

Dakwah-Based Educational Strategies for Enhancing Community Understanding of Agricultural Zakat in Belawa District, Wajo Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of dakwah-based educational strategies in improving community understanding of agricultural zakat in Belawa District, Wajo Regency. The research aims to identify the existing dakwah-based educational strategies, assess the community's knowledge of agricultural zakat, and examine the challenges faced in enhancing this understanding. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the study incorporates theological-normative, sociological, and psychological approaches. Data were gathered from primary sources, including religious leaders, government officials, and community leaders, as well as secondary sources through relevant documentation. Instruments such as observation guidelines, interview protocols, and documentation were employed for data collection. The analysis involved data reduction, presentation, verification, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that the community's understanding of agricultural zakat remains limited, with many believing that donating an unspecified amount of money after harvest at the mosque constitutes agricultural zakat. The study highlights the importance of dakwah-based educational strategies in improving this understanding, as current socialization efforts by relevant authorities have been inadequate. These findings emphasize the need for a more effective approach in educating the community about agricultural zakat to strengthen religious and social awareness.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Da'wah (Islamic preaching) is a fundamental aspect of Islam, serving as a guiding light that illuminates the path for spiritual and moral transformation. It acts as a remedy for society, countering the erosion of religious values caused by materialistic influences. Da'wah calls individuals toward Allah, urging them to adhere to divine commandments and avoid prohibitions. This includes enjoining good and forbidding evil, which is a core responsibility of every Muslim (Qardawi, 2011).

The significance of da'wah is evident not only in the Qur'an but also in its definition, which emphasizes spreading Islam universally and encouraging adherence to its teachings in all circumstances. Its urgency becomes more pronounced when human nature deviates from the straight path due to social, cultural, and economic influences (Rahman, 2019). The role of da'wah in contemporary society is crucial, especially in maintaining religious awareness and fostering adherence to Islamic obligations such as zakat.

Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam, is intrinsically linked to da'wah. Effective da'wah ensures that Muslims remain conscious of their duty to pay zakat, which contributes to economic justice and social welfare (Ahmed, 2020). Without consistent and strategic da'wah efforts, many individuals may neglect this obligation. The continuous reinforcement of Islamic teachings through da'wah is essential in cultivating a collective awareness regarding the importance of zakat (Hasbi, 2018).

The fulfillment of zakat plays a critical role in developing social synergy within modern life. Wealthy individuals are encouraged to channel their zakat through official institutions, such as Badan Amil Zakat (BAZ) or Lembaga Amil Zakat (LAZ), to ensure effective distribution and utilization. These institutions allocate zakat funds for essential needs and economic empowerment, such as providing skills training and capital to underprivileged communities (Hassan, 2022). This approach transforms zakat from mere charity into a mechanism for sustainable economic development, potentially fostering home industries and employment opportunities for mustahik (zakat recipients) and their families.

Etymologically, zakat is derived from the Arabic root "زكا - زكاء" (zaka - zaka), meaning growth, increase, and purification. In the theological context, zakat refers to the mandatory act of purifying wealth by allocating a portion for the needy, as stipulated by Islamic jurisprudence (Shiddieqy, 2017). Various Islamic schools of thought define zakat slightly differently but agree on its obligation and function as an economic redistribution tool (Ibn Qayyim, 2003).

The Qur'an emphasizes the significance of zakat in multiple verses, such as Surah At-Tawbah (9:103), which states: "Take, [O Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them to increase." Similarly, Surah Al-Baqarah (2:277) affirms that those who establish prayer and give zakat will receive divine rewards and security. These scriptural foundations highlight the integral role of zakat in fostering social harmony and economic balance (Al-Suyuti, 2015).

Despite its importance, zakat compliance remains a challenge, particularly among agricultural communities where misconceptions about its obligation persist. Many farmers believe that general charity suffices, neglecting the structured requirements of zakat (Nasution, 2021). This lack of awareness underscores the need for intensified da'wah initiatives to educate communities on their religious and economic responsibilities.

