THE CONTRIBUTION OF ZAKAT ADMINISTRATION AGENCIES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (Study: National Zakat Agency of Probolinggo City)

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the role of the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) of Probolinggo City in the development of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) while identifying the factors that support the success of the program. This study employs a qualitative approach using *field research*. Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation, while data analysis utilized an interactive model comprising the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results show that BAZNAS in Probolinggo City has implemented various efforts to support the development of PAI, such as mapping educational needs, distributing scholarships, providing religious guidance, supplying educational facilities, and strengthening cooperation with various stakeholders. Additionally, monitoring and evaluation activities are conducted periodically to ensure the program s effectiveness. Supporting factors include the availability of zakat funds, institutional legitimacy, public trust, a religiously oriented social environment, human resource capacity, and partnership support. These factors play a role in supporting the program s success, although challenges remain regarding funding stability and improving the quality of management. Thus, BAZNAS s management of zakat is not merely a form of temporary aid but also aims to empower the community through the sustainable development of Islamic religious education.

Keywords: BAZNAS, Zakat, Islamic Religious Education (PAI), Empowerment, Education

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic religious education holds a very important position in the process of shaping the character, morals, and personality of students amid ever-changing times (Arrijalul Aziz Inayatullah, 2025). In the context of Indonesia a country with a Muslim-majority population religious education serves not merely as a means of imparting knowledge but also as a vehicle for instilling spiritual, ethical, and social values. In various regions, including the city of Probolinggo, Islamic religious education serves as a cornerstone in preserving religious identity while also sustaining local culture (Ibnu Rofi & Zainal Arifin, 2026).

However, in the current era of globalization and modernization, the implementation of Islamic religious education faces various challenges, such as limited resources, low-quality teaching staff, and unequal access to education across all segments of society (Muhammad Makinuddin, 2025). Based on realities on the ground, disparities in access to and the quality of education still exist, particularly among economically disadvantaged communities. Ideally, Islamic religious education should develop equitably and reach all segments of society; however, in reality, there remain limitations in facilities, a lack of financial support, and disparities in learning opportunities (Tri Lestari et al., 2024).

On the other hand, zakat as one of the economic instruments in Islam holds great potential to support the education sector. However, the utilization of this zakat potential has not yet been fully optimized to support the development of Islamic religious education. This indicates a gap between the potential of religious funding sources and their actual implementation in the field of education (Nur Sakina & Husni Tamrin, 2021).

Various previous studies have discussed the contribution of zakat to the field of education, showing that zakat can be utilized for providing scholarships, building educational infrastructure, and improving the quality of human resources. Additionally, zakat management institutions are considered to play a significant role in supporting the development of Islamic education through sustainable empowerment programs (Muhammad Yusuf Haldi and Muhammad Saleh, 2024).

Nevertheless, most of these studies remain general in nature, are conducted on a national scale, or focus on specific institutions outside the local context. Studies that specifically examine the contribution of zakat management institutions to the development of Islamic religious education at the regional level particularly in the city of Probolinggo remain limited (Irfan Syauqi Beik & Laily Dwi Arsyianti, 2016). Therefore, there is a *research gap* related to the lack of in-depth empirical studies on the implementation, strategies, and supporting factors of the role of zakat institutions in the local context (Elida Wati, 2023).

From the perspective of Islamic teachings, the use of zakat for social purposes, including in the field of education (Ratih Kumalasari et al., 2023), has a strong normative foundation as explained in the Qur an, Surah At-Taubah, verse 103:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Meaning: Take zakat from their wealth to purify and sanctify them, and pray for them. Indeed, your prayer brings them peace. Allah is All-Hearing and All-Knowing. (The Qur an and Its Translation, 2019). This verse indicates that zakat serves not only as a

spiritual act of worship but also has a broad social dimension in improving the welfare of society (Siti Nur Azizah, 2023).

Based on this, this study focuses on examining the contribution of zakat collection agencies to the development of Islamic religious education, specifically by studying the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) of Probolinggo City. This study aims to identify the steps taken by BAZNAS to support the development of Islamic religious education and to analyze the factors influencing the success of these programs. *The novelty* of this study lies in its presentation of an empirical analysis grounded in the local context, which is expected to enrich the literature on optimizing the role of zakat in the field of education and serve as a reference for developing more effective and sustainable zakat management policies.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) of Probolinggo City in the development of Islamic religious education based on actual conditions in the field. Research informants included BAZNAS officials, educators, and beneficiaries, who were selected through purposive sampling based on their involvement in the study. The data used consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews and observations, while secondary data were derived from supporting documents such as activity reports, organizational structures, and scholarly literature.

Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were used to gather information regarding program planning, implementation, and evaluation, while observations were conducted on ongoing activities. Documentation was used to supplement the data. Data analysis employed the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Salda a, which includes data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, methodological triangulation, and enhancing rigor.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Steps Taken by BAZNAS in Developing Islamic Religious Education in Probolinggo City

Based on the research findings, the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) of Probolinggo City implements various strategies in its efforts to develop Islamic Religious Education (PAI) that focuses on community *empowerment* and improving the quality of human resources (Nur Hidayati & Ahmad Fauzi, 2023). This approach aligns with the role of zakat in the perspective of Islamic economics, which functions not only as social assistance but also as a productive instrument capable of driving social change (Khoirul Ma arif, 2023).

The initial step taken by BAZNAS Probolinggo City to support the development of Islamic Religious Education was to identify and map the community s educational needs. This activity was carried out through direct observations at a number of Islamic educational institutions, such as the Al-Qur an Education Center (TPQ), Madrasah Diniyah, and Islamic boarding schools (pondok pesantren), to create an adequate

religious learning environment. In addition to conducting field observations, BAZNAS also established communication with various parties, including 24 Regional Coordinators (KORWIL), the Subdistrict Education and Culture Division (DIKDAYA), and the Subdistrict Chairs of the Indonesian Teachers Association (PGRI) throughout Probolinggo Regency to gain a more comprehensive understanding of existing educational needs.

The information gathered through this process then served as the basis for designing and determining the educational programs to be implemented. Consequently, the programs designed can be tailored to the actual conditions and needs of the community. This approach ensures that the assistance provided is more targeted, thereby maximizing and sustaining the benefits felt by the recipients.

Second, BAZNAS runs programs such as the BAZNAS Decent Housing Assistance (BRLHS) for low-income residents, educational scholarships, and aid for orphans. These programs embody the implementation of zakat s distributive function in reducing economic and educational disparities. Conceptually, this form of assistance can be categorized as consumptive-creative zakat, as it not only meets basic needs but also contributes to enhancing individual capacity (Abdullah & Fathullah, 2023).

Table 1.1 Data on Baznas Aid Recipients for 2026

No	Baznas Program	Number of Recipients
1	RLHB Assistance for Low-Income Residents	6 People
2	Scholarship assistance for college students	50 People
3	Orphan Assistance	12 people
4	High School Equivalent Scholarship Assistance	20 People

Source: Data obtained from the Baznas Probolinggo City website, 2026

Based on the data in the table, Baznas Probolinggo City has distributed educational assistance to various groups in need, including orphans, low-income families, college students, and high school students or equivalent. The distribution of this assistance is a form of utilizing zakat, infaq, and sadaqah (ZIS) funds directed toward supporting the continuity of education for people facing economic constraints.

Research findings indicate that the educational assistance program implemented by BAZNAS not only targets students at the secondary education level but also reaches college students pursuing higher education. This reflects BAZNAS Probolinggo City s efforts to improve the quality of human resources through the education sector. With this assistance, beneficiaries receive support to continue their education, which is expected to help them develop academic skills, strengthen their religious understanding, and improve their quality of life in the future.

Third, BAZNAS conducts programs to foster religious ethics and Islamic scholarship among student beneficiaries so that spiritual values align with academic achievement. This demonstrates that the development of Islamic Education (PAI) does not focus solely on knowledge but also encompasses the cultivation of attitudes and skills, in accordance with the concept of Islamic education that emphasizes a balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Fourth, BAZNAS makes a

significant contribution to the development of Islamic Religious Education through the implementation of the Probolinggo Cerdas program. This program focuses on the distribution of zakat, infaq, and sadaqah (ZIS) funds in the form of teaching aids for 85 Madrasah Diniyah throughout Probolinggo City, as well as scholarship grants for high-achieving students (BAZNAS Probolinggo City Public Relations, 2023).

Fifth, BAZNAS has established partnerships with various parties, including educational institutions and local governments. BAZNAS Probolinggo City has established five collaborations through memorandums of understanding (MoUs) and cooperation agreements with various strategic partners to support the implementation of social, religious, educational, health, and humanitarian programs. These partners include Dr. Moh. Saleh General Hospital in Probolinggo City for funding health services for underprivileged individuals not yet enrolled in BPJS, the Probolinggo City Government regarding the loan of local government assets to support BAZNAS operations, Bank Syariah Indonesia (BSI) for the collection and management of funds as well as sharia banking services; the Probolinggo City Ministry of Religious Affairs through the *Probolinggo Cerdas* scholarship program; and the Probolinggo City Red Cross (PMI) for the implementation of humanitarian activities, such as free mass circumcision for orphans and the underprivileged.

This partnership reflects a collaborative governance approach, in which the program s success is determined by synergy among various stakeholders. Sixth, BAZNAS conducts periodic monitoring and evaluation of the program as part of its management control functions. These activities aim to assess the program s effectiveness while ensuring the sustainability of its impact. Overall, the various steps taken by BAZNAS in Probolinggo City indicate a shift in zakat management from a consumptive approach to a more productive and empowerment-based one. This aligns with the concept of modern zakat management, which is oriented toward sustainably improving the welfare of mustahik, particularly in the field of Islamic education.

