

THE ROLE OF LAZIS IN EMPOWERING THE ECONOMY OF COMMUNITIES IN THE ENVIRONMENT MOSQUE PROSPERITY COUNCIL (DKM)

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Abstract

The role of the Zakat, Infaq, and Sedekah Institution (LAZIS) in empowering the community's economy in the Mosque Prosperity Council (DKM) environment. The purpose of this article is to explore how LAZIS can optimize zakat, infaq, and sedekah funds to create a sustainable and independent economic empowerment program. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach with literature studies and interviews with LAZIS and DKM managers. The results of the study indicate that LAZIS has great potential in improving the welfare of the community through skills training, providing business capital, and developing entrepreneurship. In conclusion, the strategic role of LAZIS in the community's economic empowerment program in the DKM environment requires great support and collaboration from mosque managers and active community participation to achieve the success of the mosque as a center for the community's economy.

Keyword : *LAZIS, economic empowerment, Mosque Prosperity Council, zakat, infaq, alms, entrepreneurship*

A. INTRODUCTION

Mosques in Islam are not only places to perform ritual worship such as prayer, but also function as centers of social, economic, educational, and cultural life for Muslims. (Abdullah, 2011). Over time, mosques have increasingly been considered as multifunctional spaces that contribute more broadly to community development, both spiritually and materially. In this context, mosques play an important role in strengthening social solidarity, improving the economic welfare of the community, and providing various services that support daily life.

Mosques have an important function as centers of social activities for the community. In a social context, mosques are not only places of worship, but also become meeting places for the community to strengthen ties and work together to overcome common problems (Keddie, 2003). Mosques are places to collect zakat, infaq, and alms that can be distributed to those in need, such as the poor, orphans, or people in need of other assistance. Mosques are often places that organize social activities such as community service, free medical treatment, assistance for disaster victims, and other humanitarian programs. This shows that mosques function to strengthen social solidarity among the community.

Mosques during the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW not only functioned as places of worship, but also as economic centers that organize transactions of buying and selling, trade, and also economic empowerment of the community, as places of worship and social activities, mosques have great potential as centers of economic activities of Muslims (Shidiqi, 2010). Mosques can be economic drivers through joint ventures (independent businesses involving many parties). For example, mosques can develop agricultural or livestock businesses that involve the congregation as workers or business owners. Mosques can manage empty land around the mosque area to be planted with various types of plants or used for livestock. In many ways, mosques can be centers of empowerment that integrate the spiritual and material aspects of the lives of Muslims. By exploring the socio-economic potential that exists in society, mosques can improve the welfare of the community as a whole, both in terms of spirituality and economy. This creates a more independent society, not only in terms of economy, but also more solid in terms of social and spiritual aspects.

The mosque functions as a center for social activities that strengthen relationships between people and help those in need, as well as a center for economic empowerment that encourages the independence of the people through various entrepreneurship and sharia economic programs (Zarqa, 2013). This dual role of the mosque creates an ecosystem that supports the economic growth of the people that is more just, equitable, and sustainable.

The "Productive Zakat" program is increasingly popular, where zakat funds are managed for economic empowerment such as providing business capital to mustahik (zakat recipients) or establishing mosque cooperatives. Many mosques have begun to manage zakat, infaq, and alms funds for sustainable

economic empowerment programs. These funds are not only given in the form of direct assistance such as basic necessities, but are also used for business capital, skills training, and community-based small business development (Ibrahim, 2014). This phenomenon reflects a change in the understanding and utilization of mosques as centers of social activities that have a broad impact on the welfare of the community. Mosque-based economic empowerment programs have emerged as an effort to optimize the potential of zakat, infaq, and alms funds and the strength of the mosque community in improving the welfare of the surrounding community (Sulaiman, 2017).