The strategic management of zakat is vital for maximizing its benefits. Governmental and non-governmental organizations have been instrumental in streamlining zakat collection and distribution. Indonesia, for instance, has enacted regulations such as Law No. 23 of 2011 on Zakat Management to enhance efficiency and ensure proper allocation to eligible recipients (Badan Amil Zakat Nasional, 2021). Scholars like Yusuf Al-Qardhawi advocate for governmental oversight in zakat administration to prevent misallocation and ensure equitable distribution (Qardawi, 2011).

In conclusion, da'wah and zakat are deeply interconnected, with the former serving as a vehicle to reinforce the latter. Effective da'wah campaigns can rectify misconceptions, enhance compliance, and optimize the socioeconomic impact of zakat. Strengthening institutional frameworks for zakat collection and distribution is crucial in realizing its full potential as an instrument for poverty alleviation and economic justice.

2. METHOD

The research methodology used in this study follows a qualitative descriptive approach, aiming to analyze and interpret educational strategies based on da'wah to enhance understanding of agricultural zakat fulfillment. This approach involves field research, where data is collected through direct observation, interviews, and documentation. The study seeks

to provide an accurate depiction of social phenomena and human behavior related to zakat obligations, utilizing sociological, psychological, pedagogical, and theological approaches to gain a comprehensive understanding.

Data sources for this research are classified into primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained from direct interactions with informants such as religious leaders, community members, and government officials, while secondary data consists of supporting materials like books, documents, and reports. The data collection methods include participatory observation, structured interviews, and document analysis, ensuring a thorough examination of the factors influencing agricultural zakat fulfillment.

Data analysis is conducted using qualitative techniques based on Sugiyono's interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis follows deductive, inductive, and comparative approaches to identify patterns and develop meaningful insights. Through this methodology, the study aims to highlight the role of da'wah-based education in strengthening awareness and adherence to zakat obligations within the community.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

a. Community Understanding of Agricultural Zakat in Belawa District, Wajo Regency

In life, Allah has provided sustenance for humans. Islam obligates its followers to pay zakat, which holds significant meaning and function. Beyond being an act of worship, zakat serves social purposes, including assisting those in need, reducing social inequality, fostering unity, and maintaining social stability. It helps impoverished communities meet their basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter, thereby improving living standards and alleviating poverty. Therefore, understanding zakat is crucial for society.

Community understanding of zakat can be assessed through their accuracy in fulfilling zakat obligations, particularly in agricultural zakat. Several factors influence this understanding. A lack of socialization can lead to limited knowledge about zakat obligations. Many farmers in Belawa District still lack awareness of the rules governing agricultural zakat. This is due to insufficient access to information and guidance on its implementation, resulting in a lack of awareness of its importance and the proper methods of fulfilling this obligation. Consequently, many farmers do not perform agricultural zakat correctly.

In addition to limited knowledge, unfavorable weather conditions also affect agricultural production, making it difficult for farmers to predict their harvest yields. During periods of drought, they must pump water from rivers to irrigate their crops while also dealing with pests that hinder growth and reduce yields. These challenges directly impact the ability of farmers to set aside a portion of their harvest for zakat.

Field observations indicate that while some farmers fulfill their zakat obligations, many do so without adhering to the prescribed Islamic guidelines, often following personal preferences instead of the established nishab criteria. Additionally, local traditions inherited from ancestors continue to influence agricultural zakat practices. Instead of following Islamic rulings, many farmers distribute zakat in ways dictated by cultural customs.

Although some individuals possess basic knowledge about agricultural zakat, their understanding remains superficial. Many recognize it as a form of almsgiving from agricultural produce but lack awareness of the specific conditions and requirements set by Islamic teachings.

b. Da'wah-Based Educational Strategies to Enhance Agricultural Zakat Understanding

Education plays a vital role in helping individuals recognize their potential and understand their responsibilities. A da'wah-based educational approach can be employed to improve community comprehension of zakat, particularly agricultural zakat. This effort can be carried out by individuals, institutions, foundations, or legal entities involved in zakat education. Several key figures can play a role in disseminating knowledge about zakat:

1) Religious Counselors

Religious counselors at the sub-district level serve as the front line in religious education and guidance. They are responsible for explaining religious matters, including zakat, its legal rulings, and the proper procedures for fulfilling it. However, their role in zakat education has not been fully maximized. The current approach relies primarily on sermons during Ramadan, limiting the effectiveness of socialization efforts. Religious counselors generally educate the public about zakat through mosque lectures, but these efforts need to be expanded beyond seasonal religious events.

