

OPTIMIZATION OF DA'WAH COMMUNICATION OF LAZISMU MAKASSAR IN INCREASING MUZAKKI PARTICIPATION

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the optimization of da'wah communication carried out by Lazismu Makassar in an effort to increase muzakki participation and loyalty. Through a descriptive qualitative approach, this study identifies forms of communication (da'wah bi al-lisan, bi al-qalam, and bi al-hal), media strategies (offline and digital), as well as supporting and inhibiting factors that affect the effectiveness of philanthropic da'wah. The findings show that the integration of persuasive, humanist, and transparent approaches, combined with the use of digital media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, successfully builds emotional closeness and public trust. Personal communication through WhatsApp has proven to be the most effective channel in maintaining muzakki loyalty. The main supporting factors include the support of the Muhammadiyah network, a structured management system, real empowerment programs, and adaptive digital literacy. On the other hand, the low public understanding of zakat obligations and the preference for direct distribution to mustahik are still structural obstacles. This research enriches the treasures of contemporary da'wah communication theory by integrating the perspective of relationship marketing, social identity theory, and the principles of da'wah bil hikmah. The practical implications emphasize the need to strengthen zakat literacy, optimize social impact-based storytelling, and standardize measurable digital communication to strengthen the sustainability of Islamic philanthropy in the urban era.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of Islamic da'wah in Indonesia in the modern era has undergone a significant transformation, no longer just understood as an activity of conveying religious teachings verbally or textually, but has evolved into a social practice oriented towards empowering the ummah and transforming people's lives. In the contemporary context, da'wah does not only rely on the pulpit, taklim assembly, or conventional lectures, but is also realized through Islamic philanthropic movements that integrate spiritual values with social responsibility (Hafidhuddin, 2002; Azra, 2005).

Zakat, infaq, and alms management institutions (ZIS) are present as a strategic da'wah medium that not only functions to collect and distribute funds, but also builds collective awareness, strengthens humanitarian solidarity, and fosters social spirituality in the midst of an increasingly complex urban society. This phenomenon confirms that Islamic philanthropy has become an instrument of bil-hal da'wah that is able to bridge the gap between religious texts and contemporary social realities, while shifting the paradigm of da'wah from a normative-textual approach to a practical-empirical approach that has a measurable impact.

One of the institutions that plays an active role in the social da'wah movement is the Muhammadiyah Amil Zakat Infaq and Alms Institute (Lazismu). As part of the Muhammadiyah organization, Lazismu not only carries out the managerial function of managing ZIS funds, but also positions itself as an agent of social change that adopts the principles of professionalism, transparency, and accountability in each of its programs (Aziz, 2016). In Makassar City, Lazismu takes a strategic role in advancing the Islamic philanthropic movement through an adaptive, contextual, and responsive da'wah approach to the dynamics of urban society. However, the acceleration of digitalization, changes in information consumption patterns, and increasing public expectations of social institutions require the optimization of da'wah communication. Without an effective and measurable communication strategy, efforts to maintain public trust and increase muzakki participation will face increasingly complex challenges, especially in the face of increasingly critical, digitally connected audiences, and demanding concrete evidence for every institutional claim.

Changes in communication patterns in the digital space have fundamentally changed the da'wah landscape. Urban people in Makassar now access more information through digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, and WhatsApp than through face-to-face interaction or traditional taklim assemblies (Effendy, 2011). This shift opens up a great opportunity for Lazismu Makassar to expand the reach of da'wah, but at the same time demands adjustments in designing narratives that are not only informative, but also persuasive, inspiring, and able to build emotional connections. Today's muzakki do not only need an administrative invitation to give zakat, but they want transparency, real impact, and certainty that their contributions are managed in a trustworthy manner and provide measurable social value. In this context, da'wah communication must be able to shift the paradigm from just fundraising to building long-term relationships based on trust and commitment (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Relationship marketing theory asserts that the quality of the relationship between institutions and donors is largely determined by the level of satisfaction, trust, and emotional closeness that is built consistently (Berry, 1995). When muzakki feel valued and gain certainty over the distribution of funds, their loyalty tends to increase significantly (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014).

