

The Role of Islamic Media in Promoting Zakat: A Comparative Study of Audience Perception in India and Indonesia

Kamaljeet Kaur

University Institute of Media Studies,
Chandigarh University, Mohali Punjab, India

Ibnu Darmawan*

Department of Communication, Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences,
Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia

* Corresponding Author Email: ibnu.darmawan@uii.ac.id

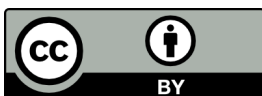
<https://doi.org/10.20885/iconish.vol2.art14>

Abstract: Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam, mandates charitable giving for community welfare. Islamic media plays a crucial role in promoting Zakat awareness and encouraging its practice. This study examines audience perceptions of Islamic media's effectiveness in promoting Zakat in India and Indonesia. Through surveys of 100 respondents in each country, representing Malerkotla, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Surabaya, the research explores how Islamic media influences Zakat knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Findings from this comparative analysis will contribute to understanding the impact of Islamic media on Zakat promotion and provide insights for enhancing its effectiveness.

Keywords: zakat, media, social media, islam, digitalization, India, Indonesia

1. Introduction

India and Indonesia, both multi-religious countries, have significant Muslim populations. According to a report by Al Jazeera (2024), 14.09% of India's population is Muslim, while Islam constitutes 87.08% of Indonesia's population based on data from the Indonesian Ministry of Home Affairs 2024. Both countries share a common Islamic tradition that includes the practice of



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by the Faculty of Psychology and Socio-Cultural Sciences, Universitas Islam Indonesia (FPSCS UII). This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Zakat. Zakat, It is one of the five pillars of Islam. The term is derived from Arabic Zakah means to give or charity. According to Rahmat and Nurzaman (2019), once a Muslim's wealth exceeds the nisab, they are required to calculate and pay the Zakat amount based on the prescribed rates for different types of assets. It is a religious duty of every Muslim to donate 2.5% of his/her income. There are two major types of Zakat i.e. zakat-al-mal and zakat-al-fitr. Zakat al-Mal is related with wealth while Zakat al—Fitr is related with food. Out of wealth 2.5% must be donated to needy and out of food the dates and grains should be distributed among the needy before the final prayer of Eid. As per Holy Quran 8 types of people can receive Zakat i.e. the poor, the needy, collectors of zakat, softening the hearts, slaves, those in debt, in the path of Allah and the traveler.

The Quran prominently features the concept of Zakat, referencing it in over thirty instances and emphasizing its significance in Islamic teachings. Verses such as Surah Al-Hajj 22:40-41 highlight the positive consequences of Zakat, including divine assistance and protection from wrongdoing. The Quran also underscores Zakat's role in attaining spiritual fulfillment and divine favor, as exemplified in Surah Al-Baqarah 2:110. Furthermore, verses in Surah Mary 18:31 and Surah Luqman 31:4 reinforce the importance of Zakat and the potential negative consequences of neglecting this Islamic obligation.

Historically, Zakat has served as a powerful tool in Islamic finance, demonstrably reducing poverty and empowering communities. Its implementation during the Prophet Muhammad's era and the early caliphates, as documented by Arif (2017) and Y. Aziz et al. (2020), generated remarkable success. Zakat not only enabled the poor to participate in economic activities but also contributed directly to infrastructure development. This historical evidence underscores Zakat's potential for social and economic progress. In Indonesia, despite being the world's largest Muslim country, Zakat collection remains far below its estimated capacity (Puskas BAZNAS, 2020). This shortfall can be attributed, in part, to a low level of Zakat literacy, as noted by Beik (2019).