2) Religious and Community Leaders

Religious leaders are highly respected figures entrusted with guiding the community in accordance with Islamic teachings. However, not all religious or community leaders are well-versed in zakat matters. To effectively educate the public, these figures should possess knowledge of both the shariah principles and legal regulations surrounding zakat. Ideally, they should have attended training sessions organized by relevant authorities and have direct experience in zakat management.

The current socialization efforts by religious leaders remain limited, often confined to Friday sermons, which only touch on zakat a few times per year. This approach has yet to establish a comprehensive understanding among the farming community.

3) Academics and Professionals

Academics specializing in zakat, such as lecturers, researchers, and scholars, have the expertise to clarify misconceptions and correct improper zakat practices. However, there has been minimal involvement from this group in public education efforts. Many educated individuals leave the region in pursuit of career opportunities, resulting in a lack of professionals available to engage in zakat socialization.

c. Challenges in Enhancing Community Understanding of Agricultural Zakat

Islam promotes balance in human life, addressing both material and spiritual needs. Wealth is regarded as a blessing, but it must be managed responsibly. Poverty should be minimized, as it can negatively affect individuals, families, and society. Islamic principles offer mechanisms for wealth distribution, including zakat, infak, and waqf, to alleviate economic disparities. However, many Muslims still neglect zakat due to a lack of awareness.

Efforts to enhance public understanding of agricultural zakat in Belawa District face several obstacles:

1) Lack of Socialization

Socialization plays a crucial role in shaping individual awareness and behavior. Government agencies and zakat institutions are responsible for raising public awareness, but their outreach remains inadequate. There has been little collaboration between zakat institutions and local government bodies to conduct structured educational programs. In many cases, zakat-related discussions are limited to mosque sermons during Ramadan. Additionally, a lack of zakat management institutions outside Ramadan results in inconsistent zakat collection and distribution. Many farmers only pay zakat during Ramadan because they perceive it as the only period for fulfilling this obligation.

2) Limited Education and Knowledge

Education and knowledge significantly influence a community's beliefs and behavior. A lack of formal education on zakat contributes to misconceptions, leading many

to believe that simply donating an unspecified amount to the mosque after harvest fulfills their obligation. Some farmers, even when meeting the required nishab, fail to pay zakat according to Islamic regulations. Without structured educational initiatives, misunderstandings about agricultural zakat will persist.

In conclusion, improving public understanding of agricultural zakat in Belawa District requires a more comprehensive and continuous approach. Religious counselors, community leaders, academics, and zakat institutions must enhance their roles in educating the public. Socialization efforts should not be limited to Ramadan but should be an ongoing initiative throughout the year. By addressing these challenges, greater awareness and compliance with agricultural zakat obligations can be achieved, ultimately benefiting both the farming community and society as a whole.

3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight three key aspects influencing agricultural zakat practices in Belawa District: (1) Community Understanding of Agricultural Zakat in Belawa District, (2) Da'wah-Based Educational Strategies to Enhance Agricultural Zakat Understanding, and (3) Challenges in Enhancing Community Understanding of Agricultural Zakat. This discussion analyzes these aspects in relation to relevant theoretical perspectives.

a. Community Understanding of Agricultural Zakat in Belawa District

The study reveals that community understanding of agricultural zakat in Belawa District remains limited, particularly regarding nishab (minimum threshold), distribution mechanisms, and the distinction between zakat and other forms of charity. Many farmers rely on inherited traditions rather than formal Islamic jurisprudence, leading to inconsistencies in zakat practices.

This phenomenon aligns with Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991), which suggests that individuals' actions are influenced by their knowledge, social norms, and perceived behavioral control. Since community members lack structured knowledge about agricultural zakat, their intention to fulfill this obligation correctly is weak. Saad and Haniffa (2014) further argue that zakat compliance is strongly linked to awareness levels; when individuals are not properly informed, their adherence is inconsistent or incorrect.

