

A Model of Empowerment Agus Wahyu T

by Agus Wahyu Triatmo

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A MODEL OF EMPOWERMENT OF A POOR COMMUNITY BASED ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WITH ISLAMIC VALUES

(A Case Study on Yayasan Solo Peduli Umat, Central Java, Indonesia)

Agus Wahyu Triatmo¹, Ravik Karsidi², Drajat Tri Kartono³, Suwarto⁴

UNS, Surakarta, Central Java,

aguswt69@gmail.com

Abstract:

Empowering the poor is the responsibility of all members of society, not just the government. Muslims, as the majority in Indonesia, should play a significant role in poverty alleviation. Zakat, infak and sedekah (ZIS), in the teachings of Islam, is not just worship because, if managed properly, it can be a solution to poverty. To date, the management of ZIS as a mechanism for change in society has not been optimal due to various factors, one of which is a poor management model. Therefore, this article presents a model of empowerment of the poor based on social responsibility with the integration of Islamic values. This article is based on research conducted at Yayasan Solo Peduli Umat. The research data are obtained from the managers of Solo Peduli, beneficiaries and other parties involved. The results of this study indicate that the integration of Islamic values with the concept of social responsibility can maximize the empowerment of the poor. An empowerment model is created to increase the number of entrepreneurs who diligently worship and have noble morality (akhlaqul karimah), increase the independence and welfare of the poor, ensure the continuity of network-based businesses between musthik and muzaki/donatur, and provide sustainable donations to be used as capital for social transformation.

Key words: Social responsibility, Islamic values, Empowerment, Poor, Islamic Philanthropy

Introduction

Social responsibility is one of the primary missions in Islam. It is not only a normatively and doctrinally clear teaching but also has been continually actualized by Muslims since the era of the prophet Muhammad Saw. Among the Prophet's achievements regarding social responsibility is his successful transformation of the



heterogenic society of Madinah into peaceful, egalitarian and modern community ruled by their constitution, Piagam Madinah, which was formulated by the Prophet and his society¹. The prosperity of Islamic civilization during the era of the Prophet continued through generations, until the middle of the 13C. At that time, Islamic civilization reached its peak after defeating the most powerful civilizations of that time, the Byzantine Empire in Eastern Europe and the Persian Empire in Western Asia². The doctrine and Islamic history regarding elements of society, which includes social responsibility, have been important in the creation of the social order based on Al-Quran. Among the Islamic teachings of social responsibility is the doctrine about zakat, infak and sedekah (ZIS).

There are at least 34 orders of shalat and zakat in the Qur'an. Among the verses are QS. Al Baqarah 83 and 110. These make the orders of zakat parallel with the orders of shalat. Just as shalat is the symbol of the relationship between a man and his God, zakat is the symbol of the relationship between a man and other men. The connection between the order of shalat and zakat in several Quranic verses shows that the life of Moslem has two dimensions, the relationship between a man and his God and a man and other men, represented as an inseparable unit.

If Islamic values regarding social responsibility, especially ZIS, can be re-implemented in modern social life, the resultant just and prosperous society will not be a utopia. Unfortunately, empirical facts show that the opposite will occur. Social inequalities are found in many countries. An example is Indonesia, which has the world's highest population of Moslems, where social-economic inequalities predominate.

The estimated Gini coefficient of Indonesia at the end of 2014 reached 0,42. This equates to 1% of the population holding 42% of the country's wealth. From this, the Indonesian people are composed three, income-based classes. Twenty percent are in the upper class, 40 percent are in the middle class, and the remaining 40 percent are in the lower class. In 2005, the lower class benefited from an economic growth rate of 21 percent; however, in 2014, this number decreased to 16,9 percent. In contrast, the upper class benefited from an economic growth rate of 40 percent in 2005, which rose to 49 percent from PDB in 2014. If there is no effort to reach equity, the Gini coefficient will equal 0,6 percent in ten years. This represents a dangerous outcome and could potentially cause a social revolution. This inequality must be resolved immediately by increasing the income of the lower class (<http://www.republika.co.id/> accessed on May, 26 2016).

Moreover, in addition to having high levels of social inequality, Indonesia has a high proportion of poor citizens. Based on the data of the Social Ministry in 2000, 40 percent of people in Indonesia were poor. BPS reported that in 2006, there were 39,05 million poor Indonesians (17,75%). The aggregate data were developed using SUSENAS by estimating the consumption cost (equal to 2.2.00 kilos of calories per day). Moreover, according to Sumodiningrat (1997), the prevalence of poverty in Indonesia is equal to ¾, or 60%, of Indonesians.