To fully realize the potential of Zakat and foster a deeper understanding of its significance, it is imperative to explore the role of media in raising awareness and enhancing Zakat literacy. By effectively navigating the media landscape, we can empower individuals with knowledge about Zakat, thereby encouraging greater participation and maximizing its impact. This is particularly crucial in countries like Indonesia and India, which have the largest Muslim populations in the world. A comparative analysis of media roles and their effectiveness in these countries can provide valuable insights for enhancing Zakat awareness and promoting its practice on a broader scale.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Impact of Zakat on Poverty Reduction

Zakat, a cornerstone of Islamic faith, offers significant potential for social and economic development beyond its spiritual significance. As a mandatory charitable contribution, Zakat can be a powerful catalyst for positive change. When its funds are strategically allocated to

productive initiatives, create a ripple effect, and positively influence various aspects of society. From poverty alleviation to community empowerment, Zakat has the potential to make a lasting impact on individuals and communities (Bayraktar & Sencal, 2022). According to Osman et al. (2020), effective Zakat distribution, particularly through micro-business management, can empower beneficiaries with a sustainable source of income.

Furthermore, Mawardi et al. (2022) stated zakat empowerment programs and business assistance initiatives have a positive impact on the growth of mustahik businesses, ultimately benefiting their well-being. These programs provide valuable support and resources that enable mustahik to develop and expand their entrepreneurial ventures, leading to improved economic outcomes.

When effectively implemented, Zakat can alleviate poverty, create sustainable livelihoods, and foster community cohesion. Additionally, Zakat operates as a system for income redistribution, social protection, economic stimulation, and also plays a significant role in the overall well-being of mustahik (Rahmat & Nurzaman, 2019; Yardımcıoğlu, 2019; Yakasai, 2021; Hisan, 2022). By strengthening Zakat institutions and fostering a conducive environment, Zakat can be more effectively utilized to address global challenges and promote positive change (Pratama, 2023).

2.2 Utilizing Technology to Enhance Zakat Promotion

In this digital age, technology has revolutionized the way we connect, communicate, and conduct our daily lives. This transformation extends to the realm of charitable giving, including Zakat, a pillar of Islam. By leveraging digital platforms and tools, Zakat institutions can reach a wider audience, streamline processes, and enhance transparency, ultimately fostering greater engagement and participation from the community in this important Islamic practice (Maisyarah, et al., 2024). To broaden their reach, Zakat management institutions should implement a digital marketing strategy aligned with Sharia principles to enhance their reach and promote Zakat literacy.

Studies by Afiyana et al. (2019) have revealed that Zakat literacy plays a significant role in influencing individuals' decisions to pay Zakat. This suggests that enhancing Zakat literacy is a crucial step in promoting Zakat donations. Zakat literacy encompasses an individual's knowledge, understanding, and practical skills related to Zakat, including the ability to calculate Zakat obligations and access relevant information (Kasri & Yuniar, 2021).

Furthermore, Abdullah et al. (2023) emphasize social media's potential to enhance transparency, accountability, and public awareness regarding Zakat. These factors contribute to building trust and confidence in Zakat institutions, ultimately leading to increased donations and support. Additionally, the Zakat management institutions should improve their social media content to make it more engaging and informative, thereby increasing accessibility to Zakat-related information (Utami, et al., 2020; Ilham, et al., 2024).

In contrast to the findings of other studies, Al Anshory et al. (2020) observed that Zakat campaigns in Indonesia often lack a strong and distinctive message that can effectively change attitudes or behaviors. Despite BAZNAS' efforts to promote Zakat through specific

and general messages, there was no clear message that could directly trigger awareness and motivate individuals to donate through institutions. However, effective messaging is crucial for successful Zakat campaigns. The study revealed by Nasution et al. (2023) stated that both informational and transformational messages significantly influenced individuals' decisions to pay Zakat through institutions. This highlights the importance of crafting compelling content that effectively communicates the benefits of Zakat and inspires action.