In addition, the growth of the Muslim middle class in Makassar City also influenced the pattern of philanthropic participation. This demographic group generally has higher levels of education, adequate digital literacy, and a tendency to choose professionally managed and accountable social institutions. They tend to be critical of the institution's claims, demanding concrete evidence through program impact reports, visual documentation, and responsive two-way communication. Therefore, the da'wah approach that relies only on traditional rhetoric or normative invitations is no longer adequate. Da'wah communication needs to be strengthened with valid data, storytelling that prioritizes empathy, and consistent and credible branding strategies in order to be able to touch the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of muzakki simultaneously. From the perspective of persuasive communication, an effective da'wah message must be able to change the attitudes and behaviors of the audience through strong arguments, emotional appeal, and motivation that are relevant to the context of their lives (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011). Without an integrated approach, da'wah communication risks only stopping at the initial level of awareness without producing sustainable donation actions.

On the other hand, the dynamics of public trust in Islamic philanthropic institutions are also inseparable from external challenges. The emergence of various negative issues that befell several zakat institutions at the national level, although not always directly related to Lazismu Makassar, also created caution and skepticism among the public (Suharto, 2014). This fragmented public perception requires ZIS management institutions to proactively build communication oriented towards transparency, accountability, and emotional closeness. In such conditions, da'wah communication is no longer one-way, but must be designed as a dialogical process that allows muzakki to be actively

involved, provide feedback, and feel valued as a strategic partner in the movement of goodness. This is in line with the principles of da'wah that emphasize bil-hikmah, al-mau'izah al-hasanah, and al-mujādalah billatī hiya aḥsan, where the message is conveyed wisely, touching, and respecting the different perceptions of the audience. When institutions are able to provide a two-way communication space through consulting services, criticism and advice channels, as well as direct interaction on social media, negative prejudices can be reduced and public trust can gradually recover.

Theologically, the foundation of da'wah communication in Islamic philanthropy is rooted in the values of the Qur'an and Sunnah which emphasize social concern, solidarity, and collective responsibility. The words of Allah SWT in QS. Al-Baqarah/2:261

(The example of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) is that he is the Messenger of Allaah (261 (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and that he is the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and that he is the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and that he is the .Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)

giving an illustration of the value of spiritual and social investment from infak and almsgiving, which affirms that every good given in the way of Allah will be multiplied in reward and have a sustainable impact on society (Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2012). This verse is not only a theological motivation, but also a strong communication message that zakat and alms are not just administrative obligations, but instruments of social transformation. Furthermore, the Prophet PBUH emphasized in a hadith narrated by Ath-Thabrani that "the best human being is the most beneficial to other human beings" (Ath-Thabrani, t.t.).

Jabir ibn 'Abd-Allaah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The believer is composed and composed, and there is no good in him who does not compose ".and does not compose, and the best of people is the most beneficial to the people

This hadith underlines that social benefits are at the core of Islamic da'wah, and in the context of philanthropy, these benefits must be communicated ethically, responsibly, and measurably in order to be able to mobilize voluntary and sustainable community participation. Da'wah communication that ignores this value dimension risks reducing religious messages to mere transactional fundraising campaigns.

In practice, Lazismu Makassar has implemented various forms of da'wah communication, both through da'wah bi al-lisan (direct socialization, zakat education, interpersonal communication), da'wah bi al-qalam (digital publications, social media content, written reports), and da'wah bi al-hal (empowerment programs in the fields of education, health, economy, social, da'wah, and the environment). These three forms do not run separately, but rather strengthen each other in building awareness, trust, and involvement of muzakki. However, the optimization of da'wah communication still needs to be studied more deeply, especially in relation to muzakki participation which is not only measured by the nominal donation, but also by the frequency of contributions, the level of loyalty, involvement in the program, and the willingness to recommend the institution to others. The participation of muzakki is essentially a response to the effectiveness of da'wah communication that is able to touch their spiritual, emotional, and social needs holistically. The perceived value theory asserts that the muzakki will compare the spiritual, social, and emotional value they feel with the amount of funds spent; If the da'wah experience presented by the institution is positive, the perceived value increases and strengthens long-term loyalty.

