OIKONOMIKA
Jurnal Kajian Ekonomi dan Keuangan Syariah
Volume 5 Nomor 2, Desember 2024
Page: 43-52

http://e-journal.iainfmpapua.ac.id/index.php/oikonomika/article/view/1653

Income Inequality in Society: A Comprehensive Study of Solutions from an Islamic Economic Perspective

Elapinia Tanjung [1,*], **Rukiah** [2], **Sarmiana Batubara** [3]
Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary Padangsidimpuan, Indonesia[1,2,3]
elapiniatanjung1998@gmail.com[1], rukiahlubis@uinsyahada.ac.id[2], sarmiana@uinsyahada.ac.id[3]
*Corresponding Author

Received: December 3, 2024; Revised: December 19, 2024; Published: December 30, 2024

Abstract

Income inequality and poverty are still serious problems in Indonesia's economic development. The Islamic economic approach offers a comprehensive solution through the optimization of social instruments such as zakat, infaq, and waqf. This study discusses the great potential of zakat and waqf in Indonesia in the context of poverty alleviation and equitable distribution of welfare. Based on data from the National Amil Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) and the Indonesian Waqf Agency (BWI), the potential for national zakat reaches more than IDR 300 trillion per year, while the potential for money waqf is estimated at up to IDR 180 trillion. Although the realization of the collection is still far from this figure, various programs such as Zakatpreneur, educational scholarships, free health services, and productive waqf have made a real contribution in improving the standard of living of the mustahik and strengthening the microeconomic sector. This study emphasizes that structured, professional, and sustainable management of Islamic social funds can be an important pillar in suppressing social inequality and accelerating the achievement of people's welfare. Strategic collaboration between the government, zakat, and waqf management institutions, as well as active participation of the community, is needed to realize this potential to the maximum.

Keywords: *Zakat, Waqf, Income Inequality, Islamic Economics*

Abstrak

Ketimpangan pendapatan dan kemiskinan masih menjadi persoalan serius dalam pembangunan ekonomi Indonesia. Pendekatan ekonomi Islam menawarkan solusi komprehensif melalui optimalisasi instrumen sosial seperti zakat, infak, dan wakaf. Penelitian ini membahas potensi besar dari zakat dan wakaf di Indonesia dalam konteks pengentasan kemiskinan dan pemerataan kesejahteraan. Berdasarkan data Badan Amil Zakat Nasional (BAZNAS) dan Badan Wakaf Indonesia (BWI), potensi zakat nasional mencapai lebih dari Rp300 triliun per tahun, sementara potensi wakaf uang ditaksir hingga Rp180 triliun. Meskipun realisasi penghimpunannya masih jauh dari angka tersebut, berbagai program seperti Zakatpreneur, beasiswa pendidikan, layanan kesehatan gratis, dan wakaf produktif telah memberikan kontribusi nyata dalam meningkatkan taraf hidup mustahik dan menguatkan sektor ekonomi mikro. Kajian ini menegaskan bahwa pengelolaan dana sosial Islam yang terstruktur, profesional, dan berkelanjutan dapat menjadi pilar penting dalam menekan ketimpangan sosial dan mempercepat tercapainya kesejahteraan umat. Diperlukan kolaborasi strategis antara pemerintah, lembaga pengelola zakat dan wakaf, serta partisipasi aktif masyarakat guna merealisasikan potensi tersebut secara maksimal.

Keywords: *Zakat, Wakaf, Ketimpangan Pendapatan, Ekonomi Islam*

https://doi.org/10.53491/oikonomika.v5i2.1653

INTRODUCTION

Income inequality is one of the main challenges in Indonesia's social and economic development (Rudhy Dwi Chrysnaputra & Wahyoe Pangestoeti, 2021). Although poverty rates have shown a downward trend in recent years, the wealth distribution gap between income groups is still high (Islahiha et al., 2019). This phenomenon reflects an imbalance in access to resources, employment opportunities, and development benefits generated by the state.

Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) shows that the poverty rate in Indonesia increased in 2020 and 2021, with a peak of 10.14% and the number of poor people reaching 27.54 million people. From 2022 to 2024, there will be a gradual decrease in both the percentage of poverty and the number of poor people, reaching 9.03% and 25.22 million people in 2024. Meanwhile, the Gini Ratio as an indicator of income inequality increased to 0.389 in 2022, but fell to 0.379 in 2024, indicating an increase in income distribution (Statistik Indonesia, 2024).

Inequality and Poverty Trends

Year	Poverty Percentage	Poor Population (Millions)	Gini Ratio
2019	9,41 %	25,14	0,382
2020	9,78 %	26,42	0,381
2021	10,14 %	27,54	0,384
2022	9,54%	26,16	0,389
2023	9,36%	25,90	0,388
2024	9,03%	25,22	0,379

Source: Badam Pusat Statistik

Indonesia's Gini ratio tends to fluctuate, with values dominated above 0.38, indicating an uneven distribution of income. This inequality often occurs due to non-inclusive economic growth, so most of the profits are only enjoyed by the upper class of society (Fuady, 2018).

Income inequality is often thought to be the result of free market mechanisms, in which an individual's ability to access education, capital, and technology determines his or her economic position. When these opportunities are not evenly distributed, there is a concentrated accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few people

Social Welfare in the neoclassical approach explains that market efficiency will be achieved when there is no longer an incentive to redistribute (Kutanegara, 1997). However, in reality, markets are not always efficient and tend to fail to ensure a fair distribution of income. This opens up space for government intervention, for example through progressive taxes, social assistance, or subsidies. These policies are not enough to address structural gaps.

https://doi.org/10.53491/oikonomika.v5i2.1653

This is where Islamic economics offers an alternative paradigm that places social justice as the main principle .

Islamic economics offers a different approach to dealing with income inequality. This system does not only rely on redistribution through taxes, but emphasizes Islamic social financial instruments such as zakat, waqf, and alms as part of a comprehensive economic system (Desiana & Afrianty, 2017).

The concept of welfare *(al-falah)* in Islam includes both material and spiritual aspects. The goal of Islamic economics is not only growth, but also justice, equality, and community empowerment. In this perspective, inequality is not only an economic problem, but also a form of social injustice that is contrary to the principles *of maqashid sharia,* which is to protect property, soul, religion, descent, and intellect

Zakat is an obligation of individual Muslims that functions as a means of distributing wealth to eight mustahik groups In Indonesia, the potential for zakat is very large, reaching Rp 233.8 trillion per year (Canggih et al., 2017). However, the realization of the collection has only reached around Rp10 trillion, or only 4.3% of the national potential.

Types of Funds	Potential (IDR. Trillion)	Realization	Percentage of Realization
Zakat	233,8	± 10	± 4.3%
Money Waqf	-	-	± 2.4%

Source: Baznas

The disparity between the potential and realization of zakat shows that the zakat management system has not run optimally. The biggest challenges include low zakat literacy, low public trust in zakat management institutions, and an uneven digitization system in collecting and distributing zakat.

Waqf has an important role as a productive economic instrument. Currently, the collection of money waqf in Indonesia has only reached Rp2.4 trillion, far below the national potential which is estimated to reach hundreds of trillions of rupiah (Kemenagama). Waqf can be used for the development of social infrastructure such as education, health services, and sharia-based MSMEs

Research by states that Islamic economics has a comprehensive mechanism to reduce inequality through a spirituality-based wealth redistribution system (Wati et al., 2023). Another study shows that zakat can reduce poverty by up to 40% if managed properly and channeled to the productive sector. The research also concluded that digital-based and transparent zakat management is able to increase public trust and expand the reach of distribution to the poor and marginalized.

