

Zakat Education In Islamic Boarding Schools: The Relationship Between Persuasive Communication By The Darussyifa Islamic Boarding School Upz And Increasing Interest In Zakat

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Abstract

Zakat education in Islamic boarding schools is an important instrument in fostering religious awareness and reducing social inequality through the fair distribution of wealth. However, the potential of zakat in Indonesia is still far from being realized, including in Islamic boarding schools, which have a large Muslim community base. This study aims to analyze the role of zakat education through the persuasive communication strategies of the Zakat Collection Unit (UPZ) of the Darussyifa Al-Fithroh YASPIDA Islamic Boarding School in Sukabumi in increasing the interest of muzaki. The research method used a quantitative approach with a field study design. The research sample consisted of 63 respondents determined using the Slovin formula from a population of 168 muzaki. Data were collected through a five-point Likert scale questionnaire and then analyzed using significance tests and determination coefficients. The results showed that the motivation dimension had a significant effect on the interest of muzaki in paying zakat ($p = 0.004$), while the communicator's ability dimension was not significant ($p = 0.127$). The R^2 value of 0.931 indicates that the persuasive communication model can explain 93.1% of the variation in muzaki interest. However, the message relevance (45.1%) and follow-up motivation (50.7%) indicators are still relatively low. These findings confirm that emotional factors are more dominant than technical skills in influencing muzaki interest. The practical implications of this study encourage the optimization of peripheral pathways in the Elaboration Likelihood Model through emotional narratives, inspirational figures, and mustahik testimonials. Further research is recommended to explore the role of digital media, audience segmentation, and visual storytelling in strengthening the message of zakat.

Keywords: Zakat; Persuasive Communication; Communicator Motivation; UPZ; Donor Interest.

Abstrak

Edukasi zakat di lingkungan pondok pesantren menjadi instrumen penting dalam menumbuhkan kesadaran religius sekaligus mengurangi ketimpangan sosial melalui distribusi kekayaan yang adil. Namun, potensi zakat di Indonesia masih jauh dari realisasi, termasuk di pesantren yang memiliki basis komunitas muslim cukup besar. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran edukasi zakat melalui strategi komunikasi persuasif Unit Pengumpul Zakat (UPZ) Pondok

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Pesantren Darussyifa Al-Fithroh YASPIDA Sukabumi dalam meningkatkan minat muzaki. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain studi lapangan. Sampel penelitian sebanyak 63 responden ditentukan dengan rumus Slovin dari populasi 168 muzaki. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket skala Likert lima poin, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan uji signifikansi serta koefisien determinasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dimensi motivasi berpengaruh signifikan terhadap minat muzaki berzakat ($p = 0,004$), sementara dimensi kemampuan komunikator tidak signifikan ($p = 0,127$). Nilai R^2 sebesar 0,931 mengindikasikan bahwa model komunikasi persuasif mampu menjelaskan 93,1% variasi minat muzaki. Meskipun demikian, indikator relevansi pesan (45,1%) dan motivasi lanjutan (50,7%) masih tergolong rendah. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa faktor emosional lebih dominan dibanding keterampilan teknis dalam memengaruhi minat muzaki. Implikasi praktis penelitian mendorong optimalisasi jalur periferik dalam Elaboration Likelihood Model melalui narasi emosional, figur inspiratif, dan testimoni mustahik. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk mengeksplorasi peran media digital, segmentasi audiens, serta storytelling visual dalam memperkuat pesan zakat.

Kata kunci : Zakat; Komunikasi Persuasif; Motivasi Komunikator; UPZ; Minat muzaki.

I. Introduction

Zakat is one of the five pillars of Islam that has a fundamental position in the life of a Muslim. Zakat not only reflects an individual's obedience to Allah SWT's commands, but also has a very significant social dimension in creating justice and mutual prosperity. On a spiritual level, zakat is a form of purification of wealth and soul, while from a social perspective, zakat is an instrument of wealth distribution that aims to reduce economic inequality and improve the welfare of the people (Jubaidah et al., 2025; Silastia et al., 2023). In other words, zakat is an important pillar in building a just, prosperous, and civilized society. As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia has enormous potential for zakat. However, this great potential has not been maximized. Data shows that the realization of zakat collection is still far from the estimated potential. This indicates a gap between potential and realization that must be addressed through various approaches, including more effective communication strategies that reach various levels of society (Azhar, 2025).