The diversity of the character of the people who are the target of philanthropic da'wah is also a strategic consideration. Muzakki in Makassar City come from various social backgrounds, levels of religious understanding, media preferences, and different patterns of participation. This difference demands a segmented, adaptive, and non-uniform approach to communication. Effective da'wah messages must be able to reach the younger generation who are familiar with visual and interactive content, while remaining relevant to adult groups who prioritize personal closeness and institutional transparency. In social identity theory, a person tends to participate more actively when they feel they are part of a group that shares the same values and goals (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). When muzakki view Lazismu as a representation of Islamic values, social concern, and professionalism that they uphold, their emotional

ties to the institution tend to strengthen. Therefore, da'wah communication needs to be designed in such a way that it forms a sense of "being part of the big family of goodness", not just as a contributor to funds.

In addition to emotional and spiritual factors, the social aspect also plays an important role in encouraging muzakki participation. Donations are no longer seen as a purely individual act, but rather as a social activity that strengthens group identity and community solidarity. In urban societies such as Makassar, the Muslim middle class often makes philanthropic activities part of a religious, modern, and progressive social lifestyle (Castells, 2010). The phenomenon of social proof also has an effect; when community leaders, community leaders, or public figures participate in institutional programs, the general public tends to be more easily motivated to donate (Rogers, 2003). Da'wah communication that is able to utilize this dynamic ethically and not manipulatively will have greater leverage in driving collective participation. However, this requires a mature communication strategy, consistency of messages, and the ability of institutions to respond to public expectations in real-time.

On the other hand, the reality on the ground shows that there is still a gap between the potential participation of muzakki and the actual achievements of the institution. Some people still view zakat as an obligation that can be distributed directly to mustahik without going through official institutions, thus reducing the effectiveness of structured and wide-impact distribution. Zakat literacy, lack of continuous education, and a perception that is not entirely positive about the management of ZIS funds are obstacles that require a more systematic, persuasive, and evidence-based communication approach. From the perspective of mass and interpersonal communication, this condition reflects the existence of obstacles in the cognitive and affective aspects, where the message of da'wah is not fully able to internalize values and change deep-rooted habits. Non-adaptive communication approaches tend to lose audience attention and reduce participation opportunities, especially amid information saturation in the digital space.

Based on this description, there is an urgent need to empirically examine how the optimization of da'wah communication can be designed and implemented by Lazismu Makassar in order to increase muzakki participation in a sustainable manner. This study is not only relevant from an academic perspective, but also has significant practical implications for the development of philanthropic da'wah strategies in the digital era. By integrating Islamic values, persuasive communication theory, long-term relationship marketing approaches, and strategic use of digital media, Lazismu Makassar can strengthen its position as a philanthropic institution that is not only trusted in fund management, but also excels in building spiritual and social relationships with muzakki. This research is expected to fill the literature gap regarding da'wah communication in the context of urban Islamic philanthropy, as well as provide operational recommendations that can be adopted by other zakat management institutions in increasing public participation, loyalty, and trust in the midst of increasingly complex community dynamics, digitally connected, and demanding real accountability for every act of kindness.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to reveal in depth how da'wah communication is optimized by Lazismu Makassar in increasing muzakki participation. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the meaning, interaction process, and social context that underlie the communication strategies of philanthropic institutions in a holistic and natural way (Moleong, 2016; Sugiyono, 2019). The location of the research was determined at the Lazismu Makassar office, Jl. Mt. Lompobattang No.201, which was chosen based on considerations of accessibility, relevance to the focus of the study, and the dynamics of Makassar's urban community as the main target of philanthropic da'wah.