The findings also indicate that many farmers believe zakat can be given directly to those in need without intermediaries, affecting institutional zakat collection. This misconception stems from informal sources of knowledge rather than structured Islamic teachings. To improve compliance, systematic educational initiatives are needed to bridge the knowledge gap and ensure that agricultural zakat is practiced correctly.

b. Da'wah-Based Educational Strategies to Enhance Agricultural Zakat Understanding

Given the strong religious and cultural influences in Belawa District, da'wah-based education plays a crucial role in improving the community's understanding of agricultural zakat. The study suggests that religious leaders and local da'i (preachers) are the most influential figures in shaping zakat perceptions and practices. However, variations in their knowledge levels lead to inconsistencies in the way zakat is taught and practiced.

This aligns with Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which emphasizes that individuals learn behaviors through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. When farmers observe religious leaders prioritizing traditional zakat practices over formal Islamic guidelines, they tend to follow the same patterns. Idris et al. (2012) emphasize the need for structured da'wah programs to ensure that religious leaders disseminate accurate information about zakat.

A more systematic da'wah-based educational approach can be implemented through:

Regular training programs for religious leaders to ensure they convey standardized zakat teachings.

- 1) Integration of zakat education into community religious gatherings (such as Friday sermons, Islamic study groups, and farmer associations).
- 2) Utilization of digital platforms (WhatsApp, social media, or online lectures) to reach a wider audience with accessible zakat information.

By reinforcing agricultural zakat education through da'wah, the community's understanding and compliance with zakat regulations can be significantly improved.

c. Challenges in Enhancing Community Understanding of Agricultural Zakat

Despite the potential of educational interventions, several challenges hinder efforts to enhance community understanding of agricultural zakat. These challenges include economic constraints, environmental factors, and deeply rooted cultural traditions that conflict with formal zakat guidelines.

From a psychological perspective, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) provides insight into why some farmers prioritize economic survival over religious obligations. When farmers face financial hardships due to poor harvests, price fluctuations, or debt, they often delay or neglect zakat payments. Noor et al. (2015) found that financial instability significantly affects zakat compliance, as individuals prioritize immediate economic needs over long-term religious duties.

Additionally, cultural traditions play a significant role in shaping zakat practices. The study found that some farmers prefer to distribute zakat directly to family members or neighbors rather than through formal zakat institutions. This is influenced by a sense of social solidarity, which, while beneficial, can lead to deviations from Islamic zakat regulations. According to Geertz's theory of religious patterns (1960), religious practices in rural communities are often shaped by local customs rather than formal religious texts, making it difficult to standardize zakat compliance.

To address these challenges, a contextualized approach is necessary, which includes:

- 1) Economic incentives (such as zakat-based agricultural subsidies) to encourage farmers to fulfill their zakat obligations despite financial difficulties.
- 2) Gradual integration of formal zakat institutions into local customs, ensuring that compliance does not contradict community values.
- 3) Collaboration between Islamic scholars and community leaders to bridge the gap between traditional practices and formal zakat regulations.

By acknowledging these challenges and implementing strategic solutions, efforts to enhance agricultural zakat understanding in Belawa District can become more effective and sustainable.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of this study, it can be concluded that the community's understanding of agricultural zakat in Belawa District remains limited. Many people still believe that giving an unspecified amount of money at the mosque after harvest fulfills their obligation for agricultural zakat. However, what they have been practicing is merely voluntary charity (*sadaqah*) or paying land and building taxes annually. This indicates a significant lack of awareness regarding the correct calculation and obligation of agricultural zakat according to Islamic teachings.

The implementation of a Da'wah-Based Educational Strategy is crucial in improving the community's understanding and fulfillment of agricultural zakat. The dissemination of

zakat knowledge has not been maximized, as responsible institutions and religious leaders have not effectively conducted structured socialization programs. The existing efforts are mostly limited to mosque sermons, which are insufficient to provide in-depth education on agricultural zakat. A more comprehensive and systematic approach is needed to ensure that farmers and landowners understand and fulfill their zakat obligations correctly.

Several challenges hinder the efforts to enhance community awareness of agricultural zakat. These challenges stem from multiple stakeholders, including the government, religious authorities, and the community itself. The key obstacles include a lack of systematic socialization efforts, low levels of education and religious knowledge among the community, and indifference towards zakat obligations. Addressing these issues requires a collaborative effort between religious leaders, educational institutions, and policymakers to develop targeted programs that emphasize the significance of agricultural zakat in Islamic economic and social systems.

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