Mosques as institutions that manage zakat, infaq, and sedekah have shown significant changes in the way they manage social funds for the community (Mujani, 2014). Not only distributing consumptive assistance, many mosques are now developing more productive and sustainable programs. The phenomenon of mosque-based economic empowerment in Indonesia shows a growing awareness to maximize the potential of mosques as centers of social and economic activities. Programs based on zakat, infaq, and sedekah funds are now more oriented towards sustainable empowerment, such as providing business capital, skills training, mosque cooperatives, and micro-enterprises. These programs open up opportunities for the congregation to be actively involved in sustainable sharia-based economic development.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role of Lazis Mosque in Community Empowerment Through Zakat, Infak, and Alms (ZIS) was once studied in the Scientific Journal of FEB Students, Brawijaya University by Irfan Rahmad Widiutomo, 2018. This study discusses how LAZIS DKM plays a role in community empowerment through the distribution of ZIS funds. It was found that consumptive empowerment has been running, but productive empowerment still requires further development. Lazis DKM has carried out its role in managing ZIS funds through community empowerment programs through distribution of consumer empowerment, the impact felt by the dhuafa can be helped in meeting the needs of basic necessities and children's school needs.

Farhan Amymie's research, 2017, optimizing the distribution and utilization of zakat funds in implementing the goals of the sustainable development program (SDGs), strengthens this research on optimizing community empowerment in productive distribution programs, Lazis DKM has a burden to provide effective utilization through productive distribution. Asma Kharimah's research, 2017., revealed the effectiveness of productive zakat utilization in community economic empowerment programs, revealed that there are still weaknesses in the Lazis mentoring process for mustahik, where mentoring is only carried out when Lazis only meets in passing, so that it requires the role of a facilitator in supporting the development of community businesses/businesses even though there are still challenges in the limited number of human resources.

According to Asifin An Nakhrawie, 2011, productive zakat is zakat that can later produce something, zakat that provides profitable results and will continue to grow. Productive zakat is the provision of zakat that can make its recipients produce something continuously, with the zakat assets they have received. This strengthens the definition of productive zakat, which is zakat given to mustahik not spent but developed and used to help their efforts, so that with these efforts they can meet their living needs continuously.

C. METHOD

This research method uses a qualitative method, according to Turyandi, (2019), literature studies and in-depth interviews with LAZIS, DKM managers, and congregations involved in economic empowerment programs in mosques, as many as 12 mosques whose DKM managers are the administrators of the Regional Leadership of the Indonesian Mosque Council (PD DMI) of West Bandung Regency. Data sources use primary data and secondary data, primary data is obtained through structured interviews with LAZIS and DKM managers in several mosques that have economic empowerment programs, while secondary data is a literature study of articles, books, reports, and documents that are relevant to the analysis of documents and reports related to the management of zakat, infaq, and alms funds in order to identify patterns of economic empowerment carried out by LAZIS and the challenges faced in its implementation.

Qualitative data triangulation techniques is an approach used in qualitative research to increase the validity and reliability of research results by utilizing various data sources, methods, theories, or researchers to verify information. Triangulation is an important tool in qualitative research, especially when researchers want to ensure that the results truly reflect reality and not just a narrow interpretation

from one point of view. The goal is to ensure that the research results are not biased, subjective, or dependent on only one perspective.

D. DISCUSSION

The Role of LAZIS in Economic Empowerment

The Zakat, Infaq, and Shadaqah Institution (LAZIS) plays a strategic role in empowering the people's economy, especially in the mosque environment which functions as a center for social, religious, and economic activities. The economic empowerment program run by LAZIS aims to improve the welfare of the people, especially among the poor or underprivileged. LAZIS is responsible for managing ZIS funds professionally to support the economic needs of the people, which focuses on community-based economic development, by utilizing mosques as centers for social and economic activities.

Building the community's economy in several mosques in West Bandung Regency through empowering small businesses around the mosque, functioning as a center for developing small businesses, such as food stalls, coffee shops, souvenir shops or crafts from craftsmen in the mosque environment. LAZIS plays a role in connecting small entrepreneurs with markets, providing managerial training, and facilitating product distribution. Providing opportunities for the community around the mosque to develop businesses, while creating a mutually supportive economic ecosystem. In addition, the mosque as a center for social and economic activities can strengthen relations between residents, and with the existence of this program and role of LAZIS, it is hoped that it will have an impact on the economic welfare of the community, especially for mustahik.