Regarding the aforementioned poverty, Tantoro delineated two types of

¹ (Watt, 1990)

² (Nasution, 1990)



poverty and their causes, the natural and the artificial³. The natural poverty occurs as a result of limited natural sources, the use of low quality technology and natural disasters. The artificial poverty occurs when societal institutions make it impossible for part of the population to control their economic condition and must rely on service facilities. Therefore, they cannot rise out of poverty.

As the majority, the involvement of Muslims in poverty alleviation is undoubtedly important. Muslims hold power in many realms due to their status as the majority, such as the potential of religious resources, economics, and human resources. If these potencies can be put to maximum use, there will be many ways for Muslims to eliminate Indonesia's poverty and social inequity. One of the potencies is in the optimization of the roles and functions of ZIS.

Sudibyo (2016), the chief of BAZASNAS used the recent national economic growth to show the potential in 2015 was 286 trillion rupiah. This potential may increase based on Indonesian economic growth. Unfortunately, the actualization of zakat is still far from its potency. For example, in 2015, the national ZIS obtained only 3,7 trillion rupiah or less than 1,3% of the potential. The question is why did the gap between the potential and the actual payment occur?

Masudi stated that the suboptimal performance and role of the zakat in the socio-economic life of Muslims was due to three factors. *First*, the weakness of its philosophy or epistemology. *Second*, the weakness of its institutional structure. *Third*, the weakness of its operational management. The first factor, which related to zakat's philosophy, was the weakness caused by the absence of a social belief that is the basis of the concept of zakat. For a long time, Muslims have viewed zakat as merely a rite (*ibadah mahdhah*) without any social context. It was a result of the system of theology considered dogma by the majority of Muslims. The second factor was the weakness related to zakat's institutional structure and administration. Muslim scholars understand the concept of zakat, its object, scale, time, receivers (mustahik), and everything related to zakat as a topic in fiqh with a legal formal approach. The third factor, the weakness of its management, or in al-Qur'an, is called *amil*⁴.

If Masudi's analysis is correct, the lack of understanding by society of the rule of zakat is one of the factors that cause a low awareness of the necessity of zakat. It does not mean that zakat is not known to them but that they have an incorrect understanding of zakat. There are many commonly held fiqh books as well as textbooks that teach about zakat used in Islamic Education from the elementary school level to higher education levels. This shows that citizens have been socialized to know of zakat. Therefore, what is missing is how individuals in society gain an understanding of the rule of zakat.

The second serious barrier to actualizing the payment of zakat in Indonesia is the institutional management of the zakat organizer, the Organisasi Pengelola Zakat (OPZ). Cholil (2014) described zakat management in Central Java. He stated that OPZ has at least two types of managerial problems, internal and external. The internal problems include: unprofessional leadership and the limited infrastructure

³ (Tantoro, 2014)

⁴ (Wahid, 2005)



of zakat management, such as office buildings, an administration system, and information technology. The external problems include the low trust by Muslims (*muzakki*) of the OPZ. Therefore, the potential payment of the large number of *muzakki* cannot be managed well by the OPZ.

The third problem related to the OPZ is the distribution model of ZIS. The OPZ has distributed ZIS using a *top-down* system without considering societal potencies and did not include society members while planning, realizing and evaluating distribution but then giving the donation or consumptive positives to them. Many have observed that giving direct help or donations to the poor solves the problem over the short-term but over the long-term. The poor will depend on this direct help and therefore cannot become independent members of society. The above three problems can be simplified into one problem, which regards ZIS management. The management of ZIS has included three activities: the paradigm of understanding, management and the distribution system.

Yayasan Solo Peduli Umat or Solo Peduli is an institution that privately manages the zakat. Preliminary research has found that Solo Peduli has at least 3.500 donors, with total donation fund or ZIS approximately equal to one billion per month. However, most of the donors pay for sedekah and infak but not zakat.

Also of interest is the distribution system of ZIS. A donation is not only distributed in the form of a consumptive donation (direct compensation), not only for unproductive poor people but also in the form of community empowerment in various strategic fields, such as agriculture, farms, trade and services. Through empowerment, society will not become dependent on donations. Moreover, they will become financially independent for life.

Using the above data, the score of the institution's performance will be more proportional if it is compared using its potencies. Solo Peduli owns a wide operational area including Solo Raya or eks-Karesidenan Surakarta and Surakarta city, Sukoharjo, Boyolali, Karanganyar, Wonogiri and Sragen. Since 2016, Solo Peduli has been legalized as LAZ of Central Java. Thus, the potential of the ZIS fund of Solo Peduli is greater than what is currently collected. In summary, there is a gap between *das Sollen* and *das Sain*. This gap shows that the performance of Solo Peduli must be improved. In addition, it is important to research the ideal model of ZIS management in Solo Peduli as it relates to its role in the empowerment of the poor community.

