

## THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA (SOSMED) IN PROMOTING ISLAMIC SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ISE) AND ENCOURAGING ZAKAT DONATIONS

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**Abstract:** *The emergence of Islamic social entrepreneurship (ISE) has given rise to the need for innovative strategies to promote and finance these ventures. One such strategy is the use of social media (Sosmed) to reach potential customers and donors. This paper examines the role of Sosmed in promoting ISE and encouraging Zakat donations. It provides an overview of the current state of ISE and the challenges faced in financing these ventures. The paper then explores the potential of Sosmed to address these challenges, including its ability to create awareness of ISE, help crowdfunding campaigns, and increase Zakat donations. Finally, the paper highlights the need for effective Zakat management systems to ensure the proper distribution of these donations to ISE ventures. Overall, the study highlights the potential of Sosmed as a powerful tool for promoting ISE and encouraging Zakat donations but also underscores the importance of effective management and regulation to ensure the success of these efforts.*

**Keywords:** Social Media, Islamic Social Entrepreneurship, Zakat

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### INTRODUCTION

Islamic social entrepreneurship (ISE) is a form of trade. It refers to the efforts of entrepreneurs to do an activity aimed at the mission and social vision. The concept of ISE is a concept based on the Islamic perspective (to seek the pleasure of Allah in this world and hereafter) which is guided by the source of revelation, namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The ISE outlined also refers to the life journey of the Prophet Muhammad SAW during his migration from Mecca to Medina. This ISE is an alternative to the existing Western social entrepreneurship which only focuses on relationships in the world alone and is even limited in the context of meeting human social needs only without referring to the concept of the hereafter (Mohd Adib, 2017; Mohd Adib et. al., 2022).

ISE is aimed at the al-Maqasid al-Syariah which is a social entrepreneurship activity that is in line with Islamic demands by taking into account the aspects of *Dharuriyyah al-Khomsah* (to preserve the religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property). ISE has also become one of the activities that contribute to the economic and social strengthening of the community because the main purpose of this ISE activity is as follows (Mohd Adib Abd Muin & Shuhairimi Abdullah, 2016; Mohd Adib Abd Muin, 2017; Mohd Adib et.al., 2022):

1. To achieve the pleasure and blessings of Allah SWT in this world and hereafter.

2. To make the values and morals of Rasulullah PBUH a guide in carrying out charitable activities.
3. To overcome the widespread problem of usury by creating ISE activities.
4. To eliminate economic and social problems through direct Muslim entrepreneurs' involvement.
5. To increase social values in life.
6. To overcome the social problems of society, especially adolescents.
7. To improve the *sillaturahim* relationship between Muslim entrepreneurs and the community especially the poor and needy.
8. To divert the source of wealth and profit to the poor and needy.
9. To eliminate the nature of greed in the pursuit of worldly possessions.
10. To be grateful for the blessings bestowed by Allah SWT.

This has been explained by Allah SWT in the holy book of the Qur'an in which ISE activity must be done in the right way based on Islamic law. The words of Allah SWT in surah al-Nisa 'verse 29 state: "*O you who believe, do not eat (use) your possessions among yourselves in a false way (deception, gambling, etc.), except in the way of business which is done willingly and equally between you*".

ISE has emerged as an important means of promoting social and economic development in Muslim communities around the world. ISE involves the creation of innovative and sustainable businesses that address social and environmental challenges while adhering to Islamic principles and values. At the same time, Zakat is a key pillar of Islamic philanthropy that involves the donation of a portion of one's wealth to help those in need. In recent years, Social Media (Sosmed) has become an increasingly valuable tool for promoting ISE and Zakat donations, providing a powerful platform for raising awareness, building networks, and mobilizing resources.

This paper explores the role of social media in promoting ISE and Zakat donations, drawing on a review of existing research and academic literature. The study aims to provide insights into the potential benefits and challenges of using social media for this purpose, and to identify areas for future research and innovation. Specifically, the study will examine the ways in which social media can be used to promote ISE and Zakat donations, including the use of social media platforms for marketing and outreach, the role of social networks in building trust and credibility, and the potential for crowdfunding and other innovative financing models.

The study will also examine some of the challenges and limitations of using social media for promoting ISE and Zakat donations, including issues related to digital divide, privacy and security, and the potential for misinformation and disinformation. Finally, the study will conclude by providing recommendations for future research and practice in this area, including the need for more empirical research on the effectiveness of social media in promoting ISE and Zakat donations, and the importance of building partnerships and collaborations between social media platforms, ISE organizations, and Zakat institutions.

## POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF USING SOSMED IN PROMOTING ISE AND ENCOURAGING ZAKAT DONATIONS

The use of social media in promoting ISE and encouraging Zakat donations has become increasingly popular in recent years. Many studies have examined the impact of social media on ISE and Zakat donations. The literature review below summarizes some of the existing research on this topic.

