
THE COMPETENCE AND PROFESSIONALISM OF AMIL ZAKAT: AN ANALYSIS OF MALAYSIAN ZAKAT MANAGEMENT

Ammar Badruddin bin Romli¹, Amir Fariz bin Che Man², Mohd Shukri bin Mohd Isa³

¹ *Jabatan Matematik dan Pengajian Umum, Politeknik Bagan Datuk, Bagan Datuk, Perak, Malaysia*
E-mail: ammar@pbd.edu.my

² *Jabatan Pengajian Am, Politeknik Ungku Omar, Ipoh, Perak, Malaysia*
E-mail: fariz@puo.edu.my

³ *Jabatan Pengajian Am, Politeknik Ungku Omar, Ipoh, Perak, Malaysia*
E-mail: mshukri@puo.edu.my

Abstract

Amil zakat are essential to Malaysia's effective and successful zakat administration and distribution. However, given the current issues and the disparity in proficiency among zakat institutions across the states, the degree of competence among Amil zakat is frequently a matter of debate. By looking at important components like knowledge, skills, professionalism values, and moral and social responsibilities, this study explores the idea of zakat amil competence in Malaysia. Five major zakat institutions, the Selangor Zakat Board (LZS), the Kedah State Zakat Board (LZNK), Penang Zakat (ZPP), the Zakat Collection Center-MAIWP (PPZ-MAIWP), and the Perak Islamic Religious and Malay Customary Council (MAIPk), are the subjects of case studies and literature analysis using a qualitative approach. The discussion's findings point to the urgent need for a reevaluation of amil zakat proficiency through improved technology use, ongoing training, and hands-on community engagement. The study's conclusions recommend enhancing hiring practices, performance reviews, and a comprehensive training program to raise the level of professionalism among amil zakat across the country.

Keywords : *professionalism, training, zakat management, amil zakat, competence*

I. INTRODUCTION

Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam, is essential to the community's well-being. Zakat helps to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor and purify wealth. In Malaysia, several state zakat institutions collect zakat and distribute it to those in need. The effectiveness of this zakat distribution is solely dependent on the competence of the designated amil zakat. Amil zakat needs to be knowledgeable about zakat fiqh, have good money management skills, and be able to administer zakat using the most recent technology [1].

However, a number of important issues hinder the effectiveness of Malaysia's zakat management. The lack of professionalism and recognition among amil zakat is one of the factors contributing to the inefficiency of zakat distribution. A study found that most amil zakat are not adequately trained in zakat fiqh and financial management, which results in

poor and incorrect zakat distribution decisions. This affects how effectively zakat fights poverty [2].

The challenges of using technology for zakat administration are another important problem. The e-zakat system has been adopted by numerous zakat institutions in Malaysia; however, its complete implementation is hindered by the lack of awareness and technological illiteracy of zakat collectors, especially in rural areas [3]. This situation reduces the likelihood that zakat will have a greater social impact by making the collection process slower and less transparent.

The lack of a defined system for performance reviews makes it more difficult to improve the competency of amil zakat. Unstructured appraisals make it difficult to measure amil zakat' performance objectively, which prevents them from growing as professionals. Zakat institutions that do not routinely audit and monitor their operations are unable to identify Amils who need additional training and

support [4]. States' disparate approaches to zakat amil training also impact the consistency of zakat management quality, indicating the need for a comprehensive and standardised training system across the country [5].

Therefore, the goal of this study is to analyse the challenges faced by Malaysian zakat management and provide recommendations that can improve zakat distribution efficiency and strengthen the Malaysian zakat system through the use of technology in zakat management, a more structured appraisal system, and continuous amil training.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Zakat management in Malaysia is inextricably linked to the role of knowledgeable and competent amil zakat. Zakat is one of the Islamic economic tools that can reduce poverty in the community and purify wealth. However, how well zakat is collected and disbursed depends on Amil zakat' comprehension of the principles of zakat fiqh and their ability to manage their finances effectively [1]. In order to achieve the true goals of zakat, it is imperative that Amil zakat receive comprehensive training in financial management, technology, and religious subjects.

Additionally, giving Amil zakat continual training is one of the most crucial ways to enhance zakat management in Malaysia [6]. Without the proper training, Amil zakat may not be able to fully understand the fiqh concepts related to zakat, which could lead to errors when determining who is eligible to receive zakat. Therefore, ensuring that every zakat amil receives continual training in a range of subjects, including fiqh, finance, and technology, will strengthen the implementation of zakat itself.