The data sources in this study are divided into primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with key informants including the management of Lazismu Makassar (head of the institution, fundraising division, and digital partnership & campaign division), as well as a number of active muzakki who have donated for at least one year. Observation of participants and non-participants was also carried out to directly record communication practices, interpersonal interactions, and the implementation of social programs in the field. Secondary data were collected from official institutional documents, activity reports, digital publications, social media content, and academic literature related to da'wah communication and Islamic philanthropy.

The data collection technique was carried out through three main instruments: interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and documentation guidelines, supported by voice recording tools and field notes. Interviews are conducted in depth and flexibly, allowing researchers to adjust the flow of questions according to the informant's responses to explore authentic perspectives on strategies, media, supporting factors, and barriers to da'wah communication. Observations were focused on the process of direct socialization, the use of digital platforms (WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok), and the implementation of empowerment programs in six main pillars (education, health, economy, social-humanitarian, da'wah, and environment).

Data analysis adopts an interactive model consisting of three simultaneous stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2019). Data reduction is carried out through the selection, focusing, and coding of themes based on the formulation of the problem. The reduced data is then presented in the form of a descriptive narrative and a thematic matrix to facilitate pattern identification. Conclusions are drawn iteratively through cross-verification between data until information saturation is achieved.

To ensure the validity of the findings, this study applied triangulation of sources and methods, as well as member checking by confirming the results of the analysis to key informants. The entire research process also complies with the principles of academic ethics, including informed consent, identity confidentiality, and data reporting integrity (Faisal, 2001).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on triangulation of data obtained through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and documentation analysis, this study identifies three main dimensions in optimizing Lazismu Makassar da'wah communication: the form and concept of communication, media utilization strategies, and the dynamics of supporting and inhibiting factors that directly affect muzakki participation and loyalty. These findings not only validate the conceptual framework of the research, but also make an empirical contribution to the contemporary understanding of philanthropic da'wah in digitally connected urban spaces.

The Form and Concept of Da'wah Communication Lazismu Makassar

The results of the study show that Lazismu Makassar implements da'wah communication in an integrated manner through three main forms: da'wah bi al-lisan, da'wah bi al-qalam, and da'wah bi al-hal. These three forms do not operate partially, but rather reinforce each other in building cognitive awareness, emotional resonance, and community behavioral commitment. Da'wah bi al-lisan is realized through direct socialization in mosques, community environments, and Muhammadiyah religious activities. This face-to-face communication allows for a two-way dialogue that is persuasive and humanistic, in accordance with the principle of al-mau'izhah al-ḥasanah which emphasizes the delivery of messages with empathy, politeness, and without elements of coercion (Aziz, 2016). This direct interaction has proven to be effective in building psychological closeness between da'i (administrators and volunteers) and mad'u (community and prospective muzakki), so that the message of zakat is not only understood as a normative obligation, but also internalized as a meaningful socio-religious responsibility.

Meanwhile, da'wah bi al-qalam has adapted significantly into the digital ecosystem through the publication of educational content, donation campaigns, and program reporting on social media platforms. This shift reflects the institution's strategic response to the transformation of contemporary society's information consumption patterns that increasingly rely on digital space and visual content (Effendy, 2011). The communication concept underlying this practice emphasizes transparency and accountability as the foundation of public trust. Lazismu Makassar consistently publishes fund distribution reports, activity documentation, and educational infographics to reduce information asymmetry which is often a source of public skepticism. This transparency is in line with the principle of relationship marketing which emphasizes that the quality of institution-donor relationships is highly determined by the level of trust, commitment, and satisfaction of services that are built in a sustainable manner (Berry, 1995; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

The third form, da'wah bi al-hal, is operationalized through six pillars of empowerment programs: education, health, economy, social-humanity, da'wah, and environment. These programs are designed not only to be charitable,

but transformative and sustainable. For example, the free meatball program involving local MSMEs and targeting online motorcycle taxi drivers and mosque worshippers shows a da'wah approach that touches real needs while strengthening the microeconomic network. In the perspective of perceived value theory, muzakki tend to increase participation when they can directly verify that their contribution results in measurable social change and real impact (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014). Thus, da'wah bi al-hal functions as the most persuasive non-verbal communication medium because it presents the reality of the program concretely in front of the community, as well as actualizing the spirit of al-ma'ūn which is the breath of the Islamic philanthropic movement (Hafidhuddin, 2002; Azra, 2005).