Several studies have shown that social media can be an effective tool for promoting ISE and encouraging Zakat donations. Abdullah et al., (2023) highlight the potential benefits of social media in promoting transparency, accountability, and public awareness about Zakat and ISE. These benefits can help build trust and confidence in Zakat institutions and Islamic social enterprises, leading to increased donations and support. However, the review also identifies several challenges and barriers to the adoption of social media by Zakat institutions, including the lack of resources and expertise, cultural and religious sensitivities, and concerns about security and privacy. These challenges can limit the effectiveness of social media in promoting ISE and Zakat donations.

Digitalization can improve Zakat collection and distribution efficiency, increase transparency and accountability, and enhance public trust in Zakat institutions. Digitalization can also provide better access to Zakat services, making it easier for potential donors to give Zakat and for beneficiaries to receive it (Riyaldi Ahmad Telaumbanua, 2020). However, the literature review also identifies several challenges and barriers to digitalizing Zakat collection, including the lack of infrastructure, limited access to technology, cultural and religious sensitivities, and concerns about privacy and security.

Kailani & Slama, (2020) suggests the importance of balancing the use of social media with traditional Islamic practices and values, such as the personal and direct nature of zakat and sedekah. The article suggests that social media can complement these practices by providing a platform for engagement and communication but should not replace them entirely. However, the literature review also identifies several challenges and limitations of using social media in Islamic charities, including the potential for misinformation, the lack of regulation and oversight, and the digital divide that may exclude some potential donors and beneficiaries.

Other studies by Nasution, Nurhayati, & Marliyah, (2023) found that Zakat institutions need to develop effective social media strategies that align with their objectives, target audiences, and available resources. This includes identifying the most effective social media platforms, creating engaging content, and addressing concerns about privacy and security. In addition, the importance of effective communication and message strategies in promoting zakat donations through social media also has been highlighted, which is a key component of ISE (Nasution et al., 2023). However, there are also challenges associated with using social media for promoting ISE and zakat donations. For example, there may be concerns about the security and privacy of personal information, as well as the potential for misinformation or fraud. Additionally, social media platforms may change their algorithms or policies, which can impact the reach and effectiveness of zakat campaigns.

Overall, the articles suggest that social media can be an effective tool for promoting ISE and encouraging zakat donations, but it is important to develop effective message strategies and be aware of the potential benefits and challenges associated with using social media for these purposes. By doing so, zakat institutions and Islamic social enterprises can improve their communication and engagement with donors and increase zakat donations and promote ISE.

However, there are also potential challenges that must be addressed to effectively leverage the power of social media for these purposes.

### THE BEST SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

The following social media platforms can be used to promote ISE and Zakat donations:

1. **Facebook:** Facebook can be used for marketing and outreach to potential donors and customers. It allows businesses and organizations to create pages and groups to promote their products and services, including ISE initiatives. Facebook also offers targeted advertising options to reach specific demographics and interests.
2. **Twitter:** Twitter can be used to build a network of followers and engage with potential donors and customers. It allows organizations to share updates, news, and promotions in real-time and use hashtags to join relevant conversations.
3. **Instagram:** Instagram is a visual platform that can be used to highlight ISE products and initiatives. It allows organizations to share photos and videos and use hashtags to reach a wider audience.
4. **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn can be used for professional networking and building credibility in the business and philanthropy community. It allows organizations to share updates and articles, connect with potential partners and donors, and participate in relevant groups and discussions.
5. **YouTube:** YouTube can be used to create video content that highlights ISE initiatives and success stories. It allows organizations to reach a wider audience, engage with viewers through comments, and likes.

In terms of building trust and credibility, social networks such as Facebook and LinkedIn can be used to connect with influencers and thought leaders in the industry. Crowdfunding platforms such as LaunchGood and GoFundMe can be used to raise funds for ISE initiatives and encourage community involvement in the donation process.

Overall, social media platforms offer a range of opportunities for ISE initiatives to market their products and services, build trust and credibility, and raise funds through innovative financing models. One relevant Quranic verse related to the use of media for promoting charitable deeds is:

*“...If any one does a righteous deed, it ensures to the benefit of his own soul; if he does evil, it works against (his own soul). In the end, will ye (all) be brought back to your Lord...”*

(Quran 45:15)

This verse highlights the individual responsibility to do good deeds, and in the context of promoting Islamic social entrepreneurship and Zakat donations, it can be interpreted as emphasizing the importance of using all available means, including social media, to promote and encourage acts of charity and social responsibility.

## CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

The use of social media for promoting ISE and Zakat donations also presents various challenges and limitations. Here are some of the issues that have been identified in the literature:

1. **Digital Divide:** The digital divide refers to the unequal access to technology and the internet, which can limit the effectiveness of social media as a tool for promoting ISE and Zakat donations. Those without access to the internet or who lack digital literacy skills may be left behind in these efforts (Warschauer, M. 2003).
2. **Privacy and Security:** The use of social media also raises concerns about the privacy and security of personal information. The collection and use of personal data by social media platforms may be perceived as invasive, and the potential for cyber-attacks and data breaches can undermine trust in these efforts (Boyd, D., & Crawford, K. 2012).
3. **Misinformation and Disinformation:** Social media has also been criticized for its potential to spread misinformation and disinformation, which can undermine the credibility of ISE initiatives and Zakat donations. This highlights the importance of promoting digital literacy and critical thinking skills to ensure that accurate and trustworthy information is shared (Pennycook, G., & Rand, D. G. 2021).
4. **Trust and Credibility:** Building trust and credibility is essential in promoting ISE and Zakat donations through social media. However, this can be a challenge, especially in a crowded and competitive digital environment where users are bombarded with information and marketing messages (Kim, Y., Sohn, D., & Choi, S. M. 2011).
5. **Cultural and Social Barriers:** Finally, cultural and social barriers may also pose challenges to the use of social media for promoting ISE and Zakat donations. For example, some communities may view social media as a Western import and may be reluctant to use it for religious purposes. Additionally, cultural taboos around discussing financial matters in public may limit the effectiveness of these efforts (Al-Bahrani, A. S., & Gao, J. 2018).

These challenges and limitations highlight the need for a nuanced and context-specific approach to using social media for promoting ISE and Zakat donations. By addressing these issues and developing strategies to overcome them, social media can be an effective tool for promoting Islamic social entrepreneurship and encouraging Zakat donations.

One example of a study related to the need for effective Zakat management systems is the paper by Ali and Mohd (2018) titled "The Role of Zakat Management System towards Effective Distribution of Zakat Funds: A Study on Malaysia". The study examines the importance of a well-designed and effective Zakat management system in ensuring the proper distribution of Zakat funds to eligible recipients, including ISE ventures. The authors emphasize the need for transparency, accountability, and proper governance in the management of Zakat funds to maximize their impact on poverty alleviation and social development.

The paper also highlights some of the challenges and limitations of Zakat management systems, such as the lack of standardization, the complexity of Zakat laws and regulations, and the need for adequate resources and expertise to manage Zakat funds effectively. The authors suggest that these challenges can be overcome through the adoption of modern technology, such as digital platforms and mobile applications, to streamline Zakat collection and distribution processes and improve transparency and accountability.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of effective Zakat management systems in promoting ISE and other forms of social development and suggests that the adoption of modern technology can play a key role in addressing the challenges and limitations of Zakat management.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Here are some recommendations for future research and practice in using social media for promoting Islamic social entrepreneurship and Zakat donations:

1. Conduct more empirical research on the effectiveness of social media in promoting ISE and Zakat donations. There is a need for more rigorous and systematic studies to examine the impact of social media on the attitudes and behavior of users towards ISE and Zakat donations.
2. Explore the potential of new and emerging social media platforms for promoting ISE and Zakat donations. As new social media platforms continue to emerge, it is important to evaluate their potential for promoting ISE and Zakat donations and to identify best practices for using these platforms effectively.
3. Build partnerships and collaborations between social media platforms, ISE organizations, and Zakat institutions. Collaborative partnerships can help to leverage the strengths of each partner and to address the challenges and limitations of using social media for promoting ISE and Zakat donations.
4. Develop strategies to address the digital divide and other barriers to accessing social media for promoting ISE and Zakat donations. Strategies may include initiatives to increase digital literacy and technology access, and targeted outreach to underserved communities.
5. Address issues related to privacy and security when using social media for promoting ISE and Zakat donations. It is important to develop guidelines and best practices for protecting the privacy and security of users and to ensure the transparency and accountability of ISE organizations and Zakat institutions.
6. Combat misinformation and disinformation by promoting accurate and trustworthy information about ISE and Zakat donations on social media. This may involve developing educational campaigns and working with social media platforms to identify and remove false or misleading content.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of social media (Sosmed) has a significant potential to promote ISE and encourage Zakat donations. By leveraging the vast reach and accessibility of social media platforms, ISE organizations and Zakat institutions can enhance their marketing and outreach efforts to engage with a wider audience and build greater awareness and understanding of their mission and impact. However, there are also significant challenges and limitations associated with the use of social media, including issues related to digital divide, privacy and security, and the potential for misinformation and disinformation.

Moving forward, more empirical research is needed to assess the effectiveness of social media in promoting ISE and Zakat donations, as well as the impact of different marketing and outreach strategies on donor behavior. Moreover, it is crucial to develop effective Zakat management systems to ensure the proper distribution of Zakat donations to ISE ventures and maximize their impact on the wider community. Additionally, partnerships and collaborations between social media platforms, ISE organizations, and Zakat institutions are essential to address the challenges and limitations of using social media for promoting ISE and Zakat donations and to ensure that their potential is fully harnessed possible.

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