Strategies to Increase Professional Zakat Awareness among Civil Servants in West Java

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ABSTRACT
This study explores strategies to enhance professional zakat awareness among civil servants in West Java through a quantitative analysis involving 150 participants. Employing SPSS version 25 for data analysis, the research identifies key factors influencing zakat awareness, including socio-economic background, religious education, and the effectiveness of zakat campaigns. The findings highlight significant correlations between these factors and zakat awareness, suggesting that tailored educational programs and targeted communication strategies can effectively improve awareness and compliance. The study provides valuable insights for policymakers and religious organizations aiming to boost zakat contributions among civil servants, ultimately supporting socio-economic development in West Java.

1. INTRODUCTION
Zakat, a fundamental pillar of Islam, serves as a mandatory act of charity crucial for the socio-economic development of Muslim communities. It plays a significant role in purifying wealth, redistributing resources, and fostering social equity [1]–[3]. By redistributing wealth from the affluent to the less fortunate, zakat acts as a powerful tool in poverty alleviation, acting as a form of social security system [1]. Moreover, zakat contributes to economic stability, prevents financial crises, and promotes investments, ultimately aiding in the overall well-being of society [2]. Additionally, zakat is viewed as a means to promote human development, improve health and education quality, and support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [4]. Through its multifaceted impact on individuals and society, zakat embodies the values of compassion, goodwill, and social responsibility [2], [5].

Enhancing zakat awareness among civil servants in West Java is crucial for effective zakat collection and distribution [6], [7]. Studies show that zakat compliance is influenced by factors such as personal income, education level, religious knowledge, and understanding of zakat [7]. Additionally, research highlights the significance of efficient zakat management practices and transparent fund utilization in positively impacting welfare improvement and community empowerment [6]. By increasing zakat literacy and awareness among civil servants, particularly in regions with a substantial
Muslim population like West Java, policymakers and stakeholders can ensure the equitable distribution of zakat funds, promoting socio-economic development and empowerment within the community.

Despite being well-educated and having stable incomes, civil servants in West Java often lack awareness and understanding of their zakat obligations [8]. Research indicates that State Civil Apparatus (ASN) lecturers at Politeknik Negeri Padang (PNP) exhibit a lack of knowledge regarding zakat as a deduction for taxable income, with most not paying zakat to official state institutions [8]. Additionally, studies on farmers in Dolok Batu Nanggar Sub-district reveal a similar trend, where despite possessing a basic understanding of agricultural zakat, there is a low level of awareness regarding payment obligations, leading to non-compliance among the majority [9]. Enhancing zakat literacy and promoting understanding among civil servants through educational initiatives and policy changes could help bridge this gap and improve compliance rates, ultimately benefiting both the individuals and the community economically [7], [10].

This gap in awareness can be attributed to several factors, including insufficient religious education, ineffective communication strategies by zakat institutions, and a lack of targeted educational programs. Addressing these issues is critical to increasing zakat contributions, which can significantly impact the socio-economic welfare of the community.

The primary objective of this study is to identify and analyze strategies that can enhance professional zakat awareness among civil servants in West Java. Specifically, the study aims to examine the socio-economic and educational factors influencing zakat awareness among civil servants, evaluate the effectiveness of current zakat campaigns and communication strategies, and propose targeted strategies to improve zakat awareness and compliance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Zakat

Zakat, a fundamental pillar of Islam, serves as a mandatory form of almsgiving aimed at purifying wealth and promoting economic fairness and social justice within the Muslim community [1], [3], [4]. This practice, ranking next to prayer in importance, involves distributing a set percentage, typically 2.5%, to those in need, thereby alleviating poverty and reducing economic disparities [1]. Zakat is not merely charity but a rightful share of the rich's wealth for the poor, functioning as a social security system and a tool to circulate wealth to the most vulnerable [1]. By fulfilling this religious obligation, Muslims can wash away greed, promote growth, and contribute to the welfare of society, embodying the principles of justice and compassion advocated in Islam [3].

