

Strengthening Islamic Philanthropy for Community Empowerment through Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama Initiatives in West Java

Willy Achmad

¹Universitas Pasundan, Bandung, Indonesia, Email: willyaachmad@unpas.ac.id

Received: 10/07/2024	Revised: 11/10/2024	Accepted: 31/12/2024
Abstract	Many communities are still trapped in poverty, with limited access to resources and economic opportunities. Certain community groups, especially in remote areas, often do not have equal access to education, health, and public services. The problems of poverty and social welfare today can be overcome through Islamic philanthropy which includes zakat, infaq, and sedekah. This study aims to analyze the role of Islamic philanthropy in community empowerment through Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama institutions in West Java. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data are sourced from articles and journals discussing Islamic philanthropy, including case studies relevant to the West Java context. The results show that Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) play an important role in social philanthropy in Indonesia, each with an approach that focuses on health, education, and community empowerment. Both organizations have a significant impact on community empowerment, with their contributions including poverty alleviation, increasing access to education, and improving health conditions. Challenges and limitations in Muhammadiyah and NU philanthropic efforts include the lack of efficiency in fund management, low community participation, and difficulty in reaching vulnerable groups. In addition, both organizations often face challenges in terms of coordination and collaboration between institutions, which can hinder their philanthropic impact. It is hoped that further research can improve the impact of Islamic philanthropy on society.	
Keywords	Islam, Social Philanthropy, Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama	
Corresponding Author	Willy Achmad Universitas Pasundan, Bandung, Indonesia, Email: willyaachmad@unpas.ac.id	

1. INTRODUCTION

The poverty rate in West Java in 2024 shows a significant figure, with various challenges in poverty reduction. Health indicators show improvement, but gaps in access to health services still exist, while education challenges focus on improving quality and access across the region. In 2024, the poverty rate in Indonesia decreased, but there are still challenges in health and education indicators. The poverty rate was recorded at 8.57% in September 2024, down from March 2024 and 2023. The proportion of poor people in West Java in 2024 is targeted to be around 7.5%. West Java Province is ranked second with the largest number of poor people in Indonesia. Government efforts in the 2020-2024 Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) focus on reducing poverty. There has been an increase in access to health services, although there are still gaps in some areas. Health indicators cover various aspects, including access to health facilities and quality of services. Data shows that despite improvements, challenges in the distribution of health services remain, especially in remote areas. Education challenges in 2024 focus on improving the quality of education and accessibility. Gaps in education are still visible, especially in



less developed areas (Khan et al., 2019). Efforts to improve educational infrastructure and teacher training are a priority to achieve better results.

In order to realize national development and improve social welfare, socio-economic challenges such as high poverty rates, low health levels, and poor environmental conditions are still often encountered (Raharjo, 2015). Social welfare is an organized system of services to aid individuals and groups to attain satisfying standards of life and health (Irele, 2019). Therefore, concrete steps are needed to overcome these problems, one of which is through community empowerment. Community empowerment is the process of enabling individuals and groups to gain control over their lives and improve their socio-economic conditions. Ideally, the state should play an active role in the empowerment process, but in reality, state efforts have not been fully effective in improving community welfare through empowerment programs that have been implemented (Rahmadani et al., 2018). This condition encourages the birth of empowerment initiatives driven by civil society, such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), local communities, and other non-governmental organizations. These organizations function as strategic partners that support the role of the state in efforts to improve community welfare. They run various programs that focus on capacity building, access to health services, education, and sustainable economic development (Vallejo & Wehn, 2016).

In an effort to overcome poverty and improve welfare, communities have long practiced traditions of giving involving various forms of support. This provision is not only limited to assistance in the form of goods or money, but also includes various forms of contributions aimed at easing the burden of life for the poor and helping them achieve better welfare (Hooley et al., 2017). This practice is known as philanthropy. Philanthropy is voluntary actions aimed at promoting the welfare of others, particularly through financial support and community initiatives (Efendi & Khomairoh, 2024). Philanthropy does not only focus on direct assistance, but also on more sustainable efforts such as education, skills training, or providing business capital to increase the economic independence of underprivileged communities (Tamim, 2016). Thus, philanthropy plays an important role as a social instrument that is not only charitable, but also empowering, helping people to escape the cycle of poverty and achieve more sustainable prosperity (Albarri, 2023).

Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) are the two largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia that have implemented various programs to meet the needs of the community (Turnip, 2018). Here are some specific examples of programs that have been successfully implemented by the two organizations. Muhammadiyah, health services such as a network of hospitals managed by Muhammadiyah provide affordable and quality health services. For example, Muhammadiyah Hospitals in various regions provide general health services, specialists, and public health education. Education such as Muhammadiyah Schools, a network of schools from elementary to tertiary levels that prioritize character and academic education. For example, Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta (UMY) and Muhammadiyah Elementary Schools. Economic empowerment through the Muhammadiyah Cooperative. While Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Health Services in the form of Nahdlatul Ulama Health Institutions (LKNU): Provide health services through clinics and hospitals managed by NU, such as NU Hospitals in various regions. Education with a network of Islamic boarding schools that teach religious and general education, such as the Luhur Al-Tsaqafah Islamic Boarding School which prioritizes character and skills education. And Economic Empowerment through Creative Economy Programs, Training and mentoring for communities to develop small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The management of Islamic philanthropy by Muhammadiyah and NU in West Java has contributed significantly to community empowerment through social programs that improve welfare.