The increase in income inequality, even if accompanied by a decrease in poverty rates, is an indication that the economic distribution system is not optimal. This inequality not only impacts people's quality of life, but also has the potential to lead to social instability, low economic mobility, and a weak entrepreneurial climate. This research is important because it offers a solution from an Islamic economic perspective, an approach that has not been fully explored in public policy. By examining zakat and waqf instruments as concrete solutions, this research is expected to make a real contribution in designing a more inclusive and equitable Islamic social finance system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Income Inequality and Social Welfare

Income inequality is a classic issue in development economics and continues to be a major challenge in developing countries, including Indonesia (Lestari et al., 2021). Income inequality usually increases in the early stages of economic growth, and will decrease in later stages as the distribution of resources becomes more even. However, this phenomenon does not always occur automatically. In the context of Indonesia, although the poverty rate has decreased, the Gini ratio remains in the high range, which is above 0.38, which indicates an uneven distribution of income.(Central Statistics Agency, 2024)

The concept of social welfare in the neoclassical approach explains that market efficiency will be achieved when there is no incentive to redistribute (*Pareto Optimal*) (Husna, 2014). However, in practice, market failures often occur, which is shown by inequality of access to education, capital, and technology (Fatmawati, 2021). Therefore, the role of state intervention is important through progressive tax policies, subsidies, and social assistance. However, this policy has not been able to touch the structural roots of the inequality that occurs.

Islamic Economics as an Alternative Solution

Islamic economics exists as an alternative paradigm that prioritizes social justice as the main goal. The main goal in Islamic economics is not just growth, but to achieve physical and mental well-being (al-falah) (Gunawan, 2020). Welfare in the Islamic view includes the fulfillment of basic needs, community empowerment, and the achievement of sharia maqashid, namely maintaining religion (dien), soul (nafs), intellect ('aql), descendants (nasl), and property (maal) (Hilman, 2017).

Islam rejects the accumulation of wealth concentrated on only a few people. This is affirmed in the Qur'an surah Al-Hasyr verse 7: *"... so that the wealth does not only circulate among the rich among you..."*. Therefore, the wealth distribution system in Islam is regulated through social instruments such as zakat, infaq, alms, and waqf, which aim to balance the distribution of wealth and create social balance (Desiana & Afrianty, 2017).

Zakat as an Instrument of Redistribution

Zakat is an obligation of Muslim individuals who have a function as an economic instrument to distribute wealth to groups in need (Muzakir, 2022). In Islamic law, there are eight groups of mustahik who are entitled to receive zakat as mentioned in the Qur'an. At-Taubah verse 60. Zakat is not only consumptive, but can also be managed productively to alleviate poverty and empower the community (Case Study of Central LAZISMu, 2019).

https://doi.org/10.53491/oikonomika.v5i2.1653

Zakat that is properly managed and distributed to the productive sector can reduce the poverty rate by up to 40%. Unfortunately, the potential for zakat in Indonesia of IDR 233.8 trillion per year has not been realized optimally, due to low zakat literacy, lack of public trust in amil institutions, and an uneven digitization system (Zakat, 2022).

Waqf as a Source of Productive Social Funds

Waqf in Islamic economics is seen as a long-term and productive instrument. Waqf can be used to build social infrastructure such as education, health, and sharia micro-enterprises (MSMEs). Cash waqf also allows flexibility in the management of waqf funds to support sectors needed by the poor.

Waqf has great potential to improve the quality of life of the poor if managed professionally and accountably. However, the realization of waqf money collection in Indonesia has only reached Rp2.4 trillion, still far below the national potential which is estimated to reach hundreds of trillions of rupiah (Sulistyani et al., 2020).

Digitalization in the management of zakat and waqf is an important aspect to increase transparency, efficiency, and public trust. Research shows that the use of digital technology in zakat management can expand the range of distribution and increase community participation. The digital system also facilitates the process of reporting, monitoring, and supervising Islamic social funds (Rahmawati et al., 2021).