3. Method

To gather data for this research, a survey was conducted using Google Forms. Given the substantial Muslim populations in India and Indonesia, these two countries were strategically chosen as the primary focus. A sample size of 100 respondents from each country was carefully selected to ensure a representative representation of the Muslim communities in both nations. This approach allowed for a comprehensive comparison of audience perceptions regarding the role of Islamic media in promoting Zakat across these diverse geographical and cultural contexts.

The survey participants were limited to residents of specific cities in India and Indonesia: Malerkotla, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Surabaya. This focused the research on urban areas with significant Muslim populations, enabling a more targeted analysis of audience perceptions within these regions. Furthermore, the age restriction of 18 to 40 years ensured that the survey captured the perspectives of a relatively young and active demographic, likely to be more engaged with social media and other digital platforms.

4. Results and Discussion

To ensure a representative sample of respondents, 100 individuals were surveyed in each country. This approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of audience perceptions across different age groups and religious demographics in India and Indonesia.

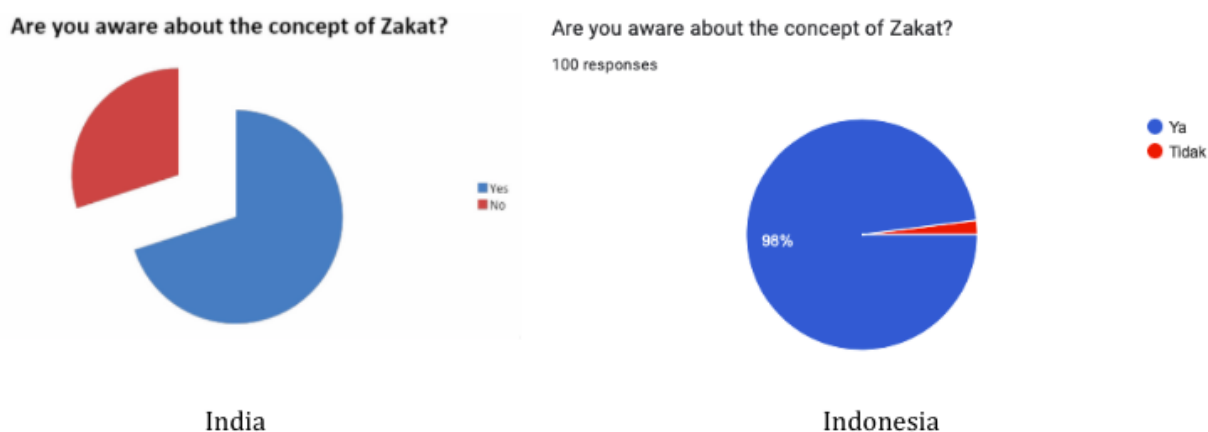
In India, the demographic breakdown was as follows: 30% of respondents belonged to the 18-25 age group, 45% to the 26-33 age group, and 25% to the 34-40 age group. This age distribution provided insights into the perspectives of various age segments within the Indian population. While Indonesia exhibited a slightly different demographic profile. 66% of Indonesian respondents were aged 18-25, 24% were aged 26-33, and 10% were aged 34-40. This suggests a younger demographic composition among the Indonesian respondents.

Beyond age, religious demographics also varied between the two countries. India's population is more diverse, with 60% identifying as Muslim, followed by Sikhism (29%), Hinduism (10%), and Christianity (1%). In contrast, Indonesia has a predominantly Muslim population, with 74% identifying as Muslim. The remaining respondents in Indonesia were primarily Christian (11%), Hindu (6%), Buddhist (5%), and Catholic (4%). These distinct religious demographics highlight the potential influence of cultural and religious factors on audience perceptions and understanding of Zakat. Understanding these differences is essential for developing targeted messaging and strategies to promote Zakat effectively in both countries.

4.1 The Understanding of Zakat

Zakat awareness levels exhibited a striking contrast between India and Indonesia. In India, a considerable segment of respondents (70%) demonstrated knowledge of Zakat, while a smaller group (30%) remained unaware. This indicates a notable gap in Zakat awareness within the Indian population. In contrast, Indonesia showcased a significantly higher level of Zakat awareness, with a vast majority (98%) of respondents familiar with the concept and only a small minority (2%) expressing unfamiliarity. This disparity underscores a profound difference in Zakat understanding between India and Indonesia.