However, challenges faced include lack of coordination between institutions, limited resources, and difficulties in reaching the most needy communities. The management of Islamic philanthropy by Muhammadiyah and NU includes Strategic Roles, Muhammadiyah and NU have important roles in the management of Islamic philanthropy, with a focus on community empowerment through programs based on Islamic values. The Zakat, Infak, and Sedekah Amil Institution (Lazismu) from Muhammadiyah and the NU Coin Movement are real examples of managing philanthropic funds to help the community. Empowerment Programs, The programs implemented include educational assistance, business capital, and skills development. The provision of assistance is not only material, but also includes training and provision so that the community can be independent. Impact on Community Empowerment. Improved Welfare is These programs have had a positive impact on meeting the basic needs of the community, such as education and health.

Communities involved in philanthropic programs show an increase in their standard of living and economic independence (Harrow & Jung, 2016). Community involvement in empowerment programs is the key to success, where they are involved in the planning and implementation of the program. Challenges Faced: Lack of coordination between Muhammadiyah and NU in implementing philanthropic programs can result in overlapping and waste of resources. Limited resources, both in terms of funds and manpower, are obstacles in expanding the reach of the program. Difficulty in reaching the most needy communities, especially in remote areas, is a challenge in itself. There are still communities who are less aware of the programs available, so their participation in philanthropic programs is still low. Community empowerment theory focuses on the process by which individuals and groups gain power, control, and ability to change their social, economic, and political conditions. In the context of Islamic philanthropy, Empowerment Through Participation, Philanthropic programs run by Muhammadiyah and NU involve communities in planning and implementation, thereby increasing their sense of ownership and responsibility. Skills Development, through training and education, communities are empowered to develop skills that can increase their economic independence. Philanthropic theory explains the motivations and practices of giving, and their impact on society. In this context Motivation of Islamic Philanthropy, Philanthropy in Islam is driven by religious values, such as zakat, infak, and sedekah, which encourage individuals and institutions to help others. Social Impact, Philanthropic practices carried out by Muhammadiyah and NU not only provide material assistance, but also contribute to the social and economic development of society.

Social economic theory emphasizes the importance of the relationship between the economy and society, as well as the role of social organizations in creating welfare (Mujtaba, 2024). In the context of Islamic philanthropy, Community-Based Economy, Philanthropic programs run by Muhammadiyah and NU often focus on local economic development, such as providing business capital and entrepreneurship training. Shared Welfare, this theory supports the idea that economic welfare is not only measured by economic growth, but also by the equitable distribution of wealth and social welfare. Integration of Theory, integrating these three theories can provide a more holistic understanding of how the management of Islamic philanthropy by Muhammadiyah and NU affects community empowerment. Empowerment Through Philanthropy, Islamic philanthropy not only functions as material assistance, but also as an empowerment tool that allows communities to actively participate in social and economic change. Value-Based Welfare, Philanthropic practices based on Islamic values create a social economic model that focuses on shared welfare, where every individual has the opportunity to contribute and benefit. Synergy Between Theories, By combining community

empowerment theory, philanthropy theory, and social economic theory, researchers can analyze how philanthropic programs can be optimized to increase social and economic impacts in society.

Previous research conducted by Sholikhah (2021), stated that ACT's role for the welfare of the global community is realized through programs such as the distribution of waqf and humanitarian workers, especially in areas affected by conflict, even having branch offices such as in Palestine. In Kaulika's research (2023), the practice of philanthropy has become an institutionalized tradition since the emergence of Islam. Philanthropy has an important role for alternative financing in Islamic educational institutions through zakat, alms, waqf and various obligations other than waqf. Other research states that the practice of Islamic philanthropy in the Kampung Sedekah program is motivated by the ownership of the habitus in the Yayasan Sedekah Ngider Indonesia, this ownership can be seen through the background and motivation of the actors in creating the Kampung Sedekah program. In addition, the distribution of capital exchanged, namely social capital, cultural capital, symbolic capital and economic capital in the Kampung Sedekah arena RW 09 Kelapa Dua Wetan and RW 10 Ciracas plays an important role in the sustainability process of the social practices carried out (Al Fachrozi, 2021). Previous studies have also discussed the practice of social philanthropy, the novelty of this study lies in its implementation which focuses on Muhammadiyah and NU.

The relevance of research on the management of Islamic philanthropy by Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and its impact on community empowerment in West Java is very important for various stakeholders, including policy makers, religious organizations, and the wider community. This research can provide data and analysis needed to formulate policies that support the development of Islamic philanthropy. Policy makers can use research findings to understand community needs and design more effective programs. For Religious Organizations, Optimizing Philanthropy Programs, Capacity Building, Strengthening Networks. For the Wider Community, this research can increase public awareness of the importance of Islamic philanthropy and how they can participate in existing programs. Communities that are more aware of their rights and obligations in the context of philanthropy will be more actively involved. By understanding the positive impacts of Islamic philanthropy, communities can be more motivated to contribute to social and economic activities that support the empowerment of their communities. This research can provide examples of successful empowerment models that can be adopted by other communities in order to improve social and economic welfare.

The formulation of the problem of this study is how Islamic philanthropy managed by Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in West Java affects community empowerment, and what are the strategies and impacts of the programs run by the two institutions. This study will examine the types of philanthropic programs carried out, such as education, health, and economy, and evaluate the extent to which these programs contribute to improving community welfare and independence. The purpose of this study is to understand the effectiveness of Islamic philanthropy programs run by Muhammadiyah and NU in the context of community empowerment in West Java. The benefits of this research include providing valuable information for philanthropic institutions, government, and society about how Islamic philanthropy can be more optimal in improving the welfare of society. In addition, the research results are expected to help formulate more effective social policies and support more inclusive community empowerment efforts.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore and understand the meaning behind the practice of social philanthropy carried out by Islamic institutions such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in West Java. This qualitative approach aims to describe and understand in depth how social philanthropy, in the context of Islam, is applied to empower communities. By focusing on the social and humanitarian aspects of these philanthropic programs, this study will reveal how Islamic values play a role in the form and implementation of philanthropic activities and their impact on community welfare. This study uses secondary data collected from various sources such as journals, books, and online sources to provide a comprehensive perspective on the topic under study (Williams & Shepherd, 2017).