The digital transformation of zakat and waqf institutions, if synergized with an inclusive and accountable approach, can be an effective solution in reducing inequality and improving people's welfare in a sustainable manner.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analysis method (Rijali, 2019). This model was chosen to dig deeper into Income Inequality in Society, a comprehensive solution study from an Islamic economic perspective. Descriptive qualitative research does not focus on testing hypotheses or manipulating variables, but aims to understand a phenomenon more deeply. This approach opens up opportunities for a comprehensive exploration of extreme poverty and its effects in the economic realm

The data sources used in this study are secondary, obtained from various literature such as academic journals, books, research reports, official documents, and other relevant references (Fiantika, 2022; Moleong, 2018). The data collection process is carried out through literature studies that include theoretical studies, as well as various publications that discuss related issues. *The literature review* has an important role in the collection of information about poverty, as well as other aspects related to the focus of this research. Data obtained from these various sources will be the basis for analyzing concepts, theories, and findings related to income inequality

This study uses *the content analysis and* thematic *analysis* methods used in this study to process the data that has been collected (Fadli, 2021; Sugiyono, 2016). Content analysis helps in identifying the main themes that emerge in the literature, whereas thematic analysis allows for a deeper exploration of the relationship between various themes and income inequality in the study of comprehensive solutions from an Islamic economic perspective. The research procedure is carried out through several stages, namely:

1. Preparation: Conduct preliminary studies and design research.
2. Data Collection: Gather relevant literature.
3. Data Analysis: Analyze data using content *analysis* and thematic analysis.
4. Interpretation of Results: Conclude research findings and relate them to sharia economic theory and policy.
5. Report Preparation: Write a research report and prepare an article for publication.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The Potential of Zakat in Indonesia

Indonesia has a huge potential for zakat. According to the BAZNAS Strategic Studies Center, the potential for national zakat is estimated to reach IDR 327.6 trillion per year. However, the realization of zakat collection is still far from this potential. In 2021, the total national zakat collection will only reach around IDR 14 trillion. This shows that there is a gap between potential and realization that needs to be overcome through increasing public awareness and optimizing the zakat collection system.

BAZNAS as the official institution of zakat management in Indonesia has developed various programs to distribute zakat effectively. These programs include:

1. Zakatpreneur: Providing business capital to the poor to start or develop their businesses.
2. Scholarship and Education Program: Provides educational assistance to children from underprivileged families.
3. Health Programs: Providing free or subsidized health services to the poor.

The Potential of Waqf in Indonesia

Waqf has great potential in supporting social and economic development in Indonesia. According to the Indonesian Waqf Agency (BWI), the potential for money waqf in Indonesia is estimated to reach IDR 180 trillion per year. However, the realization of money waqf collection until March 2022 has only reached IDR 1.4 trillion. In addition, there are around 440,500 waqf land points in Indonesia covering more than 57,200 hectares. This potential can be harnessed for various sustainable social and economic programs.

Some of the challenges in optimizing waqf in Indonesia include a lack of public understanding of productive waqf, limited regulations, and a lack of innovation in waqf management. Strategies that can be done to overcome these challenges include:

1. Education and Socialization: Increasing public understanding of the importance of waqf and productive waqf methods.
2. Strengthening Regulations: Drafting regulations that support the management of waqf in a professional and transparent manner.

https://doi.org/10.53491/oikonomika.v5i2.1653

3. Management Innovation: Developing innovative waqf management models that are in accordance with the needs of the community.

Waqf Program for Income Inequality Alleviation

Waqf can be used to finance the construction and operation of educational institutions, such as schools, Islamic boarding schools, and universities. For example, LAZISWAF Al Hilal provides scholarships for orphans and the poor, as well as skills training for adolescents and young adults. With quality education, it is hoped that future generations can get out of the circle of poverty.

Waqf can also be used to provide health services for the underprivileged. Programs such as medical assistance, health counseling, and free clinics in remote areas have been run by various waqf institutions. This service not only provides medical care, but also education about a sustainable healthy lifestyle.

Waqf can be used to finance infrastructure development that supports social and economic progress, such as clean water waqf wells, public facilities, and livable housing. These programs aim to increase people's productivity and accessibility, ultimately accelerating the process of poverty alleviation.