In the modern world, using technology is essential to improving the effectiveness of the zakat system. Electronic zakat, or e-zakat systems, facilitate online zakat payments [7]. Furthermore, this system reduces the possibility of zakat distribution anomalies and ensures transparency [8]. However, Amil zakat continue to use technology sparingly, especially in rural areas where there is still a low level of technological literacy. Therefore, additional training in digital technology is essential to improving the efficacy of zakat management.

To ensure that technology is used more widely in zakat management, Amil zakat must be properly trained in the use of digital management systems and cloud-based zakat applications [9]. The coordination of the zakat collection and distribution process can

be accelerated and enhanced by modern technology. It is essential to ensure that Amil zakat across the country receive the same training, regardless of their diverse geographic locations.

Additionally, coordinating zakat amil training across Malaysia's states is a crucial issue that needs careful thought [10]. There may be differences in the quality of zakat administration between states as a result of the different training approaches that each state uses for Amil zakat. For example, in certain states, training emphasises zakat fiqh and in others, financial management. Therefore, a uniform strategy for zakat amil training needs to be put into place nationwide in order to ensure the effectiveness of zakat in Malaysia.

An important subject covered in this study is the assessment of Amil zakat' performance. A comprehensive and open system for assessing their performance is absent from the majority of Malaysian zakat institutions. Without a systematic system to evaluate the performance of Amil zakat, it is difficult to identify any individuals who are less capable or not carrying out their responsibilities effectively. Establishing an assessment system based on actual performance is essential to boosting the effectiveness of Amil zakat.

Additionally, this study highlights community involvement in zakat distribution, which is regarded as a very successful strategy to boost the system's effectiveness [11]. Involving the community in this process not only increases transparency but also encourages participants to take responsibility for ensuring that zakat reaches the people who actually need it. Communities that actively engage in this process will have more faith in the zakat system and feel more responsible for distributing zakat funds to those in need. Finally, this study emphasises how important routine audits and monitoring are to zakat management [12]. Without strict oversight, there is a greater chance of fraud and inefficient zakat distribution. Every zakat institution must conduct audits on a regular basis to ensure that zakat amil meets the requirements. This will ensure that zakat is used correctly and suitably to help those who deserve it.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology uses a qualitative approach that combines case studies and literature reviews to assess the proficiency of Amil zakat in Malaysia. The Perak Islamic Religious and Malay Customs Council (MAIPk), Penang Zakat (ZPP), Kedah State Zakat Board (LZNK), Selangor Zakat

Board (LZS), and Zakat Collection Centre (PPZ MAIWP) were among the major zakat organisations that were the focus of case studies in order to obtain an understanding of the activities and practices that Amils carried out. Theories,

concepts, and best practices related to zakat management were assessed through literature reviews. This combination of methods provides a thorough and in-depth understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of Malaysia's zakat management.

IV. FINDINGS

Implementing programs to improve Amil zakat' proficiency is one of the most important aspects of zakat management in Malaysia. Effective management depends on the level of knowledge and experience of the zakat amil as well as the quantity of zakat funds collected, according to zakat organisations such as MAIPK, ZPP, LZS, LZNK, and PPZ MAIWP. Amil zakat must take part in a comprehensive and continuous training and development program to ensure that zakat distribution is carried out precisely and in accordance with the syarak principles. By getting the proper training, amil zakat can improve the process of choosing zakat recipients and increase the effectiveness of zakat in combating poverty and social inequality.

Table 1. Amil Competency Initiatives that have been implemented by the Selangor Zakat Board (LZS), Kedah State Zakat Board (LZNK), Penang Zakat (ZPP), Zakat Collection Center (PPZ MAIWP), and the Perak Islamic Religious and Malay Custom Council (MAIPk) and their Impact on Zakat Management.

Zakat institutions that have successfully implemented this initiative can increase public confidence in the zakat system overall, as well as the efficacy of zakat management. For example, PPZ MAIWP and MAIPK have put in place state-of-the-art technological systems and training modules to improve the effectiveness and transparency of zakat distribution. Meanwhile, LZNK and LZS also emphasise the importance of training focused on how to manage amil zakat effectively and how to use technology to expedite zakat payment and distribution. By helping zakat institutions perform their responsibilities more effectively, this integrated approach improves the social impact for the asnaf group.