Media Utilization Strategy and Communication Approach

The results of the study identified that Lazismu Makassar optimizes the delivery of da'wah messages through the integration of offline and online approaches. Offline, direct socialization in mosques and Muhammadiyah charities remains a mainstay strategy to reach the community's base and build social legitimacy. However, the reach, speed, and efficiency of message dissemination are maximized through digital media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok. These findings are consistent with the study by Wahyuni and Anwar (2020) which emphasized that digital platforms have become a strategic space for philanthropic institutions to expand audiences, especially the urban young generation who are digitally active.

Empirically, WhatsApp is identified as the most effective medium in building and maintaining relationships with muzakki. Unlike platforms that are one-way broadcasts, WhatsApp allows personalized, responsive, and continuous communication. Administrators routinely greet, ask how they are doing, and send program updates one-on-one or through managed groups. This approach reflects the application of interpersonal communication theory that emphasizes psychological closeness, empathy, and reciprocal interaction as catalysts for attitude and behavior change (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011). On the other hand, Instagram and TikTok are used for visual storytelling that displays humanitarian narratives, aid distribution processes, and program impacts in a short and interesting way. Nevertheless, the institution still maintains the privacy ethics of the beneficiaries by avoiding the exploitation of the poverty narrative, in line with the principle of da'wah that respects human dignity (*karamah insaniiyah*) and the example of the Prophet PBUH in building social solidarity without degrading the beneficiaries (Ath-Thabrani, t.t.; Shihab, 2013).

The digital communication strategy is also supported by audience segmentation based on the muzakki database. Donor data is grouped based on donation frequency, media preferences, and program engagement history, so that the message conveyed can be contextually tailored and personalized. This approach increases the relevance of communication and reduces information fatigue that often occurs in generic digital campaigns. In line with the diffusion theory of innovations, communication innovations that are adaptive to the characteristics, needs, and digital literacy of audiences tend to be adopted more quickly and produce sustainable behavioral impacts (Rogers, 2003).

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for Optimizing Da'wah Communication

The optimization of da'wah communication at Lazismu Makassar is inseparable from the dynamics of internal and external factors that interact with each other. The main supporting factors include muzakki loyalty built through consistency of service, structural support from the Muhammadiyah network and local governments, and a structured, audited, and transparent fund management system. Muzakki's loyalty is not only measured by the nominal donation, but also by the frequency of contributions, involvement in the program, and willingness to recommend the institution to other parties (advocacy loyalty). This phenomenon reinforces the findings of Berry (1995) that the quality of institutional-donor relationships is strongly influenced by service satisfaction, institutional trust, and emotional recognition. When muzakki feel valued and gain certainty over the distribution of funds, their loyalty tends to increase significantly (Kotler & Armstrong, 2014).

The support of the Muhammadiyah organization provides social legitimacy and a wide communication infrastructure, ranging from mosques, schools, to hospitals. Meanwhile, cooperation with local governments strengthens public perception of the credibility and accountability of institutions. The transparency of financial reports and program documentation that is published regularly is also a catalyst for trust, especially in the midst of the rampant issue of misuse of philanthropic funds at the national level which has the potential to create public caution (Suharto, 2014). In this context, da'wah communication serves a dual function: as a medium of religious education and as an

instrument of institutional trust-building.

However, the optimization is still faced with two structural obstacles that require a transformative communication approach. First, the low literacy of zakat in some communities, especially related to the conceptual differences between zakat, infaq, alms, and sharia governance which requires distribution through trusted and professional amil institutions. Second, the persistence of the culture of direct zakat distribution to mustahik without institutional intermediaries. This preference is often driven by a desire to ensure visual accuracy of the objectives and avoid the operational costs of the institution. In a sociological perspective and the communication of change, these barriers reflect resistance to shifting habits that have been culturally and hereditary (Castells, 2010).