The research design is descriptive and exploratory, which allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the context, motivation, and impact of these philanthropic practices. Sampling Technique through Purposive Sampling. This technique involves selecting samples based on specific objectives. In literature studies, this means selecting books, journals, articles, or other written sources that are considered the most relevant and important to support the research.

This study uses primary and secondary data to provide a comprehensive picture of Islamic philanthropic practices. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with administrators of philanthropic institutions in Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama environments in West Java, as well as community leaders and program beneficiaries. These interviews were conducted directly and used semi-structured interview guidelines to allow for flexible yet focused exploration of the research objectives. The informants in this study were AS, the administrator of Muhammadiyah in West Java Province, MS, the administrator of Nahdlatul Ulama in West Java Province, and S and IH, who are beneficiary community in West Java. Meanwhile, secondary data were collected through literature studies that included books, scientific journals, articles, and online sources that discussed Islamic philanthropy, especially those relevant to the context of community empowerment in West Java. The criteria for selecting literature were based on the relevance of the content to the research topic and published within the last 10 years to ensure data actuality.

The data analysis process in this study follows three main steps: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is done to filter and organize relevant information from various sources, while data display focuses on presenting information systematically to facilitate understanding and analysis. The final step, namely drawing conclusions, involves interpreting the data to conclude key findings regarding the effectiveness and impact of social philanthropy in community empowerment. With this method, the study is expected to produce a deep understanding of how Islamic philanthropy functions in the local context and provide recommendations for improving the implementation of such programs in the future.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Practice of Islamic Philanthropy in Muhammadiyah Institutions in West Java

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the current population of Indonesia is around 270.20 million people. Of this number, the potential for muzaki (zakat givers) in Indonesia is estimated to reach 70.72 percent. Hilman Latief in Ascarya (2022) stated that 85% of the Indonesian population is Muslim, and around 14% of them are members of Muhammadiyah. Based on 2015 data, the potential for zakat in the Muhammadiyah organization and Muhammadiyah members is estimated

at IDR 524 billion. Assuming an annual growth of 20.86 % (S. R. Ascarya & Tanjung, 2018), the potential for zakat in 2020 is estimated to reach IDR 1.4 trillion. However, in reality, the hope for an increase in the amount of zakat collection is often hampered by the low zakat literacy index (LIZ) among the Indonesian Muslim community, including in the organization's members. This shows that even though the potential for zakat is quite large, the main challenge lies in the public's understanding and awareness of zakat itself.

The characteristics of muzakki in West Java can be explained through the following aspects. Muzakki in West Java come from various economic backgrounds, from the middle to upper classes. Many of them are entrepreneurs, professionals, and civil servants who have a fixed income. The social and cultural environment in West Java which is thick with the value of mutual cooperation also encourages muzakki to contribute in the form of zakat. Zakat given by muzakki is often used for economic empowerment programs, such as skills training, business capital, and educational assistance, which can increase community income. Overall, muzakki in West Java play an important role in improving community welfare through the zakat contributions they give, driven by religious motivation and social awareness.

Muhammadiyah, as one of the largest Islamic organizations in Indonesia since its founding, has made the Qur'an and Hadith the main foundation in all its activities. The Quran has an important meaning in this context because it serves as a guide for the implementation of three main activities. This theology is translated into real practice through three main pillars of work: health rehabilitation, education, and social services. In this context, Muhammadiyah focuses on health rehabilitation to serve the medical needs of the community, school construction to improve the quality of education, and food provision to support the socially disadvantaged. KH Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah, believed that this approach would be able to overcome various social problems that plagued the Indonesian nation at that time. The four social problems include: damage in the realm of belief, rigidity in the field of fiqh law, decline in the education sector, as well as poverty that plagues the people and the loss of local flavor.

Muhammadiyah has long been known as a pioneer in organizing zakat, both zakat fitrah and zakat mal, which are an integral part of their efforts to empower society socially and economically. In this context, Muhammadiyah not only acts as a recipient of zakat, but also as an effective and transparent manager. The Muhammadiyah Zakat, Infaq and Shadaqah Amil Institution (LAZISMU) is one of the charitable efforts managed by Muhammadiyah with the main objective of optimizing the collection and distribution of zakat and other charitable funds. LAZISMU functions as an official forum that manages various charitable funds collected from Muslims, including zakat, infaq, and sadaqah (Purnawan et al., 2024). This institution is responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating social programs funded by zakat and donations. These programs cover various aspects, such as education, health, and social assistance to communities in need. With professional and accountable management, LAZISMU strives to ensure that zakat and charity funds are used effectively to improve community welfare and support various social initiatives, that are in line with Islamic values in the research of Apriliani & Malik (2021).

The background to the establishment of the Muhammadiyah Zakat, Infaq and Shadaqah Collection Institution (LAZISMU) was influenced by two main factors. First, Indonesia faces serious challenges related to widespread poverty, high levels of ignorance, and a very low human development index. These issues are closely related to a weak social justice system, resulting in inequity in the distribution of resources and opportunities. This situation indicates an urgent need for effective interventions to

improve the social and economic conditions of the community, which is the basis for the establishment of LAZISMU as a response to these challenges. Second, zakat is seen as a potential instrument in promoting social justice, improving human development, and eradicating poverty. As a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia has quite high potential for zakat, infaq, and waqf. However, this potential has not been fully managed and empowered to the maximum, so that its impact on solving social problems has not been significant. LAZISMU was established to optimize the management and utilization of zakat and other charitable funds, with the hope of making a greater contribution to overcoming poverty and improving the welfare of society as a whole.

