanisms, consistent referral channels, and stable role allocations.

Therefore, collaborative inter-agency management, which faces communication barriers, field resistance, resource limitations, and procedural differences, must be reformulated

to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of collaboration between stakeholders (Ahmad et al., 2025; Goswami & Ahmad, 2025). This means that the issue of implementation is not merely the intention of collaboration, but the institutional capacity to transform collaboration into a repeatable and documented cross-sectoral work system.

This discussion is also strengthened when linked to the literature on the socio-health impacts of the forced displacement approach. While the Batam context differs from the widely discussed studies of homelessness in US cities, it is difficult to apply to a social construct with a still-developing societal pattern in Asia, such as Indonesia. Goldshear et al. (2023) demonstrated that cleanup can undermine the ontological sense of security of vulnerable groups, while Barocas et al (2023) and Zwick et al (2025) highlighted population consequences and economic costs of displacement without adequate service delivery. This correlates with the assertion of the evaluative principle that public order policies must be measured against hidden social costs. Therefore, the Batam findings represent an important contribution to Indonesian discourse, encouraging evaluation of Satpol PP officers to go beyond operational outputs-encompass welfare impacts, referral quality and stability.

Within the framework of administrative law, this implies the need for improved policy design at the local government level, collaborative operating standards, integrated data collection, referrals, and cross-organizational success measures that do not place the entire burden on a single agency. This view is also consistent with social rehabilitation studies that emphasize the importance of program accountability and government capacity for the restoration of social functions to occur (Mahendra & Lodan, 2024).

Thus, theoretically, this research strengthens three positions simultaneously. First, it confirms that handling buskers, vagrants, and beggars is simultaneously an issue of governance and administrative legality, so that social analysis or simply enforcement will always be partial. Second, it enriches the literature on street-level regulation by demonstrating that official discretion is shaped by operational pressures, resource constraints, and the quality of cross-sector coordination. Third, it emphasizes the need to reposition success from visual order to sustainable handling and procedural justice. Its strength lies in its courage to connect real phenomena with normative and empirical debates so that the resulting policy recommendations do not fall into a strict or humanist dichotomy, but rather focus on legitimate, collaborative, and sustainable governance designs.

CONCLUSION

This research confirms that the handling of buskers, vagrants, and beggars in Batam cannot be positioned solely as a matter of public order, but rather as a regional governance issue that reconciles administrative enforcement authority with social protection responsibilities. The overall analysis reveals that the Satpol PP performs a far more complex function than simply implementing field operations. This institution acts as a response trigger in the initial phase of handling, a liaison between service units, and an implementer of operational discretion, operating under pressure from field conditions, community demands, and limited institutional support. Therefore, the quality of handling cannot be assessed solely on the visibility of target groups at strategic points, but rather on the ability of the local government system to connect enforcement actions with more sustainable social management mechanisms.

The research findings demonstrate that field practice occurs through an adaptive and contextual pattern. Persuasive approaches, data collection, administrative actions, and cross-agency coordination emerge as part of a single chain that, in practice, does not always operate with the same level of consistency. In this regard, the success of handling depends heavily on clear follow-up actions, appropriate roles between agencies, and institutional capacity to maintain service continuity after the initial intervention. Thus, the evaluation of Satpol PP performance within a broader framework, the effectiveness of cross-sectoral governance.

Theoretically, strengthening arguments for handling vulnerable groups in public spaces requires building on the intersection of administrative law perspectives, policy implementation studies, and collaborative governance. The administrative law perspective helps legitimize actions through legality, accuracy, proportionality, and procedural accountability. The policy implementation perspective explains that field decisions are shaped by contextual dynamics, resource constraints, and discretionary space. Collaborative governance, meanwhile, provides a lens for assessing whether inter-agency coordination truly produces substantive impacts or stops at formal communication. The integration of these three perspectives allows for a holistic understanding and avoids simplistic conclusions, either tending to glorify the firmness of enforcement or rejecting the enforcement function altogether.

From a practical perspective, this research calls for more systemic improvements to regional policies: strengthening cross-agency coordination protocols, standardizing post-enforcement follow-up, integrating data collection, and developing success indicators that focus not only on operational outputs but also on the sustainability of social outcomes. Thus, the main contribution of the research lies in developing an argumentative basis that handling buskers requires a governance design that is administratively legitimate, socially sensitive and institutionally consistent.

Based on these findings, two concrete policy steps are particularly urgent for the Batam City Government. First, the city needs an integrated inter-agency database connecting Satpol PP, Dinas Sosial, UPT, sub-district authorities, and, where relevant, health and civil registration services, so that each individual encountered in enforcement can be tracked beyond the moment of removal. Such a system would allow the government to monitor referrals, repeat encounters, service uptake, family reunification, and rehabilitation outcomes, thereby shifting evaluation from one-off operations to measurable social trajectories. Second, Batam needs a formal post-enforcement protocol in the form of a joint case-management mechanism that defines who receives the case, within what timeframe, with what documentation, and what minimum follow-up must occur after field action. These measures would translate the intent of Mayor Regulation No. 60 of 2024 into a repeatable governance system rather than a merely normative framework. Without these two instruments, cross-agency coordination will remain dependent on informal initiative and the city will continue to measure success mainly through temporary spatial order rather than durable social resolution.

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