To overcome these challenges, Lazismu Makassar intensifies evidence-based education through webinars, micro-content, and collaboration with local religious leaders. This approach is in line with the principle of al-mujādalah billatī hiya aḥsan, which emphasizes polite, argumentative dialogue, and respects differences of perception in bridging the gap of understanding (Abu Zayd, 2015). In addition, the institution leverages religious momentum and social situations that touch people's empathy as an integrated campaign catalyst that combines spiritual narratives, evidence of social impact, and ease of access to donations. This shows that effective da'wah communication must be able to touch the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions simultaneously (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011).

Implications for Muzakki's Participation and Loyalty

The integration between forms of communication, media strategies, and the management of supportive-inhibiting factors significantly affects the pattern of muzakki participation. The findings show that participation is no longer transactional, seasonal, or just an administrative obligation, but rather develops into sustained engagement based on spiritual meaning and social impact. Muzakki, who experience personal communication, receive transparent reports, and see real evidence of the program, tend to show an increase in the frequency of donations and an expansion of the recommendation network. This phenomenon is in line with social identity theory, where individuals tend to actively participate and show high loyalty when they feel they are part of a community that shares the same values, vision, and goals (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Furthermore, humanistic, persuasive, and evidence-based da'wah communication has succeeded in shifting the perception of zakat from a burden of obligation to a meaningful and sustainable spiritual-social investment. When muzakki feel that their contributions are valued, involved in the process, and have a real impact on society, perceived value increases significantly, which in turn strengthens long-term loyalty. This emphasizes that the optimization of da'wah communication is not just about message delivery techniques or the selection of digital platforms, but about building an ecosystem of relationships based on trust, transparency, empathy, and collective concern.

Theoretically, these findings strengthen Harold D. Lasswell's model of communication by showing that the effectiveness of philanthropic da'wah lies not only in the clarity of communicators and messages, but also in the harmony of the media, understanding the communicator's context, and the ability to measure the effects of behavior change in a sustainable manner. In practical terms, this study shows that Islamic philanthropic institutions need to adopt an adaptive, personalized, and long-term relationship-oriented approach to communication to confront the increasingly critical, digitally connected, and demanding real accountability for every act of kindness.

Thus, the optimization of Lazismu Makassar's da'wah communication has succeeded in creating a positive cycle of participation: transparent and humanist communication builds trust, trust strengthens loyalty, loyalty encourages sustainable participation, and participation that has a real impact on strengthening the image and legitimacy of the institution. This cycle is a strategic foundation for the development of philanthropic da'wah that is not only relevant in the digital era, but also able to realize sustainable and just social transformation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research on optimizing Lazismu Makassar's da'wah communication in increasing muzakki participation, it can be concluded that the communication strategy implemented has been carried out in an integrated manner through three main forms: da'wah bi al-lisan, bi al-qalam, and bi al-hal. Direct communication

through socialization in mosques and community environments allows for persuasive and humane interpersonal interactions, while the use of digital media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok efficiently expands the reach of da'wah messages to urban communities. Da'wah bi al-hal is realized through the six pillars of empowerment programs—education, health, economy, social-humanitarian, da'wah, and environment—which present tangible evidence of the impact of zakat distribution, thereby strengthening muzakki trust. The main supporting factors include muzakki loyalty built through personal communication, structural support from Muhammadiyah and the government, transparent management system, and sustainable empowerment programs. However, challenges are still faced, especially the low literacy of zakat and the perception of the public who prefer direct distribution to mustahik. Theoretically, these findings strengthen the Lasswell communication model and relationship marketing theory in the context of philanthropic da'wah, while practically, this study provides strategic recommendations for Lazismu Makassar to continue to optimize adaptive, educational, and evidence-based communication approaches to increase public participation, loyalty, and trust in a sustainable manner in the digital era.

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