In addition to the existence of the Muhammadiyah Zakat, Infaq and Shadaqah Collection Institution (LAZISMU), Muhammadiyah is also committed to social philanthropy activities through the establishment and management of hospitals and treatment centers. Hospitals and Public Health Centers (RS/PKU) managed by Muhammadiyah not only act as providers of routine health services, but also function as health centers that are ready to respond to emergency situations. These health facilities are designed to deal with a variety of emergencies, including natural disasters, by providing the facilities and resources necessary for rapid and effective medical treatment. Thus, RS/PKU Muhammadiyah not only contributes to the daily health of the community, but also plays a key role in disaster management efforts.

In the context of social philanthropy, the presence of Muhammadiyah Hospitals/PKUs that are disaster-ready reflects the organization's commitment to sustainable community services and responsiveness to urgent needs. This effort reflects the integration of humanitarian and social values in philanthropic practices, where health facilities not only function as providers of medical services, but also as the front line in crisis situations. Through investment in infrastructure and training for disaster preparedness, Muhammadiyah strengthens its contribution in protecting and supporting communities, especially those who are vulnerable. In this way, Muhammadiyah shows how philanthropic activities can combine aspects of health services with social responsibility in facing global challenges, such as disasters and health crises.

In the field of education, Muhammadiyah integrates a philanthropic approach by preparing its schools to face disasters. Muhammadiyah schools not only focus on academic curriculum, but also prioritize disaster preparedness as an integral part of their education. Disaster preparedness programs in these schools include regular training for students and staff, designed to provide basic knowledge of what actions to take during an emergency situation. This includes training on evacuation, first aid, and ways to communicate effectively in a crisis.

In addition to individual training, Muhammadiyah schools also implement a broader strategy to protect and support their surrounding communities during disasters. This involves conducting disaster simulations involving the entire school community, working with local agencies and emergency response teams to ensure that evacuation and disaster management procedures are implemented effectively. With this approach, Muhammadiyah schools not only train young people to deal with disasters, but also serve as coordination and support centers for their surrounding communities, strengthening their philanthropic role in maintaining the safety and well-being of their communities.

Muhammadiyah institutions have various mechanisms to mobilize and utilize zakat funds. Here are some commonly used mechanisms. 1. Zakat Collection, Muhammadiyah institutions conduct socialization about the importance of zakat through various media, seminars, and religious activities to increase public awareness. 2. Zakat Fund Management, Muhammadiyah institutions implement a strict

accountability system in managing zakat funds, including transparent financial reports to the public. 3. Empowerment Programs, Zakat funds are used for education programs, skills training, and scholarships for underprivileged children. 4. Cooperation and Partnerships, Collaborating with government institutions, NGOs, and other community organizations to expand the reach and impact of programs funded by zakat. 5. Monitoring and Evaluation, Conducting regular monitoring and evaluation of programs funded by zakat to ensure their effectiveness and impact on the community. With these mechanisms, Muhammadiyah institutions strive to maximize the potential of zakat funds in improving community welfare and empowering communities.

From Informan AS, a the administrator of Muhammadiyah informed that In West Java, Muhammadiyah is active in various significant social philanthropic activities to support and strengthen local communities. One important initiative is the distribution of funds by the Muhammadiyah Zakat, Infaq and Shadaqah Institution (LAZISMU) of West Java. With a fund allocation of 250 million rupiah, LAZISMU West Java provides financial support to various campuses in the region. These funds are used to support various educational activities, including improving facilities, providing scholarships, and developing academic programs. Through this contribution, LAZISMU seeks to improve the quality of education at Muhammadiyah campuses and other educational institutions, so that it can have a positive impact on the development of human resources in West Java.

Muhammadiyah through the Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC) West Java also plays an active role in increasing disaster capacity and preparedness at the local level. MDMC West Java held SPHERE training, which is an international standard training for disaster management, attended by dozens of cadres. The training aims to equip participants with the skills and knowledge needed to respond effectively to emergency situations. By involving trained cadres, MDMC West Java ensures that there is a team ready to provide assistance and support in dealing with disasters, as well as help build community capacity to deal with possible future crises.

In addition, the Regional Social Welfare Empowerment Council (MPKSDI) of the Muhammadiyah West Java Regional Leadership is also active in forming an instructor corps to support various social and educational programs. MPKSDI is committed to developing an instructor corps that will play an important role in disseminating knowledge and skills related to community empowerment and social program management. By forming this corps, Muhammadiyah aims to strengthen the organizational structure and increase the effectiveness of the implementation of philanthropic programs in West Java, as well as ensuring that instructors can provide the training and support needed by the community to improve their quality of life in a sustainable manner.

3.2 Practice of Islamic Philanthropy at Nadhlatul Ulama in West Java

Philanthropy or generosity has been at the heart of the revival of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) since the organization was founded in 1926. As the largest Islamic mass organization in the world, NU's journey has been supported by generous contributions from its members and supporters. In Islamic tradition, this form of generosity is known as zakat, infak, and sedekah, all of which play an important role in strengthening the principles of NU's struggle (Asili, 2017). Zakat, as one of the pillars of Islam and a pillar of religion, has a very crucial role in supporting NU activities and missions. This generosity provides additional strength for the Islamic struggle, because it can strengthen social solidarity and support various community activities (Ismail, 2019).

