


## Impact of Islamic Philanthropy on Educational Development: A Case Study of BAZNAS in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta

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Article Info	Abstract
<p><b>Article history:</b> Received: 06/06/2023 Revised: 06/15/2023 Accepted: 06/21/2023</p>	<p><b>Purpose</b> – This study aims to explore the evolution and current state of Islamic philanthropy in Indonesia, focusing specifically on its impact on educational development in the region of Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (DIY).</p> <p><b>Design/methods</b>– A qualitative research design was employed in this field study, conducted at BAZNAS DIY. Data collection involved interviews, observations, and document analysis to gather comprehensive and in-depth information.</p> <p><b>Findings</b> – The research reveals that Islamic philanthropy, deeply ingrained in cultural and religious doctrines, significantly contributes to addressing socio-economic challenges in education. Philanthropic activities managed by BAZNAS DIY, such as zakat, sedekah, infak, wakaf, and others, have played a crucial role in fostering educational opportunities and enhancing welfare. Programs like DIY Cerdas, DIY Taqwa, DIY Sehat, DIY Sejahtera, and DIY Peduli have been successful in improving educational infrastructure, supporting needy students, and addressing broader societal needs.</p> <p><b>Research implications/limitations</b> – The study acknowledges limitations in its scope and generalizability. It concludes with recommendations for future research to further analyze the impact of Islamic philanthropy on a broader scale and across different sectors, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of its influence.</p> <p><b>Practical implications</b> – The findings of this study provide valuable insights for educational institutions and policymakers. They underscore the importance of effective infrastructure management and human resource development in optimizing the benefits of philanthropic initiatives in the field of education.</p> <p><b>Originality/value</b> – This study contributes original insights into the role of Islamic philanthropy in the educational development of Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, highlighting how religious and cultural practices can be harnessed to address educational and socio-economic challenges in the region.</p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b> BAZNAS Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, Educational Development, Islamic Philanthropy.</p>	<p> © 2023 by the authors. It was submitted for possible open-access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY NC) license (<a href="http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p>

## Introduction

Philanthropy, a concept deeply embedded in various cultures and traditions, has become increasingly significant in today's global society. Although the term 'Philanthropy' is not widely recognized in Indonesia, its essence has been a part of the Indonesian ethos for centuries, intertwining philosophical concepts about human relationships and altruism through the tradition of giving (Junemann & Olmedo, 2020; Mahamood & Khalid, 2020). The evolution of philanthropy, especially in education, reflects broader socio-economic and cultural dynamics, extending beyond mere acts of giving to embody effective change within communities (Lubienski, 2020; Peacock & Thompson, 2022).

In the last two decades, Indonesia has witnessed a resurgence in philanthropic activities, particularly within the Muslim community, a response to increasing globalization and economic challenges. This resurgence is partly attributable to the Islamic resurgence in various societal aspects, from politics to social and cultural institutions (Avelar, 2022; Body & Lau, 2023). The economic crisis of the late 1990s catalyzed this phenomenon, evidenced by the rise in activities such as zakat (almsgiving) and sedekah (charitable giving), which play vital roles in maintaining social stability (Fredrickson et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2023).

The contribution of philanthropy to Indonesian society has been profound, tracing back to the colonial era. Religious affiliations, particularly within the Muslim community, have significantly influenced the direction and spirit of philanthropic activities (Matovich & Cardini, 2019; Paarlberg, 2020). Major Islamic organizations such as Nahdatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah have been pivotal in this regard, showcasing the tangible impact of philanthropy on societal development and empowerment, especially among marginalized communities (Kurz & Do Amaral, 2023; Ridge & Terway, 2019).

Despite the historical depth and recent growth in philanthropy in Indonesia, there remain gaps in understanding and knowledge, particularly in its application within educational settings. Studies in various global contexts have highlighted the multifaceted roles of philanthropy in education, from infrastructure development in Nigeria Udo-Umoren (2019) to supporting technological advancement in education during crises, as observed in the COVID-19 era (Reikosky, 2023). However, the unique dynamics of Indonesian philanthropy, especially in education, remain underexplored.

This research aims to bridge these gaps by examining the development and impact of philanthropy in Indonesian education, with a focus on its cultural roots and the role of Islamic organizations. It seeks to understand how philanthropy has evolved in response to socio-economic changes and globalization, and how it contributes to educational development and social empowerment in the Indonesian context (Patil, 2021; Saltman, 2022). The study's findings will provide valuable insights into the role of philanthropy in education, contributing to the broader discourse on philanthropy's evolving nature and its implications for educational development worldwide.