Literary Review

The doctoral dissertation written by Patmawati⁶ entitled "Economic Role of Zakat in Reducing Income Inequality and Poverty in Selangor" shows that zakat has successfully reduced the level of poverty from several aspects. Regarding the point of poverty incidence, zakat has reduced the poverty in Selangor from 62% to 47% because of the total number of poor people who have the right to zakat (*mustahik*). The significant reduction happened primarily in rural areas⁵.

The research in Indonesia by *Magnificence of Zakat / IMZ* (2010) published in Huda found that zakat managed by Lembaga Amil Zakat reduces the *mustahik's*

⁵ (Patmawati Ibrahim, 2006)



poverty, poverty depth, and level of the most extreme poverty. The empirical score of household poverty can be reduced by 10,79%. It shows that if zakat is managed professionally, the implication of poverty alleviation produces a significant result ⁶.

Pramanik (1993) stated that zakat can play a significant role in redistributing the income and wealth of Muslims. Furthermore, he stated that in a macroeconomic context, zakat can provide an incentive to improve production, investment and work. Zakat is the best wealth transfer mechanism in society ⁷.

The history of Islamic civilization shows that there has been an improvement of people's welfare as a result of a zakat management system run by the state, thus providing a sense of Islamic and human glory. The role of the state is very strategic in the management of zakat, especially in Indonesia. Zakat potencies are large considering the large number of Muslims. In addition, the potency of the law has provided an opportunity for and serious attention to using zakat a way towards poverty alleviation and the prosperity of society (Solihah, 2015).

However, the lack of professionalism and social responsibility values in managing zakat causes suboptimal management. This is true for most Muslim countries. As shown by Yeni Ratnayuningsih (2013), the role of Islamic mass media in improving the quality of life of Muslim society is suboptimal (Ratnayuningsih, 2013). However, zakat could provide optimal benefits to the community.

Aziz Muslim conducted research on developing a model for empowering urban poor communities based on mosques (2016). He found that the empowerment of the urban poor can be optimized based on a system of social responsibility (Muslim, 2016). If it can be performed in the mosque environment, then it can be developed in other institutions.

This study aims to develop the ideal ZIS management model for the purpose of empowering the poor, based on social responsibility, at Yayasan Solo Peduli.

Methodology

The study used field qualitative research from the primary data obtained by the functionaries of Solo Peduli as the primary informants and data from several *mizakki* and *mustahik* as additional informants. The primary data were collected from intensive interviews with informants, observation of several activities related to the research topic and a documentation study to included needed data. A *Focus Group Discussion* was conducted to facilitate the process of sharpening and deepening the research material. The research was conducted from August 2016 to August 2017. The collected data were analysed using the Miles-Hubberman interactive data analysis technique, which requires continuous analysis throughout the research process.

The Profile of Yayasan Solo Peduli

Yayasan Solo Peduli Umat, or Solo Peduli, was established during the Indonesian monetary crisis of 1998. The establishment could not be separated from the existence of Harian Solo Pos. Thus, many people assumed that Solo Peduli

⁶ (Huda, Novarini, & Mardoni, 2015)

⁷ (Huda et al., 2015)



belonged to *Harian Solo Pos*. The establishment of *Solo Peduli* was initiated by Danie H Soe'oed, the chief of *Harian Solo Pos*, in collaboration with *Yayasan Dompot Dua'fa Harian Republika*. Since its establishment, *Solo Peduli* has focused on the empowerment of the poor community by collecting the *ZISWAF* (Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, Wakaf) and other social donations.

It was founded under now outdated management but, importantly, start of the development of *Solo Peduli* was corroborated materially and immaterially by *Harian Solo Pos*, which included facilitating advertisement and distributing news about its activities over the first three years of its existence. Moreover, *Solo Pos*, *Yayasan Dompot Dhu'afa Harian Republika* had an important role in the development of *Solo Peduli*. The management of *Solo Peduli* was initially operated by the *Dompot Dhu'afa* staff until *Solo Peduli* was stable and independent in 2005.