In the context of Islamic teachings, zakat and prayer have an important synergy in overcoming life's problems (Rahmida & Ridwan, 2023). Allah emphasizes in the Qur'an the importance of these two

acts of worship in establishing a balance between vertical relationships with Allah and horizontal relationships with fellow human beings. Zakat functions as a guardian and strengthener of social relations, improving the state of society, and reducing social disparities, while prayer strengthens spiritual relations with Allah. Both are offers of solutions given by Allah to achieve well-being and harmony in life, affirming that generosity and worship are two important aspects that complement each other in the life of a Muslim.

Philanthropy or generosity has been at the heart of the revival of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) since the organization was founded in 1926. As the largest Islamic mass organization in the world, NU's journey has been supported by generous contributions from its members and supporters. In Islamic tradition, this form of generosity is known as zakat, infak, and sedekah, all of which play an important role in strengthening the principles of NU's struggle. Zakat, as one of the pillars of Islam and a pillar of religion, has a very crucial role in supporting NU activities and missions. This generosity provides additional strength to the Islamic struggle, because it can strengthen social solidarity and support various community activities.

NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) has various philanthropic programs aimed at improving the welfare of society. Some of the initiatives implemented include the KOINNU program, which invites the community to donate, as well as social projects that focus on education, health, and economic empowerment. The impact of these programs is seen in increasing access to education and health for the underprivileged, as well as strengthening the local economy. One of them is the KOINNU Program, KOINNU is a fundraising program that invites the community to donate regularly. The goal is to increase community participation in philanthropic activities and support various NU social projects. The impact of this program has succeeded in raising funds that are used for various social activities, including assistance for education and health.

Informan MS, a the adminitrator NU West Java Province informed In the context of Islamic teachings, zakat and prayer have an important synergy in overcoming life's problems. Allah emphasizes in the Qur'an the importance of these two acts of worship in establishing a balance between vertical relationships with Allah and horizontal relationships with fellow human beings. Zakat functions as a guardian and strengthener of social relations, improving the state of society, and reducing social disparities, while prayer strengthens spiritual relations with Allah. Both are offers of solutions given by Allah to achieve well-being and harmony in life, affirming that generosity and worship are two important aspects that complement each other in the life of a Muslim.

The journey of Islamic philanthropy in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) has gone through a consistent process of preaching and socialization, becoming a commitment that is firmly held by all Nahdliyin members to this day. Involvement in generosity, especially zakat, infak, and sedekah, is an integral part of Islamic teachings that are actively practiced by NU (Ubaidillah et al., 2021). Along with the increasing awareness of the importance of zakat, the passion for zakat in Indonesia has also experienced significant growth. As a concrete step, in 2005, the establishment of the Nahdlatul Ulama Zakat, Infak, and Sedekah Institution (LAZISNU) in Donoyudan, Solo, following the legal basis of Zakat Law Number 38 of 1999, marked an important milestone in the development of Islamic philanthropy within NU. The establishment of LAZISNU not only strengthens NU's commitment to zakat management, but also contributes to the encouraging development of social philanthropy efforts in Indonesia, strengthening NU's role in empowering communities through generosity (Makmun & Sadat, 2019). Here are some of the things LAZISNU does:

- Helping the welfare of the community: LAZISNU focuses on efforts to improve the welfare of the community through various social programs and direct assistance. This includes providing social assistance to communities in need, such as food distribution, health assistance, and support for vulnerable groups. The main goal is to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of the community through effective and targeted interventions.
- Improving social dignity: One of LAZISNU's missions is to improve the social dignity of the community, with a focus on economic and social empowerment. These programs include skills training, small business development, and education aimed at improving the abilities and well-being of individuals and communities. By improving social dignity, LAZISNU hopes to provide a sustainable positive impact on society.
- Conducting ZISWAF collection: LAZISNU is actively involved in collecting zakat, infak, sedekah, and waqf (ZISWAF) from donors. This process involves various methods to collect donations, such as campaigns, online donations, and fundraising programs. This ZISWAF collection is an important initial step in implementing various planned philanthropic programs.
- Conducting ZISWAF management: After collection, LAZISNU is responsible for managing ZISWAF in an efficient and effective manner. This involves planning, allocating, and distributing funds according to established needs and priorities. Good management ensures that the funds collected are used optimally to achieve the desired social and humanitarian goals.
- Helping the global community get to know LAZISNU: LAZISNU strives to increase the visibility and recognition of the institution at the global level. This is done through various communication and promotional strategies aimed at introducing LAZISNU to the international community. In this way, LAZISNU hopes to attract the attention of global donors and increase support for its philanthropic programs.
- Increasing donor trust: To build and maintain donor trust, LAZISNU is committed to running operations in a transparent and accountable manner. This includes clear and regular reporting on the use of funds, achievement of results, and the impact of programs run. Donor trust is key to the sustainability of philanthropic programs managed by LAZISNU.
- Distributing ZISWAF in an accountable, transparent, trustworthy, and professional manner: LAZISNU ensures that the distribution of ZISWAF funds is carried out with high standards in terms of accountability, transparency, trustworthiness, and professionalism. This process involves the use of strict systems and procedures to ensure that every donation is managed properly and distributed to the rightful recipients in an effective manner. Commitment to these standards helps maintain the integrity of the institution and increases trust from donors and the community.