Overall, initiatives to improve amil zakat' proficiency in zakat institutions such as LZS, LZNK, ZPP, PPZ MAIWP, and MAIPK have helped with zakat distribution. A more systematic and professional approach to amil zakat' training and development has resulted in a more efficient, equitable, and transparent zakat distribution process.

Zakat Institution	Amil Competency Initiative	Outcome/Impact
Selangor Zakat Board (LZS)	Implements structured training covering fiqh zakat, communication, technology, and empathy. Introduces a KPI-based performance monitoring system.	Increased professionalism, enhanced public confidence, and consistent annual growth in zakat collection.
Kedah State Zakat Board (LZNK)	Stations amil at the kariah level. Introduces digital training modules and e-zakat systems to increase efficiency.	Improved technological competence of kariah-level amil; initiative still in early stages of implementation.
Penang Zakat (ZPP)	Implements an annual Amil Assessment Scheme (SPA) involving technical performance and integrity values. The assessment is used as a basis for promotion.	86% of high-performing amil demonstrate effectiveness in managing asnaf cases and customer satisfaction.
Zakat Collection Center (PPZ MAIWP)	Integrates amil training with advanced technology, provides mobile applications for amil, and introduces regular courses in zakat management and fiqh.	Enhanced effectiveness in zakat collection and asnaf satisfaction, as well as ensuring more efficient and professional management.
Perak Islamic Religious and Malay Custom Council (MAIPk)	Introduces an amil assessment system based on KPIs covering technical and interpersonal aspects. Provides regular training programs involving the community.	Improved quality of amil services and zakat management at the state level, increasing public trust in zakat.

Additionally, the increasing use of technology, like electronic zakat applications, has made it simpler to pay and distribute zakat, which has a greater impact on helping those in need.

The nationwide coordination of zakat amil training could still be improved, though. Every state must guarantee that all amil zakat participate in uniform training programs. For instance, PPZ MAIWP and

V. DISCUSSION

The training and development of amil zakat is crucial to guaranteeing the efficacy of zakat distribution, as demonstrated by Malaysian zakat management, especially when considering zakat amil competency. Well-trained amil zakat will be more effective in identifying eligible recipients and making sure that zakat reaches those who truly need it, according to PPZ MAIWP, MAIPK, and a number of other state zakat institutions. In order to enable amil zakat to perform their duties in a more professional manner, LZS and LZNK have also implemented training modules that integrate elements of zakat fiqh, financial management, and technology [7]. Many zakat institutions have reported an increase in the efficiency and transparency of zakat management as a result of this initiative.

The use of technology is one of the most crucial components in raising the proficiency of amil zakat. The way zakat is gathered and disbursed has changed significantly as a result of the e-zakat system and zakat applications that PPZ MAIWP and MAIPK introduced. This system reduces the issue of inequality in zakat distribution by making it simple for people to complete their zakat obligations online [8]. However, putting this technology into practice presents difficulties, particularly in rural areas where technological literacy is low. Thus, it is necessary to broaden training programs in digital technology use to include zakat collectors at all levels throughout the nation.

This digital system has also improved transparency and zakat management by enabling zakat institutions to more methodically track and monitor every zakat transaction. To lower the risk of fraud, LZNK, for instance, has implemented a system that enables amil zakat to directly check and verify the status of zakat recipients [9]. To make sure that amil zakat rely on more thorough monitoring protocols and more successful recurring audits rather than just technology, the study concluded that a more reliable monitoring system must be put in place.

MAIPK may be the best examples of how to use the newest technology and offer a thorough training program to increase the effectiveness of zakat management. With persistent work, zakat will develop into a potent instrument for creating a more sustainable and equitable society in addition to serving as a means of aiding the underprivileged.

In addition, continuing education for amil zakat is a crucial but frequently disregarded component. While knowledge and skills in zakat management must be updated on a regular basis, many zakat institutions in Malaysia only concentrate on initial training. For instance, LZS has started an annual training program that covers a number of topics, such as zakat fiqh and financial management. Nonetheless, a significant disparity still exists between the theory taught and real-world implementation in the field [10]. To guarantee that amil zakat can carry out their responsibilities more effectively, more comprehensive training that incorporates technological applications and hands-on experience should be taken into consideration.