Optimizing the potential of zakat for more sustainable economic empowerment, LAZIS uses zakat funds to help the community in the form of business capital assistance, business training and skills, and financing community-based business development programs. LAZIS can run productive businesses managed with sharia principles, this program will increase the empowerment of a more just and equitable community economy, for more sustainable economic empowerment.

LAZIS must encourage active participation of community leaders in various economic empowerment activities by involving program design and planning and program implementation according to local needs. Participation of mosque congregations to be involved in providing donations, participating in LAZIS programs, accompanying program implementation and even mentoring the economic empowerment program.

LAZIS through productive zakat, has succeeded in creating a significant impact in increasing the income of mustahik through a small and sustainable business empowerment program so that they can be economically independent. It is hoped that these mustahik can increase their capacity and capability and maintain their productive businesses so that they can continue to be sustainable until the point where these mustahik become muzaki in the mosque environment.

Challenges Faced by LAZIS

The biggest challenge faced by LAZIS in the DMI environment of West Bandung Regency is the limited funds and human resources (HR). The Regional Leadership of the Indonesian Mosque Council (PD DMI) of West Bandung Regency sees that mosques have great potential to empower the community, but obstacles in managing funds and managing HR can hinder the effectiveness and sustainability of the empowerment program. The main source of funds for LAZIS which comes from zakat, infaq, and shadaqah has a high level of fluctuation, this is a threat to the management of ZIS funds, especially in planning and implementing long-term programs.

Sustainable economic empowerment programs require large investments, such as ongoing training, increasing the number of business capital recipients, and monitoring small business development, which can be hampered by insufficient funds. In the end, LAZIS must limit the scope of the program and reduce the reach of the program, so that the success and sustainability of the empowerment program are not in accordance with expectations.

Program management that requires good planning, coordination, and evaluation will be hampered if there are no skilled personnel in the managerial field. An effective mentoring process requires personnel who have skills in business management, finance, marketing, and community empowerment. LAZIS has limited human resources (HR), which only rely on volunteers or workers with limited skills to manage and run empowerment programs. The limited number and quality of workers affect the quality of service and

program effectiveness. This has an impact on the quality of training, business mentoring, and management of empowerment programs that are not in accordance with the planning targets.

Another challenge faced is the reach of mustahik who really need it, this happens because the identification of mustahik who are entitled to receive assistance is limited by the lack of valid and updated mustahik data and the lack of innovation and use of technology. LAZIS operates with uneven distribution of assistance, only focusing on the nearest area so that it causes inequality and reduces the positive impact of the empowerment program as a whole.

Mosque-based economic empowerment requires full support from the community, because not all people understand the importance of productive zakat for the economic empowerment of the community. The congregation is often only involved as donors without playing an active role in the implementation of the program, as well as the minimal support of community leaders in the implementation of the program, thus reducing the effectiveness of the program and hindering the achievement of the goals of economic empowerment of the community.

Strategy for Optimizing the Role of LAZIS in Empowering the Community's Economy

The strategy to optimize the role of LAZIS in empowering the people's economy requires a holistic and structured approach. Research shows that these efforts can be strengthened through improved fund management, program innovation, strategic collaboration, and utilization of technology. Mosques have great potential as centers of socio-economic activity, through close cooperation between LAZIS and DKM, economic empowerment programs can be designed according to local needs and involve DKM administrators as mentors or facilitators in program implementation so that the program runs effectively, on target, and sustainably.