## Methods

This study employed a qualitative research design, chosen for its effectiveness in capturing complex social phenomena in words rather than numbers. This approach is particularly suitable for the nature of data required in this research, primarily involving verbal and narrative information (Euler, 2019; Ridge & Terway, 2019). Conducted as a field study, the research setting was BAZNAS Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (DIY), which allowed for direct observation of the philanthropic activities and their impact. BAZNAS, or the National Zakat Collection Agency, is an Indonesian philanthropic institution that plays a pivotal role in the collection and distribution of zakat funds. Zakat, an essential tenet of Islamic finance, constitutes a form of obligatory almsgiving in Islam. BAZNAS serves as the centralized body responsible for systematically managing zakat contributions and ensuring their equitable

distribution to those in need. Field research enabled the investigation of objective phenomena in their natural context, facilitating the compilation of an empirical report reflective of the real-world application of philanthropy in education (Body & Lau, 2023; Olmedo, 2019).

For data collection, the study utilized interviews, observations, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with BAZNAS DIY staff and beneficiaries, while observations were made during visits to BAZNAS DIY facilities and during the implementation of their philanthropic programs. Document analysis included reviewing organizational reports, program descriptions, and relevant media coverage. This multi-modal data collection approach was complemented by a descriptive analytical method, focusing on detailing the situations or events as they unfolded during the study (Cencula Olberding & Kim, 2023; Tu et al., 2020). To ensure the study's reliability and validity, triangulation was employed, combining multiple data sources and methods to mitigate biases and enhance credibility. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, identifying patterns and constructing a coherent narrative about the impact of educational philanthropy at BAZNAS DIY (Mahamood & Khalid, 2020; Viseu & Carvalho, 2021)

## Results

Philanthropy, in terminological essence, represents love and compassion for others, signifying generosity, charity, or humanity. It also embodies anything that demonstrates kindness or love for others. This term originates from the Greek words 'philos' (love) and 'anthropos' (human), literally translating to the conceptualization of voluntarily giving, serving, and uniting to assist those in need as an expression of love. Charity, as a term, refers to the voluntary donation of one's wealth or energy for the benefit of others, defined as integrity in assisting and sharing one's intellect with others. This term encapsulates the spirit of voluntarily giving to others (Tohari & Machali, 2022).

In Islam, philanthropy is not a new concept. *Dawam Raharjo* refers to philanthropy as a doctrine inherent in Islamic teachings. Islam is founded on the belief that generosity, as understood, is a spirit and value highly esteemed in the Islamic faith. Islam, being a complete and merciful religion to all worlds, portrays itself as a philanthropic faith. This form of philanthropy stems from religious doctrines in the Quran and Hadith, adapted through the mechanism of *ijtihad*, giving rise to institutions such as *zakat*, *infak*, *sedekah*, and *wakaf*. The purpose is to ensure wealth does not circulate only among the wealthy. Islamic philanthropy can also be defined as charitable activities based on promoting social justice and general welfare. Types of Islamic philanthropy include *zakat*, *sedekah*, *infak*, *wakaf*, donations, gifts, and bequests. In this research, the theoretical framework employed is Islamic philanthropy in the form of *zakat*. *Zakat* is a mandatory almsgiving required of all Muslims who have reached the necessary wealth threshold. The inclusion of Islam-based educational philanthropy is intended to demonstrate that the management of philanthropic funds for education is based on Islamic perspectives and teachings. This also serves to differentiate it from other philanthropic institutions like CSR and those funded by donors or corporations. Thus, the model of Islam-based educational philanthropy has specific characteristics, and the funds collected comply with the rules established by Islam. Besides fundraising, the distribution of these funds is also governed by Islamic teachings (Futaqi & Machali, 2019). *Zakat* for education is distributed to less fortunate children and adults to enhance their human potential for their welfare. This distribution can be seen through the classification patterns for eligibility to receive *zakat*. In relation to educational institutions, students categorized as *faqir*, *poor*, *gharimin*, and *ibnusabil* qualify for educational programs. Meanwhile, educational institution managers are entitled to receive it as the category *'amil* (*zakat* administrators).