The Potential of Social Fund Management

Indonesia is known as a country with a high level of generosity. According to *the 2021* World Giving Index issued by *the Charities Aid Foundation* (CAF), 83 percent of Indonesians claim to have given assistance to others. This potential can be used to develop Islamic social funds, such as zakat, infaq, alms, and waqf.

Integrated management of social funds can support the achievement of *the Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), especially in poverty alleviation and improving the quality of education and health. Programs such as Zakat Villages and Waqf Cities developed by the Ministry of Religion aim to empower the economy of the ummah through the proper and structured distribution of zakat and waqf.

Discussion

The potential of zakat and waqf in Indonesia is very large and can be a strategic solution in reducing poverty and income inequality if managed optimally (Kamariah et al., 2021). Based on data from BAZNAS, the potential for national zakat reaches more than Rp300 trillion per year, but the realization of its collection is still far below this figure, showing the need to increase public awareness and a more professional management system (Hudaefi et al., 2020). BAZNAS programs such as Zakatpreneur, health services, and educational assistance have made a real contribution to increasing the purchasing power and independence of mustahik. Waqf also has extraordinary potential, both in the form of assets and money waqf, which can be used for the construction of educational facilities, free health services, and the development of social infrastructure such as housing and access to clean water (Rakhmat & Beik, 2022). This productive waqf instrument plays an important role in supporting the microeconomy and sustainable development at the grassroots level.

Strengthening collaboration between the government, charities, and the private sector in managing sharia social funds is essential to expand the scope of benefits, considering that Indonesia is also known as the most generous country according to *the World Giving Index*. With integrated management, zakat, infaq, and waqf are not only an obligation of worship, but also an instrument of sharia economics that is able to encourage inclusive growth, strengthen social solidarity, and systematically answer the challenges of inequality and poverty.

CONCLUSION

Zakat, infaq, and waqf have a very significant role in overcoming income inequality and poverty in Indonesia through an Islamic economic approach. The great potential of these three social instruments, if managed effectively and professionally, is able to create a fair redistribution of wealth, strengthen the microeconomic sector, and improve the quality of life of the poor. Strengthening productive programs, increasing public literacy, and synergy between the government, social fund management institutions, and the private sector are the main keys in optimizing the function of zakat and waqf as a driver of people's welfare. With the sustainable and structured use of Islamic social funds, it is hoped that a more prosperous, independent, and just society will be created, so that Islamic values are not only present at the spiritual level, but also become concrete solutions in the nation's social and economic development.

REFERENCE

Antonio, M. S., Sanrego, Y. D., & Taufiq, M. (2012). IIUM Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance ISSN. Journal of Islamic Finance, 1(1), 2289–2109.

Fahmi, I. (2018). Analisis Kinerja Keuangan: Panduan bagi Akademisi, Manajer, dan Investor dan Menganalisis Bisnis dari Aspek Keuangan. 213.

Haryono, T. J. S. (2012). Pengantar Antropologi. Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia, 95.

Khaliq, R. (2019). Pengaruh Kualitas Pelayanan Terhadap Kepuasan Nasabah Bank Syariah Mandiri di Banjarmasin Kalimantan Selatan. Relevance: Journal of Management and Business, 2(1). https://doi.org/10.22515/relevance.v2i1.1609

Koentjaraningrat, K. (2009). Pengantar ilmu antropologi, edisi revisi PT. Rineka Cipta: Jakarta, 144.

Kristanto, Y. (2022). Pengaruh Kualitas Layanan Terhadap Loyalitas Pelanggan Yang Dimediasi Oleh Kepuasan Konsumen, Studi Kasus Pada Usaha Susu Murni Siliwangi A Karsan Bandung. Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen, 19(1), 13–22. https://doi.org/10.21831/jim.v19i1.50173

Lupiyoadi, R. (2013). Manajemen pemasaran jasa : berbasis kompetensi / Rambat Lupiyoadi. August, 2018.

https://doi.org/10.53491/oikonomika.v5i2.1653

Meithiana Indrasari. (2019). pemasaran dan kepuasan pelanggan - Google Play Buku. In Unitomo Press (p. 114). Unitomo Press. https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=PYfCDwAAQBAJ&pg=GBS.PA56&hl=id&lr=