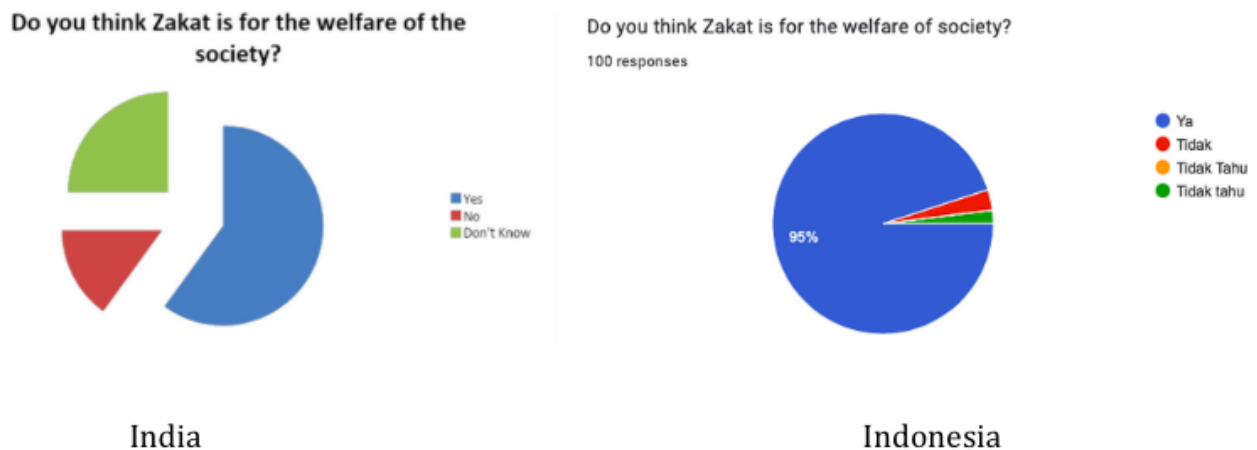
Table 1. Zakat awareness levels



Several factors may contribute to this disparity in Zakat awareness. Cultural, religious, and socioeconomic factors could play a significant role in shaping public perceptions of Zakat. In India, with its diverse religious landscape, Zakat may be less prominent in the public consciousness compared to Indonesia, where Islam is the dominant religion. Additionally, socioeconomic factors, such as education level and income, influence Zakat awareness and contributions. Individuals with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to pay Zakat. This suggests that targeted strategies focusing on these factors can enhance Zakat collection efforts (Durohman, et al., 2023).

Furthermore, perceptions regarding Zakat's purpose exhibited a notable disparity between India and Indonesia. In India, a majority of respondents (60%) recognized Zakat's role in promoting societal welfare, while a smaller group (15%) disagreed. However, 25% of Indian respondents expressed uncertainty, indicating a lack of clarity regarding Zakat's intended benefits. While Indonesia demonstrated a significantly higher level of consensus regarding Zakat's purpose. A substantial majority (95%) of Indonesian respondents affirmed Zakat's role in advancing societal well-being. Only a small minority (3%) disagreed, and 2% expressed uncertainty. This data underscores a marked difference in the perceived benefits of Zakat between the two countries.