The vision of BAZNAS in Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (DIY) is "To realize BAZNAS as a professional, effective, efficient, and trustworthy body in the region." Its mission includes improving the quality of ZIS (*Zakat*, *Infaq*, *Sadaqah*) management, simplifying services for *zakat* donors and recipients, providing adequate facilities and infrastructure, intensifying and

extending the collection and utilization of ZIS, and fostering cooperation with all community components. BAZNAS, as a state-built zakat managing body, aligns with the perspective cited by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, as also mentioned by Widyawati, that managing Islamic philanthropy, especially Zakat, is requested to be undertaken by the state. BAZNAS is responsible for collecting and distributing zakat to those entitled. Al-Qaradawi also opines that the poor and needy should be prioritized over individuals or personal interests. State-level distribution eliminates the focus on specific beneficiary groups in certain regions, facilitating zakat donors to send their contributions to more needy recipients in remote areas. Such distribution ensures that zakat is directed and evenly spread according to the horizontal needs of the beneficiaries. The objectives of BAZNAS include Establishing BAZNAS as a robust, credible, and modern religious organization, achieving optimal national zakat collection, Realizing effective distribution to alleviate poverty, enhance livelihoods, and reduce social inequality in ZIS-DSKL, establishing a competent, integrated, and prosperous national Amil Zakat career, implementing modern administrative systems and national Zakat administration databases, ensuring planning, control, reporting, and accountability of zakat administration through good and standardized practices, fostering a respectful and reciprocal relationship between zakat donors and recipients, achieving synergy and collaboration among all stakeholders involved in national zakat development, positioning Indonesia as a leading center for Zakat administration globally.

The programs at BAZNAS DIY include:

### **1. *DIY Cerdas***

Distribution and utilization in the field of education, aiming to assist beneficiaries in elevating their educational level to match economic development. The operational staff during the budget deployment phase is divided into four parts of the DIY Cerdas program. Educational activities include high school scholarships in collaboration with the DIY Youth and Athletics Department and the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, high school education support, university scholarships (Bachelor's degree) in partnership with universities in Yogyakarta, and support for undergraduate student research. Note: The BAZNAS Elementary and Middle School Learning Assistance Program in districts/cities follows applicable guidelines.

### **2. *DIY Taqwa***

Distribution in the field of da'wah (proselytizing) is productive. This distribution not only strengthens the faith of converts but also the faith of Muslims from harmful ideologies (secularism, liberalism, religious pluralism) and apostasy. Forms of distribution include training and skills for public speaking or preaching, mentoring and support in mosques, school meetings for religious study and Islamic boarding schools, developing da'wah in remote and religiously vulnerable areas, and assisting in building mosques/prayer rooms in poor, remote, and unstable areas, as well as strengthening the Islamic faith of new converts.

### **3. *DIY Sehat***

Implementing health priority measures in DIY and even at the national level involves many stakeholders working together. The health outreach (DIY Sehat) aims to assist the community in healing and rehabilitation. Forms of assistance include support for medical expenses, wheelchairs, walking aids, hearing aids, and other health monitoring.

### **4. *DIY Sejahtera***

Focused on empowerment, including community empowerment through productive economic activities. This active and routine program includes vocational training/skills, business capital/job assistance, career development support. Real examples include capital

assistance for companies, business training, group business development, livestock, basic needs, and malnutrition.

## 5. *DIY Peduli*

Distribution in the field of social humanitarianism (DIY Peduli) is temporary or immediate, prioritizing the basic needs of recipients who are victims of natural disasters or social conflicts. The distribution includes very minimal food aid, minimal clothing support, minimal housing subsidies, transportation assistance for refugees, and other emergency aid. With the establishment of the BAZNAS DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM DIY, it is hoped to provide more assistance to those in need.

Macro sources of educational funding obtained by Baznas come from government revenue, mainly taxes, non-tax revenues, such as the use of natural resources and other government productions used for gas and non-gas; profits from the export of goods and services; and assistance in the form of grants and foreign loans. Funding for educational institutions is not only provided by the government through the state budget and regional budgets. Other sources of funding are from students/parents in the form of Educational Development Contributions (SPP) and the community through the Education Implementation Assistance Agency (BP3) (Sakinah & Thamrin, 2020).

Since the enactment of Law No. 38 of 1999 on zakat management, the number of organizations managing zakat in Indonesia has changed significantly. Most of these organizations focus on poverty alleviation. The Special Region of Yogyakarta, known as the City of Education, has not yet been able to alleviate poverty. Data from the Central Statistics Agency for the first half of 2019 (March) shows that the poverty rate in Yogyakarta is 10.89%, still higher than the national average of 9.41%. Poverty in Yogyakarta City and other areas creates other problems, namely education (Tohari & Machali, 2022). The DIY Cerdas program aims to improve the quality and quantity of underprivileged students from kindergarten to university through scholarship programs for orphanage children, BAZNAS Smart Houses, and scholarships for productive students.

## Discussion

The current research delves into the evolving nature of philanthropy in education within Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (DIY), Indonesia, particularly focusing on the role of Islamic philanthropy and its impact on socio-economic challenges. This exploration aligns with the global trend where philanthropy in education has seen varied manifestations, from corporate support in infrastructure development Udo-Umoren (2019) to the adaptation of philanthropy in different cultural and religious contexts (Mahamood & Khalid, 2020; Paarlberg, 2020). Our study specifically addresses the multifaceted nature of Islamic philanthropy, including zakat, in educational contexts, resonating with the broader understanding of philanthropy as a means of social justice and community development (Body & Lau, 2023; Ridge & Terway, 2019).