2.2 Zakat Awareness and Compliance

Awareness of zakat is indeed a crucial factor influencing compliance among Muslims, as highlighted in various studies. Research by Almasah et al. emphasizes the positive impact of zakat success factors on compliance, with economic development playing a moderating role [11]. Additionally, Bahori et al. stress the importance of knowledge, attitude, and practice in enhancing awareness of zakat management [12]. Furthermore, Qur'ani et al. underscore the significance of understanding zakat for empowerment, especially among women, as it fosters prosperity and poverty alleviation [13]. Ghozali's study in Indonesia reveals that zakat compliance is influenced by factors like personal income, education level, and religious knowledge, further emphasizing the role of education in promoting zakat literacy and compliance [7]. Overall, these studies collectively support the notion that religious education, socio-cultural factors, and community reinforcement play vital roles in shaping zakat awareness and fostering compliance among Muslims.

2.3 Factors Influencing Zakat Awareness

Various factors influence zakat awareness and compliance. Socio-economic factors like income level and educational
background play a significant role in shaping individuals' awareness of zakat obligations [7]. Higher income and educational levels generally correlate with increased zakat awareness, although differences in knowledge may persist due to varying religious education and engagement levels [13]. Moreover, religious education, whether formal through religious schools or informal via mosque activities and interactions with religious scholars, is crucial in enhancing understanding and compliance with zakat [6], [11]. Effective communication strategies utilized by zakat institutions are also vital, as they not only inform about zakat obligations but also educate on its benefits and collection/distribution processes. Utilizing digital platforms, social media, and community outreach programs has been identified as effective in raising zakat awareness [14].

2.4 Zakat Campaigns and Initiatives

Various initiatives and campaigns globally aim to enhance zakat awareness and compliance. In Malaysia, efforts by the government and religious authorities have been notable, utilizing diverse media channels for public education on zakat [12], [14], [15]. Strategies to boost zakat fundraising have been explored, emphasizing data-driven personalization, interactivity, and responsiveness to trends through social media and digital campaigns [16]. Zakat's significance lies in its role in social welfare and poverty alleviation, with zakat funds not only aiding in reducing poverty but also fostering economic growth through support for small and microenterprises [15]. Additionally, the educational values of zakat are highlighted, emphasizing the importance of performing zakat with faith, sincerity, and in accordance with guidance to internalize positive values and benefit society [17].

2.5 Zakat in the Context of Civil Servants

Civil servants play a crucial role in zakat collection due to their stable incomes and positions within government structures [18]. Targeted zakat education programs for civil servants have been shown to enhance compliance and increase zakat contributions [19]. These programs typically involve training sessions, workshops, and direct communication from religious figures and zakat institutions [15]. By improving civil servants' knowledge about zakat, addressing misconceptions, and building trust in zakat institutions, these educational initiatives can effectively boost zakat compliance and contributions among this significant segment of the population. Professional training, empowerment programs, and transparent zakat management practices further support the effectiveness of these educational efforts in enhancing zakat collection from civil servants [4], [20].

2.6 The Role of Technology in Enhancing Zakat Awareness

The integration of digital technology in zakat practices has indeed transformed the dissemination and management of zakat information, making it more accessible and convenient for individuals to fulfill their religious obligations [21]–[24]. These advancements have the potential to enhance zakat awareness and compliance, especially among the younger, tech-savvy demographic, by providing platforms for easy calculation and contributions [21], [22], [24]. Strategies such as utilizing social media, data-driven personalization, and interactive engagement have been identified as effective in increasing zakat fundraising and community participation [16]. The research emphasizes the importance of tailored digital solutions that cater to the preferences of the young Muslim generation, highlighting the need for continuous improvement and education in zakat literacy to optimize digital zakat adoption [21], [22].

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that individual behavior is driven by behavioral intentions where attitude towards the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control play a crucial role (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of zakat awareness, this theory suggests that civil servants' attitudes towards
zakat, the influence of social norms, and their perceived control over zakat payment significantly affect their zakat compliance behavior.