Negara AT, M. H. P., Situmorang, S., & Gultom, D. T. (2020). Analisis Kepuasan Dan Loyalitas Konsumen Terhadap Pisang Raja Sereh Dan Pisang Cavendish Di Kota Bandar Lampung. Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Agribisnis, 8(1), 124. https://doi.org/10.23960/jiia.v8i1.4342

Prasetyo, D., & Irwansyah. (2020). Memahami masyarakat dan perspektifnya. Jurnal manajemen pendidikan dan ilmu sosial, 1(1), 163–175. https://doi.org/10.38035/jmpis.v1i1.253

Puspasari, M., Nurrahmi, M., Handhiko, B., & Fitriah, W. (2021). Pengaruh Persepsi Dan Pengalaman Terhadap Keputusan Memilih Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang. Motivasi, 6(2), 134. https://doi.org/10.32502/mti.v6i2.3785

Robyardi, E. (2017). Pengaruh Kualitas Pelayanan Bukti Fisik Terhadap Kepuasan Nasabah Kantor Cabang Rivai Bank Rakyat Indonesia Palembang. Jurnal Media Wahana Ekonomika, 14(1), 102–112. https://jurnal.univpgri-palembang.ac.id/index.php/Ekonomika/article/view/1720

Sabri, S. (2022). Pengaruh Wujud Fisik Dan Proses Terhadap Kepuasan Konsumen Pada Hotel Arafah Takengon Kabupaten Aceh Tengah. Biram Samtani Sains, 6. http://jurnal.ugp.ac.id/index.php/jbss/article/view/158

Sabri, S., & Resti, O. (2022). Produk dan Jasa Bank Syariah Dalam Kajian Literatur. Manageable, 1(2), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.59000/jm.v1i2.75

Setiawan, B., & Ferawati. (2018). Pengaruh Jaminan, Empati Dan Kehandalan Terhadap Kepuasan Pelanggan Pada KPR Bank BJB Cabang Bogor. Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Kesatuan, 6(1), 25–32. https://doi.org/10.37641/jimkes.v6i1.33

Soekanto, S. (2015). Sosiologi Suatu Pengantar/ Soerjono Soekanto-Ed. Revisi, Cet. 47.-Jakarta :Rajawali Pers. Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 410.

Suardin, H. S., Hakim, L., & Mubyarto, N. (2022). Analisis Determinan Fungsi Intermediasi dan Profitabilitas Bank Umum Syariah di Indonesia. Islamika : Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman, 22(2), 218–232. https://doi.org/10.32939/islamika.v22i2.1715

Suparmini, & Wijayanti, agustina tri. (2017). Masyarakat Desa Dan Kota (Tinjauan Geografis, Sosiologis Dan Historis). In Fakultas Ilmu Sosial Universitas Negeri

Yogyakarta (Vol. 01). https://staffnew.uny.ac.id/upload/198608172014042001/pendidikan/bahan-ajar-masy-kota-desa.pdf

Syarif. (2020). Bank Dan Lemabaga Keuangan Modern Lainnya. Kencana.

Tjiptono & Chandra, F. (2020). Sevice, Quality, and Satisfaction. In Chandra, G. Penerbit ANDI.

Tjiptono, F. (2015). Manajemen Pemasaran dan Pemasaran jasa | Perpustakaan. http://digilib.itbwigalumajang.ac.id/index.php?p=show_detail&id=3905

Wahyudi, B., Umiyarzi, E., & Mapaza, G. (2022). Kepuasan Nasabah terhadap kualitas pelayanan Nasabah PT Bank Rakyat Indonesia Unit Tanjung Batu Cabang Kayu Agung. Pada masa Pandemi Covid 19. Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Perbankan Syariah (JIMPA), 2(1), 103–112. https://doi.org/10.36908/jimpa.v2i1.55

https://doi.org/10.53491/oikonomika.v5i2.1653