

Is Street Performing or Begging Permissible?

Islam embeds in its followers the sense of dignity and honor. Thus, clear injunctions forbid Muslims to be dependant or to make a livelihood through begging. A Muslim is required to have a suitable, lawful job through which he can benefit himself, as well as his community.

Responding to this issue, **Dr. Monzer Kahf**, Scholar in Islamic Economics and a Financial Expert, states,

Street performing, as done in some countries, is a form of begging, and it is of course not permissible in Sharia unless the beggar is in real, severe need and he or she begs to satisfy his or her minimum basic needs. Taking it as a profession or doing it for fun is definitely shameful too. In the Qur'an, Almighty Allah praises those who, though in real need, do not beg or even show that they are in need, to the extent that a stranger who does not know their real situation may think that they are rich.

On the other hand, on certain occasions, performing in public — even for pay — is permissible as long as what is done or said is itself permissible. An example of this is street shows done in special celebrations or on certain occasions, such as marriage and birth. This is very often paid for either by the local authorities, by the individuals, or by the audience.