2.8 Research Gap
While numerous studies have explored various aspects of zakat awareness and compliance, there is a limited focus on civil servants in the Indonesian context, specifically in West Java. Additionally, the integration of modern communication strategies and technology in zakat awareness campaigns remains underexplored. This study aims to fill these gaps by providing a comprehensive analysis of factors influencing zakat awareness among civil servants in West Java and proposing targeted strategies to enhance their compliance.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design
This study employs a quantitative research design to investigate the factors influencing professional zakat awareness among civil servants in West Java. Quantitative analysis is chosen for its ability to systematically measure variables and test hypotheses through statistical methods. The research is structured to collect numerical data that can be analyzed to identify significant correlations and derive actionable insights.

3.2 Population and Sample
The population for this study comprises civil servants working in various government departments in West Java. A total of 150 civil servants were selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation from different departments and hierarchical levels. This sample size is deemed sufficient to provide a reliable statistical analysis and generalize the findings to the broader population of civil servants in West Java.

3.3 Data Collection
Data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed to civil servants, capturing demographic and socio-economic characteristics, religious education and engagement, zakat awareness, perceptions of zakat campaigns, and attitudes towards compliance. The questionnaire was pre-tested and adjusted based on feedback. The study's independent variables include socio-economic factors, religious education, and communication strategies, while the dependent variable is zakat awareness and compliance, measured on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.4 Data Analysis
The collected data was analyzed using SPSS version 25 through several steps. Descriptive statistics summarized the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, as well as their levels of religious education and engagement, including calculations of mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. Reliability and validity testing involved assessing the questionnaire's internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha, with values above 0.7 considered acceptable, and conducting factor analysis to ensure accurate measurement of the constructs. Inferential statistics tested the research hypotheses through Pearson correlation coefficients to examine relationships between the independent variables (socio-economic factors, religious education, communication strategies) and the dependent variable (zakat awareness and compliance). Multiple regression analysis was used to identify the most significant predictors of zakat awareness among civil servants.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Statistics
The sample consisted of 150 civil servants from various departments in West Java. The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are summarized in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
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The sample population consists of 150 respondents, with 85 males (56.7%) and 65 females (43.3%), indicating a slightly higher representation of males. The age distribution is categorized into four groups: 20-30 years (35 respondents, 23.3%), 31-40 years (55 respondents, 36.7%), 41-50 years (45 respondents, 30.0%), and above 50 years (15 respondents, 10.0%), showing a concentration in the 31-50 years range. Education levels are distributed as follows: high school (20 respondents, 13.3%), bachelor's degree (95 respondents, 63.3%), and master's degree or higher (35 respondents, 23.4%), indicating a well-educated population with a significant portion holding a bachelor's degree or higher. Income levels are divided into three categories: less than IDR 5,000,000 (30 respondents, 20.0%), IDR 5,000,000 - 10,000,000 (70 respondents, 46.7%), and above IDR 10,000,000 (50 respondents, 33.3%), suggesting that nearly half of the respondents earn between IDR 5,000,000 and 10,000,000, reflecting a middle-income range for the majority.

Reliability and Validity Testing

The reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.82, indicating good internal consistency. Factor analysis validated the construct validity, ensuring that the questions accurately measured the intended variables.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationships between socio-economic factors, religious education, communication strategies, and zakat awareness. The results are presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Zakat Awareness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income Level</td>
<td>0.454**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>0.383**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Education</td>
<td>0.525**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Strategies</td>
<td>0.472**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicate significant positive correlations between income level, education level, religious education, communication strategies, and zakat awareness. Religious education had the strongest correlation with zakat awareness \( r = 0.525, p < 0.01 \), followed by communication strategies \( r = 0.472, p < 0.01 \).

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify the most significant predictors of zakat awareness. The results are summarized in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor Variable</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients (B)</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients (Beta)</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income Level</td>
<td>0.285</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.243</td>
<td>3.972</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The regression model was significant \(F(4, 145) = 32.56, p < 0.001\) with an \(R^2\) value of 0.45, indicating that approximately 45% of the variance in zakat awareness can be explained by the predictors. Religious education was the most significant predictor \((\beta = 0.303, p < 0.001)\), followed by communication strategies \((\beta = 0.236, p = 0.001)\).