Communication should not only be informative, but also persuasive in order to change perceptions, raise awareness, and encourage consistent zakat giving behavior. The role of zakat in society is very strategic, especially in the context of poverty alleviation and economic empowerment of the people. Zakat has the capacity to improve social conditions through fair and planned redistribution of wealth (Nikma & Ghufro, 2025). Well-managed zakat can be a concrete solution to various social problems, including poverty, unemployment, and social inequality. According to Karim (2015), zakat is a form of worship that is not only vertical (*hablumminallah*) but also horizontal (*hablumminannas*). Therefore, the management of zakat cannot be separated from the socio-economic dimensions of society, and for that reason, a good management system and an adaptive communication approach to the developments of the times are needed.

Currently, factors such as religiousness, understanding of zakat, trust in management institutions, service quality, and digital technology support are the main determinants in increasing muzaki participation (Rostiana, 2021; Safika & Mardikaningsih, 2025). Therefore, the communication strategy implemented must be able to respond to these challenges with an integrated and holistic approach. Persuasive communication as the main strategy is very relevant in the context of zakat da'wah. Persuasive communication is a type of communication designed to influence the beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors of individuals through emotional, rational, and psychological approaches (Saputra & Hidayat, 2025). Arifin and Husin (2024) explain that persuasion comes from the Latin word *persuasion*, which means enticement, and the process involves creating emotional connections and logical arguments that are acceptable to the audience. In the context of zakat advocacy, persuasion is very important because it aims to build collective awareness that zakat is not only a personal responsibility but also part of a social contribution to building a better society.

One theoretical approach that can be used to understand the effectiveness of communication is Lasswell's model (1948), which emphasizes the importance of five basic elements in the communication process: who conveys the message, what the message is, through what media the message is conveyed, to whom the message is addressed, and what impact it has. In the context of zakat advocacy, these five elements must be strategically designed and implemented so that the message of zakat is well received by the community and has a positive impact on their behavior. In addition, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) explains that there are two main pathways in the processing of persuasive messages, namely the central pathway and the peripheral pathway. The central route involves in-depth processing of messages based on logical and strong arguments, while the peripheral route relies more on non-verbal elements such as the communicator's attractiveness, emotions, or certain symbols. In the context of zakat, the use of touching narratives, testimonials from mustahik, and the involvement of religious leaders or public figures is believed to be able to increase the influence of the message, especially for people with low levels of zakat literacy (Bango et al., 2025).

In addition to the ELM approach, Ajzen's (2020) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is also highly relevant for explaining a person's intention to pay zakat. TPB explains that a person's intention to perform an action is greatly influenced by three main factors: (1) attitude towards behavior, which is the extent to which a person views zakat as a positive action; (2) subjective norms, which are the social influences of the environment or reference group; and (3) perceived behavioral control, which is an individual's belief in their ability to perform the action. These three factors collectively form a strong intention to pay zakat, especially if communicated in a manner that is relevant and appropriate to the characteristics of the audience. YASPIDA Sukabumi, as an Islamic educational institution that has been established since 1999, has a strategic role in supporting zakat

empowerment through the UPZ (Zakat Collection Unit) under its auspices. This institution manages various educational units, ranging from elementary to higher education, as well as productive economic activities such as agriculture and animal husbandry. With more than 4,000 students, the need for professional management of ZIS (Zakat, Infaq, and Shodaqoh) funds is very urgent.

UPZ Darussyifa not only focuses on collecting zakat, but also on its productive use and broad impact on society. The approach used includes interpersonal communication, digital da'wah, and partnership programs with various parties, including religious institutions, the private sector, and the government. The success of this UPZ cannot be separated from the role of religious and community leaders who are the main drivers in building public trust (Sukendar & Vidho, 2025). This trust is an important asset for zakat institutions, because the community tends to entrust their zakat to institutions that are managed by credible and trustworthy parties.

Previous studies have discussed zakat communication strategies in zakat institutions, covering aspects such as transparency, zakat literacy, and the use of digital media (Ramadhan, 2024; Wahyuni, 2023; Ridawana, 2025). However, studies on zakat education conducted through persuasive communication strategies in Islamic boarding schools are still rare. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on analyzing the role of the Islamic boarding school's Zakat Collection Unit (UPZ) as an agent of zakat education by emphasizing the dimensions of motivation and communicator ability in influencing the interest of muzaki. Thus, this study not only enriches the study of persuasive communication in the context of zakat but also provides practical contributions to the development of a community-based zakat education model in Islamic boarding schools.

Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze in depth how persuasive communication strategies are applied by the UPZ of the Darussyifa Al-Fithroh YASPIDA Islamic Boarding School in Sukabumi to increase the interest of muzaki in paying zakat mal. The main focus is on the forms of interpersonal and digital communication and partnership programs run by the UPZ, as well as the identification of factors that drive or hinder the success of these communication strategies. The results of this study are expected to contribute theoretically and practically to the development of zakat communication strategies in similar institutions and to strengthen the role of zakat as a pillar of socio-economic development for the community.

II. Research Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach with the aim of testing the relationship between variables objectively and determining the effect of independent variables on dependent variables. This approach was chosen because it is relevant in explaining how persuasive communication can influence the interest of muzaki in paying zakat mal

through the UPZ of the Darussyifa Al-Fithroh Islamic Boarding School in Sukabumi. The research design used is a field study, which is the direct collection of data from respondents included in the target population. The research respondents are muzaki who have paid zakat mal through UPZ in the period from 2023 to 2024. The selection of a field study was considered because it is capable of producing accurate primary data and representing empirical conditions in real life. The population in this study consisted of 168 muzaki. To determine the proportional sample size, the researcher used the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. Based on these calculations, a sample of 63 respondents was obtained, which was considered representative of the population characteristics with an acceptable level of precision.

The research variables consisted of persuasive communication as the independent variable and the interest of muzaki in paying zakat as the dependent variable. Persuasive communication was operationalized into two indicators, namely the communicator's motivation, which reflects enthusiasm, sincerity, and internal drive in conveying the message of zakat, and the communicator's ability, which includes the skills of composing messages, using communication media, and persuasion techniques. Meanwhile, the interest of muzaki in zakat is measured through five indicators, namely religiosity, trust and transparency, zakat literacy, service quality, and general opinions or perceptions of zakat and zakat institutions. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire was designed based on the previously determined variable indicators so that it could comprehensively explore the respondents' perceptions. The validity of the instrument was tested using item-total correlation analysis, and the results showed that all questions in the questionnaire had a correlation value (r_{count}) greater than r_{table} (0.246 at $n = 63$, $\alpha = 0.05$), thus declaring it valid. Furthermore, the reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient.

The test results showed an α value of 0.874 for the persuasive communication variable and 0.892 for the interest in zakat variable, both of which were above the threshold of 0.70. Thus, the research instrument can be categorized as reliable and consistent, making it suitable for measuring the variables under study. Next, the data were analyzed using a significance test (t-test) to determine the partial effect of each independent variable, as well as the coefficient of determination (R^2) to assess the contribution of persuasive communication to the interest of muzaki in paying zakat.

III. Result and Discussion

The results showed that the communicator's motivation dimension had a significant effect on the muzaki's interest in paying zakat ($p = 0.004$), while the communicator's ability dimension was not significant ($p = 0.127$).

Table 1. Research Results

Variable	Sig.(P-value)	Description
Communicator Motivation	0.004	Significantly Influential
Communicator Ability	0.127	Not Significant

These findings indicate that the emotional, spiritual, and rhetorical approaches developed by communicators are more effective than mere technical skills in message composition. This is in line with the research by Rahman and Puspitasari (2021), which found that emotional warmth and trust in communicators have a greater influence on zakat behavior than the use of technical or formal language. The dominant tendency of the emotional route is also in line with the peripheral route concept in ELM (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), where audiences with varying levels of zakat literacy are more responsive to messages conveyed through communicator images, inspirational narratives, and religious symbols. Research by Ananda et al. (2020) shows that a narrative-based approach to mustahik and the role of religious figures increases the emotional involvement of muzaki, thereby triggering consistent zakat behavior. The high coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.931$) indicates that the persuasive communication model applied by UPZ Darussyifa is able to explain most of the variation in muzaki interest.

These findings are in line with Hermawan et al. (2024), who reported that the integration of face-to-face communication, digital media, and religious rhetoric has a strong influence on zakat participation. In statistical tests, the researchers found the following results.