LAZISNU West Java has several community empowerment programs, including: Health assistance where LAZISNU West Java is actively committed to improving access to health services for underprivileged communities through various medical assistance initiatives. This program includes the provision of free health checks that allow communities to obtain early diagnosis and treatment at no cost. In addition, LAZISNU also provides medical services for those in need, including the distribution of medicines to overcome common health problems faced by the community. With this program, LAZISNU seeks to reduce the financial burden that individuals and families may face in obtaining adequate health care.

Furthermore, to support educational progress, LAZISNU West Java provides scholarships to students who demonstrate academic achievement but face financial limitations. This scholarship

program aims to ensure that potential students are not hindered from accessing quality education simply because of economic problems. By providing financial support, LAZISNU helps open up opportunities for young people to achieve better education, which in turn can improve their future and contribute to the development of society as a whole.

Empowering local MSMEs: LAZISNU West Java also plays a role in empowering local Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as part of efforts to strengthen the community's economy. Through various support programs, including training, access to capital, and business coaching, LAZISNU helps MSMEs to develop and improve their businesses. This program is designed to improve the capacity and competence of local entrepreneurs, which can ultimately create jobs, increase community income, and encourage economic growth at the local level. Empowering MSMEs also contributes to sustainable economic development and community welfare.

3.3 The Impact of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama Social Philanthropy on Empowerment

The impact of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) social philanthropy on community empowerment can be seen from the following aspects:

1. Improving Economic Welfare

Muhammadiyah plays an important role in empowering the community's economy through various philanthropic programs, such as empowering MSMEs, education, and health. Through financial support and training provided to small businesses, Muhammadiyah contributes to the development of the economic capacity of individuals and families. The program helps strengthen micro, small, and medium enterprises by providing access to capital, skills training, and business guidance. Thus, communities not only have the opportunity to increase their incomes, but also to create jobs and reduce poverty. Support in the field of education, including scholarships and educational facilities, as well as health services provided by Muhammadiyah institutions, expands access and improves the quality of life of the community as a whole, which ultimately supports more stable economic welfare.

Nahdlatul Ulama also makes significant contributions to economic empowerment through various philanthropic programs. The educational and health assistance provided by NU, along with support for local businesses, serves to improve the economic conditions of communities. NU's scholarship program enables high-achieving students from underprivileged families to continue their education, while business training provides the skills needed to start and manage a business. By increasing the income and economic capacity of individuals and communities, NU plays a role in creating better and more sustainable economic opportunities. These programs not only help improve people's financial well-being, but also encourage more inclusive and sustainable economic development.

2. Improving Access to Education and Skills

Muhammadiyah is committed to increasing access to education through the network of schools it manages and scholarship programs distributed by LAZISNU. Muhammadiyah schools not only provide formal education but also facilitate the development of skills and knowledge for children from underprivileged families. By providing access to quality education, Muhammadiyah helps open up opportunities for young people to receive adequate education. This enables them to develop the skills needed to improve their quality of life, face future challenges, and make a positive contribution to society. The scholarship program also reduces the financial barriers that often hinder students from lower economic backgrounds, enabling them to achieve their academic and professional goals.

Nahdlatul Ulama also has a significant impact in the field of education and skills training through the scholarship and training programs it provides. The NU scholarship program provides opportunities for high-achieving students from underprivileged families to further their education, while skills training is designed to equip individuals with relevant skills for the job market. This initiative not only enhances the ability of individuals to obtain better employment but also encourages them to start their own businesses, should they choose to do so. In doing so, NU contributes to the development of individual potential in various fields, strengthening their capacity to participate productively in the economy, and supporting sustainable skills growth within the community.

3. Strengthening Public Health

Muhammadiyah plays an important role in the health sector through the network of hospitals and health centers it manages. Muhammadiyah hospitals and Public Health Centers (RS/PKU) provide quality health services that include routine and emergency care, including in disaster situations. With complete medical facilities and professional medical personnel, Muhammadiyah can provide comprehensive and responsive health assistance. This initiative not only improves the overall health of the community but also helps reduce the burden of disease and improve the quality of life of the community. By addressing various health problems and providing necessary care, Muhammadiyah contributes to improving the welfare of society and providing solutions in emergency situations that require immediate medical attention.

Nahdlatul Ulama is also committed to improving public health through various health programs launched. The medical assistance and treatment provided by NU helps underprivileged communities gain access to the health services they need. These programs focus on reducing death and disease rates by providing treatment, health checks, and other medical assistance. Through these efforts, NU contributes significantly to improving the overall health of the community, helping to address underlying health problems, and improving the quality of life of those most in need of support. NU's health programs play a vital role in supporting community well-being and ensuring that health services are available to those in need.

4. Community Empowerment and Social Development

Muhammadiyah is committed to social empowerment through various programs designed to improve skills and support MSMEs. Skills training programs provided by Muhammadiyah provide practical training to community members, equipping them with new skills that can be applied in their businesses. In addition, the support provided to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) through capital assistance, mentoring, and training helps strengthen the economic capacity of individuals and groups. These initiatives not only support business development but also contribute to broader, sustainable social development. By empowering individuals to manage and grow their businesses, Muhammadiyah helps create more independent and resilient communities.

Nahdlatul Ulama also plays an important role in community empowerment through various philanthropic programs that focus on increasing community capacity. NU programs are designed to help communities face various social and economic challenges, including by providing support in the form of training, scholarships and business assistance. This support not only helps individuals and groups overcome difficulties but also strengthens the social fabric of the community as a whole. By promoting more inclusive and sustainable community development, NU contributes to the development of a more prosperous and harmonious society. These efforts support the creation of a more

stable social environment and increase the capacity of communities to adapt to existing changes and challenges.