The biggest issue facing the majority of zakat institutions is distribution imbalance, despite the fact that technology has greatly accelerated zakat collection. Zakat is successfully collected quickly and efficiently, but when distribution is not well-coordinated, issues arise, according to several studies. Programs like economic development and educational assistance, for instance, have been implemented by MAIPK and PPZ MAIWP; however, there are delays in providing aid to the Asnaf groups that are in immediate need [11]. To guarantee that zakat distribution is completed on schedule, cooperation between zakat institutions and other social agencies is therefore required.

Lastly, implementing structured evaluation and reward systems that can motivate Amil zakat to perform better can help them perform better. To gauge how well amil zakat are performing their duties, each zakat institution should have an impartial performance evaluation system [12]. This guarantees their integrity and encourages them to keep raising the calibre of their work. Zakat will be used to its fullest potential in Malaysia with a more open and professional system, which will have a bigger social impact.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Endowments, Zakat and Hajj (JAWHAR) should work with all State Islamic Religious Councils to develop a framework of national competency standards for Amil zakat in order to guarantee that their level of competence is always at the highest level. In addition to covering knowledge, technical skills, and professionalism values, these standards should be supported by quantifiable indicators like the degree of community trust, communication proficiency, zakat information system proficiency, and zakat fiqh mastery. A system of professional certification and recognition for Amil zakat in Malaysia could be built upon these standards.

Additionally, it is advised that a consistent, organised training program be implemented across the nation. Theory, practice, and case simulation should all be included in this modular training. Modern zakat fiqh, effective communication, asnaf case management, technology applications in zakat management, and instruction in moral principles like honesty, compassion, and responsibility are some of the primary modules. Training organisations like ILIM or IKaZ should approve this training, which should be conducted at least twice a year.

Furthermore, it is suggested that the amil zakat performance evaluation system be reinforced and extended. The evaluation system should consider qualitative evaluations like customer satisfaction, the effectiveness of resolving asnaf cases, and the degree of integrity in addition to the quantity of data collected or distributed. A 360-degree approach that incorporates input from communities, employers, coworkers, and zakat recipients can be used for this assessment. Promotions, performance bonuses, and reappointments may be based on the evaluation's findings.

Since the majority of amil zakat at the grassroots level, like amil kariah, are volunteers or people without a formal background in zakat management, a unique capacity development program must be established. Regular basic training, the use of a mobile reporting system, and mentorship support from state zakat institutions are all possible components of this program. Even at the smallest kariah level, this will aid in bringing standards and service quality into alignment.

It is necessary to enhance the digitalisation of the zakat management system from a technological standpoint. To use the e-zakat system, mobile apps, and real-time performance dashboards, amil zakat must receive training. This will improve operational

effectiveness, lower the possibility of human error, and make zakat management more transparent. To guarantee seamless system use, zakat institutions must also offer amils technical support and help desks.

Lastly, to make sure that the requirements are fulfilled, a system for tracking and recurring audits of amil zakat must be put in place. A designated third party or a special division of the zakat institution may carry out this audit on its own. The audit's findings must be openly shared with upper management and utilised as a foundation for development. Amil zakat will be more watchful in performing their responsibilities in a responsible manner and a culture of accountability can be established through this mechanism.

VII. CONCLUSION

Overall, this study demonstrates that a more effective and efficient zakat management system is ensured by increasing the proficiency of amil zakat. Zakat institutions in Malaysia can increase the efficiency of zakat collection and distribution with ongoing training, the use of contemporary technology, and impartial performance evaluation. The community and zakat recipients can benefit from an organised approach to building amil competence, as demonstrated by the actions taken by several zakat institutions, including LZS, LZNK, ZPP, PPZ MAIWP, and MAIPK.

Nonetheless, there are still difficulties in fostering amil zakat competency, particularly at the local level. Immediate attention is needed to address the lack of structured training, technological challenges, and knowledge gaps between seasoned amils and those who are new to the role. To guarantee the success of a more comprehensive zakat system, training program coordination, open performance monitoring systems, and a focus on the importance of professionalism among amils must all be strengthened.