Tabel 2. Percentage of Communication Effectiveness Indicators

Indicator	Percentage (%)	Description
Message Relevance	45	Still low, content adjustment needed
Continued Motivation	50.7	Low, Call-to-action needs to be strengthened
Rhetorical and Humorous Style is Appealing	77,6	Majority Finds Appealing
Understanding of Message Content	81,8	High, but 20,9 % still lack understanding
Effectiveness of Religious Media	74,7	Quite effective, 25% Consider it in appropriate

The results in table 2 show that understanding of the message content (81.8%) and the communicator's rhetorical style (77.6%) are already high. These findings are in line

with Rahman & Puspitasari (2021), who emphasize that the credibility of the communicator and an interesting way of delivering the message can increase the effectiveness of zakat da'wah. However, the indicators of message relevance (45.1%) and follow-up motivation (50.7%) are still low. These results are similar to the findings of Nugroho et al. (2024), which highlight the importance of personalizing zakat messages according to the socio-economic conditions of the audience so that the message is not only received but also followed by further action. Similarly, Rahayu (2023) emphasizes that a clear call-to-action in zakat messages plays an important role in maintaining the sustainability of the muzaki's intentions. Overall, the results of this study reinforce the view that in the context of community-based zakat institutions such as UPZ Darussyifa, peripheral channels that rely on the credibility of the communicator, emotional closeness, and spiritual narratives are more effective than purely technical approaches. To increase the relevance of the message, zakat institutions need to integrate personalization, visual storytelling, and digital media optimization according to the characteristics of the audience.

Persuasive communication UPZ Pondok Pesantren Darussyifa Al-Fithroh YASPIDA Sukabumi has implemented persuasive communication through two main dimensions, namely the motivational dimension and the capability dimension. In the motivational dimension, the strategy used aims to inspire muzaki to pay zakat through emotional and spiritual approaches and an inspiring delivery style (Ilyas, 2019; Muhammad, 2022; Widya, 2023). The following is a graph of the UPZ Darussyifa communication effectiveness indicators:

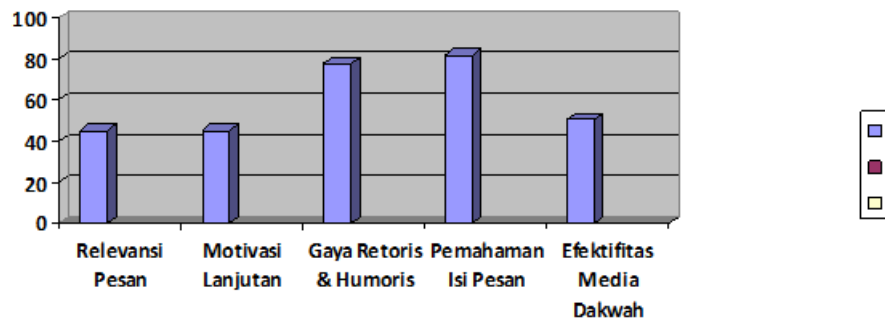


Figure 1. Graph of UPZ Darussyifa Communication Effectiveness Indicators

Based on the research findings, 45.1% of respondents stated that the zakat message conveyed was relevant to their lives, although 23.9% disagreed, indicating a need to adjust the content according to the social and economic background of the muzaki. Additionally, 77.6% of respondents found the rhetorical and humorous style used by the communicator (Kyai YASPIDA) appealing, but 22.4% considered the topics presented to be inappropriate. The level of understanding of the content of the zakat message was quite high, with 81.8% of respondents claiming to understand it, although 20.9% still did not fully understand the message. Meanwhile, only 50.7% of respondents were motivated

to seek further information after receiving the zakat message, indicating that the call-to-action element in communication still needs to be improved in order to encourage engagement and further action from the muzaki.

The dimension of persuasive communication skills of UPZ Darussyifa Al-Fithroh YASPIDA Sukabumi is related to the effectiveness of the media, message delivery, and the audience's basic understanding of zakat. The results show that 74.7% of respondents considered the use of dakwah media to be effective, although 25.5% disagreed, possibly due to the media not being suitable for the characteristics of the audience. In addition, 77.6% of respondents admitted that they were encouraged to pay zakat because of the content of the message conveyed, but 12.4% felt that they were not encouraged, which could be influenced by time constraints or a low sense of urgency. The level of basic understanding of zakat was also relatively good at 77.6%, although 22.4% still lacked understanding. Interestingly, 83.6% of respondents liked the style of message delivery used, indicating the success of the communicator's rhetoric in attracting attention and building audience engagement.