Here are some real evidences that show the important role of Muhammadiyah in empowering the community's economy through various philanthropic programs, including empowering Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), education, and health: The Muhammadiyah Zakat, Infak, and Alms Institution (Lazismu) provides business capital assistance to MSME actors. For example, in several regions, Lazismu provides interest-free loans to small entrepreneurs to develop their businesses, which has been proven to increase family income and welfare, Muhammadiyah provides various scholarship programs for students and students from underprivileged families. For example, the "Muhammadiyah Peduli" scholarship program provides educational assistance to outstanding students from underprivileged families, so that they can continue their education without being burdened by costs, and Muhammadiyah implements public health programs, such as health counseling, free health checks, and immunization programs. For example, the "Muhammadiyah Sehat" program provides free health services in remote areas, helping people who do not have access to health services.

Here are some real evidences of NU's role in economic empowerment through philanthropic programs: NU often holds exhibitions of MSME products, such as the "Sharia Economic Festival" held in various regions. This exhibition provides an opportunity for MSME actors to promote their products, network, and gain access to a wider market, NU manages thousands of educational institutions, from madrasahs to universities. For example, Nahdlatul Ulama University (UNU) and various madrasahs under NU have produced thousands of graduates who are ready to compete in the world of work, contributing to improving the quality of human resources, and NU has a network of hospitals and clinics that provide affordable health services. For example, Nahdlatul Ulama Hospitals in various regions provide quality health services at lower costs, so that they can be accessed by the wider community.

Challenges and limitations of Muhammadiyah and NU philanthropy in 2024 include issues of resources, social change, and public trust. In addition, philanthropic institutions also face challenges in managing funds and ensuring transparency to prevent misuse. Resource Challenges, Limited funds are one of the main challenges faced by Muhammadiyah and NU in running philanthropic programs. Many planned programs have been postponed or canceled due to lack of financial support. Human resources who are trained and experienced in philanthropic management are also still limited. Community Involvement Problems, Community involvement in philanthropic programs is often less than optimal, which can be caused by a lack of understanding of the importance of zakat and sedekah. Some people may be skeptical of the effectiveness of the programs being run, thus reducing their participation. Ineffective communication between philanthropic institutions and the community is also a barrier to increasing involvement. Program Sustainability, Ensuring the sustainability of philanthropic programs is a challenge in itself, especially in terms of long-term funding. Many programs are temporary and do not have a clear sustainability plan, so their impact cannot be felt in the long term. Changes in government policies and regulations can also affect the sustainability of programs that are already running. Public Trust, Building and maintaining public trust in philanthropic institutions is a significant challenge. Cases of misuse of funds or lack of transparency in fund management can damage the reputation of the institution and reduce public trust. Efforts to improve transparency and accountability in the management of philanthropic funds need to be increased to build trust. Overcoming this

challenge requires a comprehensive strategy and collaboration between various parties to achieve more effective philanthropic goals.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) play an important role in social philanthropy in Indonesia, each with an approach that focuses on health, education, and community empowerment. Muhammadiyah through the Muhammadiyah Zakat, Infaq, and Shadaqah Institution (LAZISMU) manages zakat and other charitable funds effectively to improve the welfare of the community in West Java, with programs that support education, disaster preparedness, and MSME empowerment. On the other hand, NU through LAZISNU utilizes generosity to support various social and community activities, including health assistance, education scholarships, and local economic empowerment. Both organizations have a significant impact on community empowerment, with their contributions including poverty alleviation, increasing access to education, and improving health conditions. Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) have different approaches to philanthropy, with Muhammadiyah focusing more on education and health, while NU prioritizes Islamic boarding schools and social services. The impact is seen in the way these two organizations mobilize resources and contribute to society, with each having a significant influence in the social and religious context in Indonesia. Through various philanthropic initiatives, Muhammadiyah and NU strive to create a more prosperous, inclusive, and independent society.

Challenges and limitations in Muhammadiyah and NU philanthropic efforts include the lack of efficiency in fund management, low community participation, and difficulties in reaching vulnerable groups. In addition, both organizations often face challenges in terms of coordination and collaboration between institutions, which can hinder the impact of their philanthropy. It is hoped that further research can improve the impact of Islamic philanthropy on society. Future research on Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in social philanthropy in Indonesia could explore the social impacts and innovative approaches implemented by both organizations. Focusing on social transformation, modernization, and challenges in the context of Islamization could also be an interesting area to research.

REFERENCES

- Al Fachrozi, R. D. (2021). *Praktik Sosial Filantropi Islam Untuk Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Dalam Program Kampung Sedekah (Studi Kasus Yayasan Sedekah Ngider Indonesia)*. Program Studi Sosiologi Fakultas Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik Universitas
<https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/61283>
- Albarri, A. H. (2023). Optimalisasi Program Advokasi Sosial Filantropi Islam dalam Mencapai Pilar Pembangunan Sosial SDGs. *IAIN Ponorogo*. <https://etheses.iainponorogo.ac.id/25799/>
- Apriliyani, S., & Malik, Z. A. (2021). Peran lembaga amil zakat, infaq dan shadaqah muhammadiyah (lazismu) banjarnegara dalam meningkatkan perekonomian kaum dhuafa. *Jurnal Riset Ekonomi Syariah*, 7–12. <https://journal.staidk.ac.id/index.php/aliflam/article/download/647/430/2310>
- Ascarya, A. (2022). The role of Islamic social finance during Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia's economic recovery. *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management*, 15(2), 386–405. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMEFM-07-2020-0351>
- Ascarya, S. R., & Tanjung, H. (2018). Designing Holistic Financial Inclusion Based On Maqāṣid Al-Sharī 'Ah. *Islamic Finance*, 248, 1004–1007. <https://publication-bi.org/repec/idn/wpaper/WP062015.pdf>