**DISCUSSION**

**Socio-Economic Factors**
Income level and education level were found to significantly influence zakat awareness. Higher income and educational attainment are associated with better understanding and compliance with zakat obligations. The research findings align with previous studies indicating that individuals with higher socio-economic status are more inclined to be aware of and fulfill their zakat duties [7], [11]. Economic development plays a crucial role in moderating the relationship between zakat success factors and compliance to pay zakat, emphasizing the significance of enhancing strategies for transparency and compliance within zakat institutions to cultivate positive attitudes towards zakat [11]. Additionally, the level of zakat literacy, education, and income levels influence zakat compliance, highlighting how social and economic factors, along with religious beliefs, intersect to impact economic outcomes in an Islamic context [7]. These insights underscore the importance of addressing socio-economic disparities and promoting financial literacy to enhance zakat awareness and compliance among individuals across different economic strata.

**Religious Education**
Religious education emerged as the most significant predictor of zakat awareness. This underscores the critical role that religious instruction and engagement play in fostering understanding and compliance with zakat.

Formal and informal religious education, such as participation in mosque activities and religious studies, significantly enhance zakat awareness.

Formal and informal religious education play a crucial role in enhancing zakat awareness among individuals. Studies have shown that religiosity positively influences tax reduction zakat, indicating that a strong religious foundation can lead to a better understanding and compliance with zakat obligations [25]. Additionally, research emphasizes the importance of literacy and understanding of zakat in empowering individuals to make informed decisions regarding zakat payments, especially among women who have a significant role in family and community development [13]. Furthermore, the management of zakat funds through formal institutions is hindered by a lack of awareness and socialization initiatives, highlighting the need for educational programs to increase zakat literacy and compliance within the community [26]. Therefore, active participation in mosque activities and religious studies can significantly contribute to raising awareness and promoting adherence to zakat obligations.

**Communication Strategies**
Effective communication strategies are essential for raising zakat awareness. The study found that exposure to zakat campaigns and the perceived effectiveness of communication channels significantly impact zakat awareness. This finding suggests that zakat institutions should invest in diverse and targeted communication strategies, including digital media, to reach a broader audience and improve compliance.

The research findings from various studies emphasize the importance of diverse and targeted communication strategies, particularly through digital media, for zakat.
institutions to enhance outreach and compliance among the Muslim population [16], [21], [22], [24], [27]. These strategies involve leveraging social media platforms, personalized messaging, interactive content, and data-driven approaches to engage with potential donors effectively. By investing in digital communication management and utilizing online platforms, zakat institutions can not only increase awareness about zakat obligations but also empower Muzakki to fulfill their religious duties efficiently and contribute to the welfare of society. The integration of technology in zakat transactions reflects a shift towards modernization and adaptation to the digital era, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and accessible approach to charitable giving within the Muslim community.

**Implications for Policy and Practice**

The findings of this study have several implications for policymakers and zakat institutions. Firstly, there is a need for targeted educational programs that focus on improving religious education among civil servants. Secondly, zakat institutions should enhance their communication strategies to ensure that information about zakat is accessible and engaging. This includes utilizing digital platforms and social media to reach a wider audience.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify and analyze factors influencing professional zakat awareness among civil servants in West Java. Through a quantitative analysis involving 150 participants and the use of SPSS version 25, significant correlations were found between socio-economic factors, religious education, and communication strategies on zakat awareness. Key findings include: higher income and educational levels were associated with increased zakat awareness and compliance; religious education was the most significant predictor of zakat awareness, emphasizing the importance of both formal and informal religious instruction; and effective communication strategies, including exposure to zakat campaigns and the use of diverse media channels, significantly influenced zakat awareness. Implications for policy and practice suggest a need for targeted educational programs focusing on improving religious education among civil servants and enhancing communication strategies by zakat institutions to make information more accessible and engaging, especially through digital platforms and social media. Future research should consider longitudinal studies to track changes in zakat awareness over time and the long-term effects of educational and communication strategies, as well as expanding the sample to include civil servants from other regions for a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing zakat awareness across Indonesia.

**REFERENCES**