The interest in paying zakat among muzaki at UPZ Darussyifa Al-Fithroh YASPIDA Sukabumi was analyzed through five main indicators, namely religiosity, trust and transparency, zakat literacy, service quality, and personal views. The following is a summary table of the Muzaki Interest in Paying Zakat Indicators:

Table 3. Summary of Indicators Donor's Interest in Giving Zakat

Indicator	Percentage (%)	Description
Religiousness	74	The majority are aware of their zakat obligations, but some do not pay regularly
Trust & Transaparency	78	The level of trust is quite high, although some still have doubts
Zakat Literacy	77	Understanding of Zakat Calculations is Quite Good
Service Quality	78	The service is considered satisfactory by the majority of muzaki
Personal Opinion	76	Most understand nisab & the obligation of zakat as a personal responsibility

The data in Table 3 shows that the majority of muzaki have a fairly good level of awareness, trust, and knowledge of zakat. In terms of religiosity and zakat literacy, most respondents understand the obligation of zakat, how it is calculated, and its spiritual and social implications. Trust in UPZ is also relatively high, although there are still a small number who doubt the transparency of fund distribution. The quality of service is

considered satisfactory by the majority of respondents, both in terms of zakat collection and distribution. However, the consistency of regular zakat payments remains a challenge that must be addressed. These findings are in line with Ramadhan (2024), Fadhlillah (2023), Ridawana (2025), Sholahuddin (2024), and Wahyuni (2023), who emphasize that even though the awareness and literacy of muzaki are relatively high, the transparency of the managing institutions and the sustainability of zakat behavior remain important factors in optimizing the potential of zakat.

The results of this study reinforce the theory of persuasive communication, which states that the success of communication is greatly influenced by the credibility of the communicator, the context of the message, and the suitability of the media. In the context of the UPZ at the YASPIDA Sukabumi Islamic boarding school, emotional and rhetorical approaches are more effective in influencing muzaki than technical approaches or ability alone. These findings are consistent with ELM (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), which states that peripheral (emotional and impressionistic) pathways are more influential when the audience has limitations in deep information processing. The findings of this study are in line with Alfahri's (2022) opinion, which emphasizes that the credibility of the communicator is a key factor in building audience trust, and is reinforced by Maula (2024), who states that the effectiveness of a message is largely determined by its suitability to the social and religious context of the audience. Furthermore, Sholikhah (2025) adds that choosing the right communication media will increase message acceptance, especially when combined with an emotional and rhetorical approach that touches on spiritual aspects. Thus, the success of persuasive communication in the context of UPZ Pondok Pesantren YASPIDA Sukabumi can be understood as the result of synergy between the credibility of the communicator, the relevance of the message context, and the suitability of the media used.

IV. Conclusion

Zakat has a fundamental role not only as an individual obligation to Allah SWT, but also as a strategic instrument in reducing social inequality and improving the welfare of the people. Indonesia, as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, has enormous potential for zakat, but the realization of its collection is still far from the estimated potential. This condition requires the implementation of a more effective communication strategy, which is not only informative but also persuasive, in order to build collective awareness and encourage consistent participation from muzaki. Theoretical approaches such as the Lasswell Model, ELM, and TPB provide a relevant conceptual framework for designing a zakat communication strategy that is able to reach various segments of society through emotional and rational channels. UPZ Pondok Pesantren Darussyifa Al-Fithroh YASPIDA Sukabumi is an example of an institution that combines interpersonal communication, digital da'wah, and strategic partnerships to build public trust and maximize the potential of zakat. With a strong community base and

the support of religious leaders, UPZ Darussyifa has a great opportunity to expand its socio-economic impact through professional and sustainable zakat management. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the persuasive communication strategies implemented by these institutions to identify the factors that drive and hinder success, as well as to contribute to the development of zakat communication strategies in the future.

In addition, this study contributes to the development of persuasive communication studies in the context of zakat by emphasizing the role of Islamic boarding schools as agents of zakat education. In terms of implications, these findings emphasize the importance of communication strategies based on emotional motivation, transparency, and service to build public trust. The limitation of this study lies in its focus on only one UPZ, so the results cannot be generalized broadly. Therefore, the recommendation for further research is to expand the study to various zakat institutions at the local and national levels, as well as to use a mixed method (quantitative and qualitative) in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of zakat communication strategies in Indonesia.

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