Table 2. Perceptions regarding Zakat’s purpose



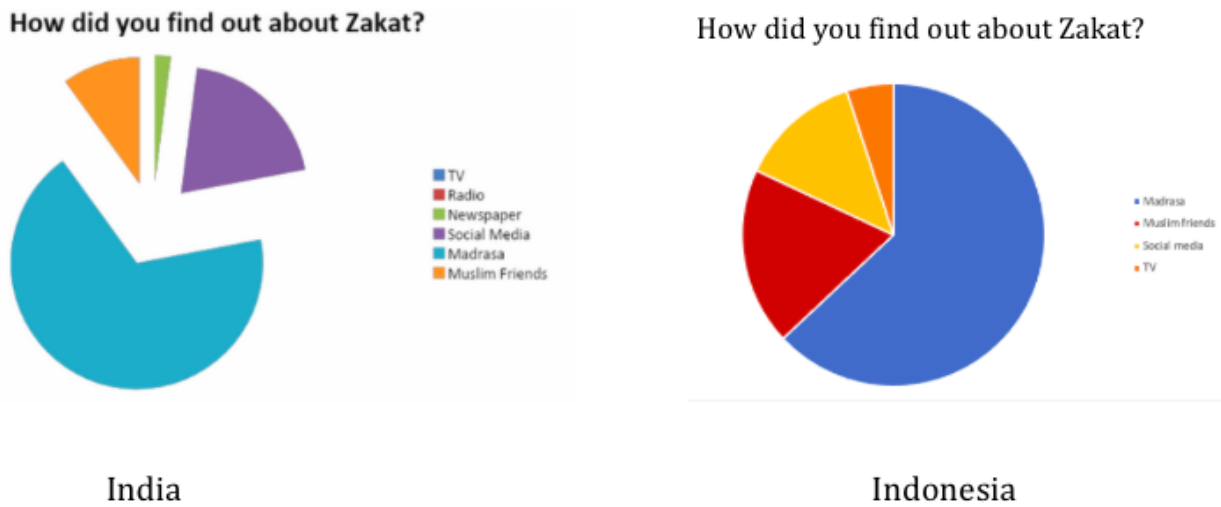
However, it can be concluded that a majority of respondents from both countries acknowledged the significance of Zakat in fostering societal well-being. As Pratama (2023) stated that beyond poverty reduction, Zakat offers solutions to various societal issues. Promoting awareness of Zakat can foster community participation and unlock its full potential.

4.2 The Role of Media

To effectively evaluate the impact of media on promoting Zakat, it is essential to understand the media consumption habits of the target audience. By examining how respondents engage with different media platforms and content, researchers can gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of various media channels in conveying Zakat messages.

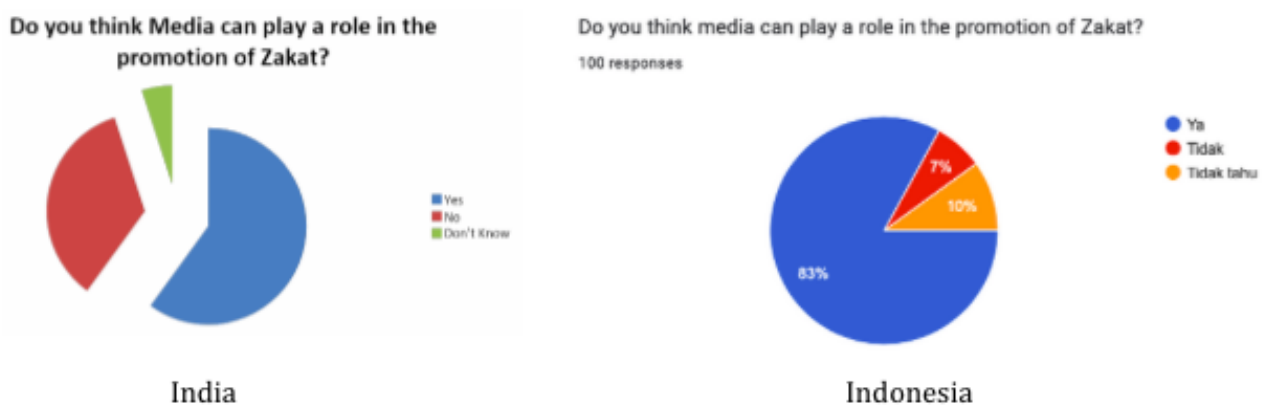
According to data analysis, the primary source of Zakat awareness exhibited notable differences between India and Indonesia. In India, a significant majority (68%) of respondents acquired knowledge of Zakat through Madrasas, traditional Islamic schools. Social media played a secondary role, with 20% of respondents learning about Zakat through online platforms. Newspapers and Muslim friends accounted for smaller percentages, at 2% and 10%, respectively. Indonesia demonstrated a slightly different pattern of Zakat awareness sources. Madrasas remained the primary source of information for 63% of respondents, followed by Muslim friends at 19%. Social media and television contributed to a lesser extent, with 13% and 5% respectively.