- Asili, A. (2017). Manajemen Strategi Filantropi Islam Di Palembang Dengan Pendekatan Appreciate Inquiry. *I-ECONOMICS: A Research Journal on Islamic Economics*, 3(2), 248–265. <https://doi.org/10.19109/ieconomics.v3i2.1689>
- Efendi, M. N., & Khomairoh, S. (2024). Philanthropy in The Creative Economy Sector: Challenges and Opportunities. *Al-Madinah: Journal of Islamic Civilization*, 1(1), 61–78. <https://doi.org/10.70901/2k9mea05>
- Harrow, J., & Jung, T. (2016). Philanthropy and community development: the vital signs of community foundation? *Community Development Journal*, 51(1), 132–152. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsv056>
- Hooley, T., Sultana, R. G., & Thomsen, R. (2017). The neoliberal challenge to career guidance: Mobilising research, policy and practice around social justice. In *Career guidance for social justice* (pp. 1–27). Routledge.
- Irele, A. O. (2019). The evolution of social welfare and social work in Nigeria. *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, 16(4), 64–85. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/lwati/article/view/192055>
- Ismail, H. (2019). Perilaku Donasi dan Potensi Filantropi Warga Nahdlatul Ulama (Survei Lazisnu di 15 Kota dan Kabupaten di Indonesia). *Jurnal Middle East and Islamic Studies*, 6(1), 1–16. <http://meis.ui.ac.id/index.php/meis/article/view/75/0>
- Kaulika, S. M. (2023). Urgensi Filantropi Islam Untuk Pembiayaan Pendidikan Alternatif Bagi Anak-Anak Yang Tidak Mampu. *Re-JIEM (Research Journal of Islamic Education Management)*, 6(1), 58–73. <https://doi.org/10.19105/re-jiem.v6i1.8720>
- Khan, S., Hwang, G., Azeem Abbas, M., & Rehman, A. (2019). Mitigating the urban–rural educational gap in developing countries through mobile technology-supported learning. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 50(2), 735–749. <https://bera-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/bjet.12692>
- Makmun, M., & Sadat, M. A. (2019). Implementasi Program Penyaluran NU-Care LAZISNU Jombang Terhadap Pemberdayaan Masyarakat. *Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam*, 4(2), 166–185. <https://journal.unipdu.ac.id/index.php/jhki/article/view/1909>
- Mujtaba, A. (2024). Economic Development and Social Welfare: Assessing the Relationship. *Physical Education, Health and Social Sciences*, 2(4), 1–10. <https://journal-of-social-education.org/index.php/Jorunal/article/view/25>
- Purnawan, S. O., Rizky, M., Arista, S. W., Masyita, S., & Murdaningsih, S. R. (2024). Peranan Muhammadiyah Melalui Amal Usaha LAZISMU Dalam Pengembangan Aspek Ekonomi Pasca Pandemi. *Jesya (Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Ekonomi Syariah)*, 7(1), 511–519. <https://doi.org/10.36778/jesya.v7i1.1407>
- Raharjo, S. T. (2015). Mewujudkan Pembangunan Kesejahteraan Sosial melalui Keteladanan Nasional dan Keluarga. *Share: Social Work Journal*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.24198/share.v5i2.13137>
- Rahmadani, R., Raharjo, S. T., & Resnawaty, R. (2018). Fungsi corporate social responsibility (CSR) dalam pengembangan dan pemberdayaan masyarakat. *Share: Social Work Journal*, 8(2), 203–210. <https://doi.org/10.24198/share.v8i2.20081>
- Rahmida, S., & Ridwan, M. (2023). Analisis Pengelolaan Ziswaf Untuk Meningkatkan Kesejahteraan Masyarakat Dibidang Ekonomi: Studi Kasus Ybm Pln Uid Wilayah Sumatera Utara. *Transformasi: Journal of Economics and Business Management*, 2(4), 157–165. <https://scholar.archive.org/work/qxzjycc6gnhshgmj5aqxqr564y/access/wayback/https://jurnal2.untagsmg.ac.id/index.php/Transformasi/article/download/1155/1038>

- Sholikhah, N. A. (2021). Peran lembaga filantropi untuk kesejahteraan masyarakat global (Studi kasus pada Aksi Cepat Tanggap Madiun). *Journal of Islamic Philanthropy and Disaster (JOIPAD)*, 1(1), 27–42. <https://doi.org/10.21154/joipad.v1i1.3051>
- Tamim, I. H. (2016). Filantropi dan pembangunan. *Jurnal Community Development*, 1(1), 121–136. <https://journal.iainkudus.ac.id/index.php/comdev/article/view/2578>
- Turnip, I. R. S. (2018). *Aktivitas Filantropi Islam Di Kalangan Jama'ah Tabligh Halqah Sipispis Kabupaten Serdang Bedagai Sumatera Utara*. <http://repository.uinsu.ac.id/3885/>
- Ubaidillah, A., Buana, M. A. W., & Za, M. A. S. (2021). Optimalisasi Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19 Melalui LAZISNU. *BUDIMAS: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 3(2), 442–449. <https://jurnal.stie-aas.ac.id/index.php/JAIM/article/view/3349>
- Vallejo, B., & Wehn, U. (2016). Capacity development evaluation: The challenge of the results agenda and measuring return on investment in the global south. *World Development*, 79, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.10.044>
- Williams, T. A., & Shepherd, D. A. (2017). Mixed method social network analysis: Combining inductive concept development, content analysis, and secondary data for quantitative analysis. *Organizational Research Methods*, 20(2), 268–298. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1094428115610807>