In the end, the effective growth of amil zakat competency will boost zakat distribution and collection while also bolstering public confidence in Malaysia's zakat system. In order for amil zakat to contribute more effectively to the fight against poverty and the economic empowerment of Muslims, it is crucial that they continue to be empowered through education, training, and the use of the newest technology. Zakat in Malaysia will have a better future and benefit everyone more if zakat institutions, the government, and the community work together.

REFERENCES

- [1] A. Muhammad, "Kepentingan zakat dalam pembangunan ekonomi masyarakat Islam (The importance of zakat in the economic development of the Muslim community)," *Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 58–70, 2020.
- [2] R. Mohd and F. Sulaiman, "Profesionalisme amil zakat: Satu kajian terhadap tahap latihan di Malaysia (Professionalism of amil zakat: A study of the level of training in Malaysia)," *Jurnal Perundangan Islam*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 50–62, 2020.
- [3] M. Yusof, A. Hassan, and R. Shah, "Tantangan penggunaan teknologi dalam pengumpulan zakat di peringkat akar umbi (Challenges of using technology in zakat collection at the grassroots level)," *Jurnal Teknologi dan Inovasi*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 72–84, 2021.
- [4] M. Abdul and S. Rahman, "The role of performance evaluation systems in improving the competence of amil zakat," *Jurnal Pengurusan Zakat*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 22–30, 2019.
- [5] A. Ismail and N. Alwi, "Perbandingan pendekatan latihan amil zakat di Malaysia: Satu kajian kes (Comparison of amil zakat training approaches in Malaysia: A case study)," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 33–47, 2020.
- [6] M. Alwi and M. Jamaluddin, "Pentingnya latihan berterusan dalam meningkatkan kompetensi amil zakat (The importance of continuous training in improving the competence of amil zakat)," *Jurnal Fiqh dan Pengurusan Zakat*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 112–130, 2019.
- [7] A. Aziz, "Technological transformation in zakat management in Malaysia," *Jurnal Teknologi dan Inovasi*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 79–91, 2021.
- [8] M. Jamil and R. Ismail, "Peranan e-zakat dalam meningkatkan ketelusan pengagihan zakat (The role of e-zakat in increasing the transparency of zakat distribution)," *Jurnal Ekonomi Islam*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 88–102, 2020.
- [9] M. Yusof and S. Mohamad, "Penggunaan teknologi dalam pengumpulan dan agihan zakat: Kajian kes di PPZ MAIWP (The use of technology in zakat collection and distribution: A case study at PPZ MAIWP)," *Jurnal Teknologi dan Pengurusan*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 102–116, 2022.
- [10] A. Ismail and S. Abdul Rahman, "Penilaian amil zakat: Perbandingan pendekatan antara negeri-negeri di Malaysia (Amil zakat assessment: A comparison of approaches among states in Malaysia)," *Jurnal Pengurusan Sosial*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 45–56, 2020.
- [11] N. Salleh, M. Ismail, and F. Ibrahim, "Penglibatan komuniti dalam pengagihan zakat: Tinjauan di institusi zakat Malaysia (Community involvement in zakat distribution: A survey in Malaysian zakat institutions)," *Jurnal Sosial dan Masyarakat*, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 75–85, 2020.
- [12] R. Kamaludin, "Audit dan pemantauan dalam pengurusan zakat di Malaysia (Audit and monitoring in zakat management in Malaysia)," *Jurnal Pengurusan Awam*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 131–144, 2021.

AUTHOR'S INFORMATION

<p>First Author: AMMAR BADRUDDIN BIN ROMLI</p> 	<p>Jabatan Matematik dan Pengajian Umum, Politeknik Bagan Datuk, 36100, Malaysia</p> <p>E-mail: ammar@pbd.edu.my</p>
<p>Second Author: AMIR FARIZ BIN CHE MAN</p> 	<p>Jabatan Pengajian Am, Politeknik Ungku Omar, Jalan Raja Musa Mahadi, Ipoh, 31400, Malaysia</p> <p>E-mail: fariz@puo.edu.my</p>
<p>Third Author: MOHD SHUKRI BIN MOHD ISA</p> 	<p>Jabatan Pengajian Am, Politeknik Ungku Omar, Jalan Raja Musa Mahadi, Ipoh, 31400, Malaysia</p> <p>E-mail: mshukri@puo.edu.my</p>