Table 3. The primary source of Zakat awareness



In addition, perceptions of the media’s role in promoting Zakat differed significantly between India and Indonesia. While a majority of Indian respondents (60%) recognized the media’s importance, a significant portion (35%) saw no impact. In contrast, Indonesia exhibited a stronger belief in the media’s effectiveness, with 83% recognizing its vital role. This data highlights a marked difference in the perceived influence of the media on Zakat promotion between the two countries. Several factors may contribute to this disparity. India’s diverse media landscape and varying levels of religious education might influence media’s effectiveness compared to Indonesia, where Islamic media is more prevalent. Additionally, the specific types of media consumed and their content could influence perceptions of the media’s role in promoting Zakat.

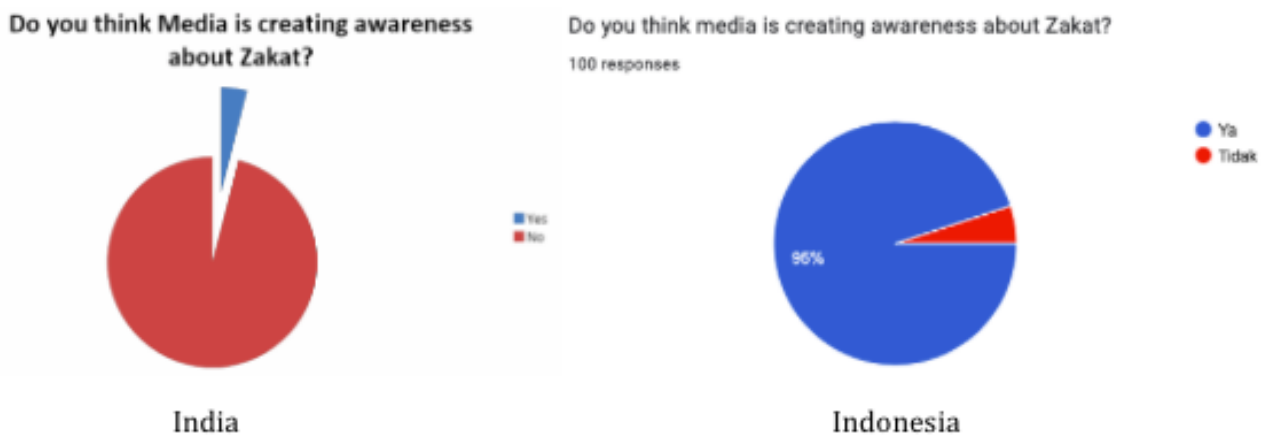
Table 4. Media’s role in promoting Zakat



Most Indian respondents also mentioned that Zakat can impact the social development of the society if the media will promote it. Few described that the media educates the people so the media can make people aware of the importance of Zakat. Others mentioned that Media Coverage can inculcate transparency amongst Zakat Institutions. Several believe that Zakat can teach empathy and sympathy to the society so the media should promote it. The majority

of Indonesian respondents believed that the media, regardless of its specific Islamic focus, could effectively reach a wider audience and promote Zakat awareness. They emphasized the media's ability to enhance public understanding of Zakat and guide individuals towards digital platforms dedicated to Zakat distribution. This suggests a positive perception of the media's role in promoting Zakat among Indonesian respondents.