Our findings highlight the terminological depth of philanthropy, especially in the Islamic context, where it is intertwined with concepts of love, generosity, and voluntary service. This conceptualization is consistent with the philanthropic doctrine embedded in Islam, as noted by Dawam Raharjo and reinforced by the activities of BAZNAS DIY. The research reveals that Islamic philanthropy in education, as practiced by BAZNAS DIY, is not merely a transactional activity but a strategic approach to socio-economic development (Raharjo; BAZNAS DIY Vision and Mission).

Comparatively, this study's results align with global trends where philanthropy is increasingly integrated into educational governance, as seen in Brazil (Avelar, 2022), or aids in bridging infrastructure gaps, as observed in Nigeria (Udo-Umoren, 2019). However, it contrasts with instances where philanthropy has inadvertently perpetuated inequalities, as discussed by Lewis & James-Gallaway (2022). The unique aspect of our study lies in the



integration of Islamic principles into philanthropic practices, thus providing a distinctive model of philanthropy that emphasizes equitable distribution and social justice (Patil, 2021; Saltman, 2022).

The effectiveness of Islamic philanthropy in education, as demonstrated by BAZNAS DIY, can be attributed to its deep alignment with Islamic teachings and the strategic implementation of zakat in educational programs. This approach ensures not only the collection but also the equitable distribution of funds, thereby addressing socio-economic disparities at the grassroots level (Junemann & Olmedo, 2020; Viseu & Carvalho, 2021). The specific focus on education within BAZNAS DIY's programs reflects a targeted effort to empower the youth and marginalized communities, contributing significantly to reducing educational inequities (Pearson, 2023; Subramanian, 2022).

Moreover, the role of BAZNAS DIY in the broader context of philanthropy in DIY illustrates a systemic and institutionalized approach to managing zakat, resonating with the global shift towards more structured and accountable philanthropic practices (Cooke & Kumar, 2020; Rowe, 2022). The organization's efforts align with the objectives of modernizing and enhancing the credibility of zakat management, as envisioned in its mission.

The findings also underscore the importance of integrating cultural and religious values in philanthropic practices. BAZNAS DIY's approach, deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, provides a model for how religious beliefs can inform and enhance the impact of philanthropy in education, especially in regions with strong religious affiliations (Brookner, 2020; Tang et al., 2022). This approach could serve as a blueprint for other regions or countries with similar cultural and religious landscapes.

In conclusion, this study highlights the significance of culturally and religiously aligned philanthropic practices in addressing educational and socio-economic challenges. The model exemplified by BAZNAS DIY in integrating Islamic principles in philanthropy offers insights into the potential of religiously-informed philanthropy in fostering socio-economic development, especially in regions where religion plays a central role in social life. This research thus contributes to the broader discourse on the role of philanthropy in education, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive and strategically implemented philanthropic interventions (Drezner, 2019; McDougle & Alexander, 2023).

## **Conclusion**

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the evolution and current state of philanthropy in Indonesia, with a specific focus on its cultural roots and growing popularity within the Muslim community. This exploration revealed the integral role of major Islamic organizations, such as Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, in promoting philanthropy, particularly in response to the socio-economic challenges exacerbated by globalization and economic crises. The findings of this research underscore the deep-seated tradition of philanthropy in Islam, where it is not just an act of charity but a doctrine deeply embedded within the religious framework. This tradition is exemplified by the wide range of philanthropic activities, including zakat, sedekah, infak, wakaf, donations, and gifts, each playing a pivotal role in fostering social justice and welfare.

The study further delved into the specific application of Islamic philanthropy in the education sector, particularly through the initiatives of BAZNAS in the Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta region. The programs under BAZNAS, such as DIY Cerdas, DIY Taqwa, DIY Sehat, DIY Sejahtera, and DIY Peduli, illustrate the multifaceted use of zakat in areas like education, health, welfare, and disaster response. However, the study acknowledges certain limitations, including its concentrated focus on BAZNAS in Yogyakarta, potentially affecting the generalizability of the findings. Future research is thus recommended to extend the scope of analysis to a broader range of Islamic philanthropic activities, examining their impact at both micro and macro levels. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic philanthropy can be effectively utilized to address various socio-economic challenges.

In essence, this research contributes significantly to the understanding of Islamic philanthropy in Indonesia, especially in the educational sector, emphasizing the need for strategic infrastructure management and human resource solutions to enhance learning environments and support the broader goals of social justice and welfare.

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