2. Supporting Factors for BAZNAS in the Development of Islamic Religious Education in Probolinggo City

In the practical implementation of programs at BAZNAS Probolinggo City, it is evident that the development of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) is supported by a number of interrelated factors, both originating from within the institution and from the external environment. These factors include the institution s ability to manage zakat funds, the level of public trust, program management capacity, and the religious character of the community. The presence of these factors not only facilitates program implementation but also influences the accuracy of targeting and the sustainability of the resulting impact (Khoirun Nisa, 2023).

One factor supporting program implementation is the availability of financial resources derived from zakat, infaq, and sadaqah (ZIS) funds. According to data from the National Zakat Agency (Baznas), the city of Probolinggo has demonstrated positive performance in collecting Zakat, Infaq, and Sadaqah (ZIS) funds. BAZNAS Probolinggo City s fund collection comes from three main donor groups: civil servants (ASN) of the Probolinggo City Government, private companies and regionally-owned enterprises (BUMD), and the general public who contribute zakat, infak, and sedekah either directly or through Zakat Collection Units (UPZ). These three groups serve as

the primary sources of funding for various social, educational, health, and humanitarian programs implemented by BAZNAS Probolinggo City.

The availability of these funds provides BAZNAS with the flexibility to develop various educational programs without having to rely entirely on government funding (Moh Abd Rahman & Yuli Agustina, 2024). In this context, financial strength serves as the primary foundation for expanding access to and promoting equitable education. Nevertheless, the sustainability of these programs remains influenced by the level of participation from zakat contributors; thus, instability in fund collection has the potential to impact the continuity of the programs being implemented (Anis Yusratun Nadiroh et al., 2025).

On the other hand, BAZNAS s institutional status as an official state institution further strengthens its capacity to manage educational programs. This legal standing facilitates coordination with various parties, including government agencies and educational institutions. From an institutional perspective, this contributes to increased public trust while expanding the program s reach (Lailatul Mukarromah et al., 2023). However, this position also demands a high level of accountability and the ability to adapt to the ever-evolving dynamics of community needs.

Furthermore, the level of public trust is a critical factor influencing the program s success. This trust encourages active community participation, both as zakat donors and as partners in program implementation. From a social perspective, public trust can be understood as social capital that plays a role in ensuring the program s sustainability. However, this trust is volatile and may decline if not accompanied by transparency and accountable fund management (Firda Nur Isnaeni, 2024).

Furthermore, the religious nature of the community contributes positively to the implementation of the PAI program. The high level of public awareness regarding the importance of religious education facilitates the implementation of programs run by BAZNAS. Sociologically, strong religious values foster a positive attitude toward these programs. Nevertheless, differences in background and levels of understanding among the public can still pose unique challenges in their implementation (Sinta Nuriyah, 2022).

Another equally important factor is the capacity of the managing human resources (HR). Professionalism in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs is a key determinant of the effectiveness of the activities carried out. Within a management framework, the quality of human resources significantly influences the results achieved. Nevertheless, limitations in the number or competence of human resources can still pose obstacles to optimizing program implementation.

Furthermore, support from partnership networks with various stakeholders also plays a role in strengthening program implementation. Collaboration with educational institutions, Islamic boarding schools, and local governments enables synergy in the utilization of resources. This collaboration contributes to enhancing program effectiveness, although its success is largely determined by the quality of coordination and the alignment of objectives among the parties involved (Moh Farhan, 2024).

These various factors indicate that BAZNAS s success in developing Islamic Religious Education does not depend solely on a single aspect but is the result of the interaction between the institution s internal strengths and external support from the community. Therefore, sustained efforts are needed to maintain funding stability,

enhance institutional capacity, and strengthen public trust so that the program s impact can be more optimal and sustainable.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research analysis, it can be concluded that the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) of Probolinggo City plays a significant role in efforts to develop Islamic Religious Education (PAI). This role is reflected in the implementation of various systematically designed programs, such as educational needs assessment, scholarship distribution, religious guidance, provision of facilities and infrastructure, and strengthening cooperation with various stakeholders, all accompanied by ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities.

The successful implementation of these programs is closely tied to several supporting factors, including the availability of zakat, infaq, and sadaqah (ZIS) funds; BAZNAS s institutional standing with formal legitimacy; a high level of public trust; a religiously oriented social environment; the capacity of human resources to manage the programs; and partnership support from various stakeholders. These factors are interrelated and form a system that supports the sustainability of PAI development programs.

Nevertheless, this study also reveals several challenges that still exist, such as dependence on the stability of zakat collection, demands for increased transparency and accountability in management, and the need to strengthen human resource capacity and inter-institutional coordination. Therefore, continuous efforts are needed to improve the quality of zakat management so that the benefits generated can be optimized, particularly in supporting the development of Islamic Religious Education in Probolinggo City.

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