LAZIS in collaboration with DKM must improve efficiency and transparency in the management of zakat, infaq, and shadaqah funds through a professional and technology-based financial management system. Develop a digital ZIS payment collection system or use of a technology-based application system (*fintech*), which allows donors or congregations to give zakat, infaq, and alms easily, facilitating ZIS financial data collection and reporting transactions in a transparent and accountable manner. This will make it easier for donors to track their donations and ensure that funds are managed efficiently, ensure that the use of funds is in accordance with sharia financial principles and increase public trust.

LAZIS can optimize the role of economic empowerment through skills training programs and business mentoring for mustahik (zakat recipients), as well as providing them with opportunities to manage their businesses better by focusing on skills that are relevant to market needs and local potential. Providing technical assistance and mentoring for small businesses so that they can manage their businesses well. This assistance can include aspects such as marketing, financial management, and product development. Initiating the formation of mosque-based cooperatives that can provide capital, training, and distribution channels for small businesses around the mosque, in order to become a means to increase the competitiveness of local products in the mosque environment.

In responding to the main challenges for the sustainability of mustahik businesses, namely limited access to capital to start or develop a business, LAZIS must act as a facilitator in connecting mustahik with wider access to capital. LAZIS must also be able to provide business capital assistance to mustahik in the form of productive loans (not grants) with sharia principles. This capital can be used for small businesses based on mosques. LAZIS must be able to collaborate with various parties, such as the government, private institutions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), will increase the effectiveness of economic empowerment programs. Collaborating with local governments in providing social assistance, skills training, or market access for small businesses based on mosques. Utilizing access to CSR programs from both the government and the private sector to support economic empowerment programs for the community, in the form of training, or market access for small businesses. Companies can be involved in large programs in the form of events to hold bazaars or product exhibitions from mustahik to introduce their products to a wider market.

Increasing community participation in the program, so that the economic empowerment program rolled out by LAZIS, involves mosque congregations, either in the form of donations, participation in training, or as facilitators, mentors for small entrepreneurs fostered by LAZIS. This can strengthen the sense of ownership and social responsibility for the program being run, provide an active role to DKM administrators and community leaders in designing and implementing economic empowerment programs, so that the program is more connected to local needs and well received by the community.

The strategy to optimize the role of LAZIS in empowering the people's economy includes more efficient fund management, utilization of technology, increasing the capacity of mustahik, and collaboration with various stakeholders. With the implementation of this strategy, LAZIS can play a more significant role in eradicating poverty and improving community welfare, especially around mosques as centers of socio-economic activities.

E. CONCLUSION

The function of the mosque is not only as a place of worship, but also as a center for social and economic activities. LAZIS collaborates with DKM to make the mosque a center for economic empowerment through training, mentoring, and development of small businesses around the mosque. LAZIS in collaboration with DKM can develop mosque cooperatives, mosque markets, or training centers that support the economic development of the community around the mosque.

The role of the Zakat, Infaq, and Shadaqah Institution (LAZIS) in empowering the economy of the community in the Mosque Prosperity Council (DKM) is very strategic. LAZIS, with its main task in managing zakat, infaq, and shadaqah funds, has great potential to improve the economic welfare of the community, especially those around the mosque. LAZIS can play various important roles in creating positive social and economic changes through various empowerment programs, helping the community to create jobs and reduce dependence on social assistance, thereby creating economic independence in the community.

The strategy for optimizing the economic empowerment of the community in the DKM environment, through increasing coordination between LAZIS and DKM to create empowerment programs that are relevant, targeted, and in accordance with the local conditions of the mosque congregation who are categorized as mustahik. Implementation of the economic empowerment program for the community using digital technology to ensure program transparency and effective and efficient fund management. Increasing the capacity of mustahik through training and skills programs as well as ongoing business assistance is the key to ensuring the success and sustainability of the economic empowerment program being run.

In order to increase the effectiveness of empowering the community's economy through LAZIS in mosques, it is important to continue to strengthen collaboration between LAZIS, DKM, and various other related parties (government, private sector, and NGOs) in order to create a greater impact in reducing poverty, creating jobs, and improving the economic welfare of the community, especially in the mosque environment.

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