Table 5. Media's role in creating awareness about Zakat



A significant disparity emerged in the perceptions of respondents from India and Indonesia regarding the media's role in creating awareness about Zakat. In India, a staggering 96% of respondents believed that the media was not effective in creating awareness. The remaining 4% who felt that the media was indeed promoting Zakat attributed this to the efforts of Islamic media outlets or specific social media content that highlighted the concept of charity. This suggests a limited understanding and reach of Zakat promotion through mainstream media in India.

In contrast, Indonesia presented a more optimistic outlook. A substantial 95% of Indonesian respondents affirmed the importance of the media in creating awareness about Zakat. They expressed confidence in the media's ability to reach all segments of society, provided they had adequate access. Moreover, many believed that media coverage of Zakat would intensify during the month of Ramadan, thereby increasing its visibility among the general public, including non-Muslims. This indicates a higher level of awareness and appreciation for the media's role in promoting Zakat within the Indonesian context.

While based on the findings that Zakat awareness sources differ significantly between India and Indonesia, with a notable reliance on traditional sources like Madrasas in both countries, it is evident that a multifaceted approach is needed to leverage media effectively for Zakat promotion. To enhance Zakat literacy and promote Zakat payments through official institutions, stakeholders need to intensify educational efforts. This involves implementing various educational programs to increase awareness of basic Zakat knowledge (Kasri & Sosianti, 2023).

Although social media may not have been the primary source of Zakat information for respondents in either India or Indonesia, its potential influence should not be overlooked. To effectively promote Zakat, a multifaceted approach that combines both online and offline media is essential. By leveraging various channels, including social media, traditional media, and

community-based initiatives, Zakat awareness can be significantly increased, reaching a wider audience and encouraging greater participation. According to Kailani and Slama (2020), social media can be a valuable tool for engaging with Islamic practices, but it should not overshadow the importance of traditional methods.

However, Nasution et al. (2023) emphasize the significance of effective communication and messaging strategies in utilizing social media to promote Zakat. Social media is a valuable tool for promoting and encouraging Zakat donations. By implementing appropriate strategies and oversight, social media can be a powerful catalyst for positive change in the realm of Islamic philanthropy (Ramli et al., 2023).

5. Conclusions

This research focused on understanding Zakat awareness and the role of media in promoting Zakat in India and Indonesia. The findings revealed notable differences between the two countries. According to Zakat Awareness, India demonstrated a lower level of Zakat awareness compared to Indonesia. This disparity may be attributed to factors such as cultural diversity, religious landscape, and socioeconomic conditions. In Indonesia, with Islam as the dominant religion, Zakat awareness is likely more prevalent and integrated into daily life. While both countries recognized Zakat's role in promoting societal well-being, Indonesia exhibited a stronger consensus on this matter. This suggests that cultural, religious, and social factors may influence how people perceive and value Zakat.

In order to fully understand the impact of media on Zakat promotion, it is essential to examine how respondents consume different media platforms and content. The study revealed that the sources of Zakat information varied between India and Indonesia, suggesting that targeted media strategies can effectively raise awareness and encourage participation. A notable finding from the research is that the majority of Indonesian respondents believed media, regardless of its specific Islamic focus, could effectively reach a wider audience and promote Zakat awareness. This suggests that a diverse range of media platforms can be utilized to effectively disseminate Zakat information and encourage participation.

Future research could delve deeper into specific media platforms and Zakat-related content consumed in each country. Additionally, analyzing the influence of religious institutions and educational systems on Zakat awareness in both countries can provide valuable insights. By understanding these factors, policymakers and community leaders can develop more effective strategies to promote Zakat and encourage greater participation in both countries.

References

- Afiyana, I. F., Nugroho, L., Fitrijanti, T., & Sukmadilaga, C. (2019). Tantangan Pengelolaan Dana Zakat Di Indonesia Dan Literasi Zakat. *Akuntabel*, 16(2), 222-229.
- Al Anshory, Ali & Saputra, Muhammad & Adhiningsih, Siti & Zaenal, Muhammad. (2020). An Overview of Zakat Campaign in Indonesia: Case Study of BAZNAS.

- Bayraktar, Ö., & Sencal, H. (2022). Evaluation Of Zakat As A Public Finance Instrument. *International Journal of Public Finance*, 7(2), 429-446.
- Durohman, H., Sutisna, F. A., & Anugrah, M. Y. (2023). Socio-Economic Determinants Of Individual Muslim Zakat Payment Behavior In Indonesia. *Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies*, 4(2), 67-15. <https://doi.org/10.47700/jiefes.v4i2.6715>
- Hisan, D. G., Farchatunnisa, H., & Zaenal, M. H. (2022). The Role Of Zakat In Poverty Alleviation In Indonesia. Paper presented at the 6th Indonesian Conference of Zakat (ICONZ), Semarang, Indonesia.
- Ilham, M., Idrus, A., N., & Kartika, R. (2024). The Influence of Transparency and Social Media on Zakat Payment Intentions in LAZISMU Central. *Indonesian Conference of Zakat - Proceedings*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37706/iconz.2023.604>
- Kasri, R., & Sosiarti, M. (2023). Determinants Of The Intention To Pay Zakat Online: The Case Of Indonesia. *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance*. 9. 10.21098/jimf.v9i2.1664.
- Maisyarah, Anisa & Hamzah, Muhammad. (2024). Zakat Distribution Management: A Systematic Literature Review. *Suhuf*. 36. 95-108. 10.23917/suhuf.v36i1.4357.
- Mawardi, Imron & Widiastuti, Tika & Al Mustofa, Muhammad & Hakimi, Fifi. (2022). Analyzing the impact of productive zakat on the welfare of zakat recipients. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*. 14. 10.1108/JIABR-05-2021-0145.
- Nasution, Juliana; Nurhayati, Nurhayati; Marliyah, Marliyah. (2023). Campaigning Zakat on Social Media: The Role of Message Strategies in the Decision to Pay Zakat. *Jurnal ASPIKOM*, [S.l.], v. 8, n. 1, p. 53-66, Jan. 2023. ISSN 2548-8309.
- Osman, M.F., Suib, S. and Md Noor, N.H. (2020). The Function OfThe Zakat Funds Continuance Modal Insan In Their Sustainable In Islamic Pedagogy. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol. 7 No. 6, pp. 526-530.
- Pratama, Siectio. (2023). The Role of Zakat in Alleviating Multidimensional Poverty. *International Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance (IJIEF)*. 6. 10.18196/ijief.v6i1.17006.
- Ramli, S. S., & Abd Muin, M. A. (2023). The Role of Social Media (Sosmed) in Promoting Islamic Social Entrepreneurship (ISE) and Encouraging Zakat Donations. *International Journal of Zakat and Islamic Philanthropy*, 5(1),1-8.
- Utami, Pertiwi & Suryanto, Tulus & Nator, M. & Ghofur, Ruslan. (2020). The Effect Digitalization Zakat Payment Against Potential of Zakat Acceptance in National Amil Zakat Agency. *IQTISHADIA*. 13. 216. 10.21043/iqtishadia.v13i2.7809.
- Yakasai, Musa & Jibrin, Munubiyah & Zanna, Lawan. (2021). The Role Of Zakat On Addressing Poverty Reduction In Yobe State. *Innovare Journal of Social Sciences*. 22-26. 10.22159/ijss.2021.v9i5.42614.
- Yardımcıoğlu, Fatih & Altintas, Nurullah & gümüş, niyazi. (2019). The Role of Zakat Potential in Reducing Poverty in Turkey.