The vision and philosophy of *Solo Peduli's* activities

Since *Solo Peduli's* establishment, its founding father has had a vision for the future of the institution. The vision regards the major function of *Solo Peduli*, which is to collect social donations to help the poor. If the given vision of *Solo Peduli* is evaluated using the standard definition of a vision – a statement about an institution's goal for the future – it is not a true vision. Not only is it too simple but also it is not futuristic because it only delineates the major responsibility and function of the institution. However, the next development stage, under the management of Supomo beginning in late 2015, the new vision of *Solo Peduli* was formulated. It is "to be an example of social institution in empowering *ummat* and creating them as independent *ummat*" (the profile of 20 years of *Solo Peduli*).

The vision intends that *Solo Peduli* is a social institution that works fairly and professionally and creates an independent *ummat* through its contribution to social empowerment (Supomo's explanation in the interview on February 05, 2017). To transform the vision into actions taken by stake holders, the system was often run by the managers of *Solo Peduli* by directing the staff of *Solo Peduli*, donors, and the public.

The new vision created a spirit of determination in the chief, managers and staff of *Solo Peduli*. The new chief tries to change the institution paradigm from one that used to wait for donations from patrons or donors before planning work, to one that actively offers the programme to motivate people to give their donation via *Solo Peduli*. The paradigm change begins with formulating a well-planned and continuous work programme. In this way, *Solo Peduli* would no longer be an institution that works incidentally and reactively but an institution with social ideals, that is solid and is sustainable.

The idea to change the institutional paradigm was inspired because *Solo Peduli* lacked the support of citizens, especially in the early days of its establishment. Over its first five years, *Solo Peduli* was only a charity institution and did not have empowerment programme. As a charity institution, *Solo Peduli* waits for a donation and then it distributes the donation. Therefore, Supomo made a breakthrough by changing the paradigm of the institution from that of a charity institution to that of an active institution conducting a community empowerment programme. The intention of the planned and long-term work programme is for



Solo Peduli to give the all-free to the poor from birth to death.

After changing the paradigm of the institution, Supomo designed various programmes. In Supomo's mind, the programmes should not be isolated to one area, because the problem of poverty in society is not singular but plural and its components are interlocked. Therefore, the programme designed by Solo Peduli is not single but plural and interlocking. Of course, the programmes are designed to help the poor. These programmes include: First, a free ambulance service for the poor, which was initiated in 2006. Second, the Free Maternity Home (RGB), which was created in 2007. In accordance with the spirit of providing a free comprehensive programme for the poor, from birth to death, the programmes have different goals. If the ambulance is free for the poor when he/she dies, then the RGB covers the needs of the poor beginning in their prenatal stage, i.e., conception to birth, through childhood, because the development of the RGB included the Mother and Child Clinic. In the following years (2007 and 2008), the programme of education for the poor was initiated. This education programme includes a free boarding school for elementary and junior high school students. In 2009, a free educational programme for senior high school students was established in SMK Smart Informatika for children from poor families. Going further, Supomo and other Solo Peduli managers are obsessed with completing this long-term programme, which includes plans to establish a university and a burial place for the poor. Additional goals include the development of many other programmes, such as scholarships for poor students, disaster response, assistance for the sick, compensation for orphans, etc.

The Solo Peduli distribution programme consists of three categories. First is the Edu & Life Skill programme. This programme includes the provision of free education assistance for elementary, junior high, and vocational students, and a scholarship for college students. Second is the Health & Humanity programme. The health programme provides free health facilities for the poor through the Maternal and Child Clinic, whilst humanitarian programmes take the form of providing humanitarian aid to the victims of humanitarian disasters, such as those in Palestine, Rohingya, etc. Third is the Empowering programme. This programme empowers poor community members, both in the field of agriculture and/or of animal husbandry.

Among these programmes, the priority of Solo Peduli is the educational programmes. Why? Because Supomo believes that education is a major problem for the poor. Education is viewed as a factor that causes many other problems. Therefore, to break the poverty cycle, education for the poor must be prioritized. For Solo Peduli, education is a strategic programme for poverty alleviation. Through education financing programmes for poor families, the impact of poor families is reduced, and the family's welfare improves. Once the child graduates from an education programme, it is hoped that the child will become independent or even an economic asset to his family.

There are 2 things to consider when designing the programme. First, is whether the programme is positive and beneficial to society. For example, why was the free vocational school established? The decision to make the Free Vocational School was based on the results of a small study. The research found that Solo is



"santri city" as well as "laskar city". However, when viewed from a religious standpoint, the society of Solo city was stagnant. Evidence is found using the parameters of political affiliation in which the people of Solo are classified into the red category (read: the voters of nationalist and leftist political parties) and not green (read: the voters of Islamic parties). Why? The research shows that children sent to boarding schools in Solo are not primarily from Solo but from outside Solo. According to Supomo, Solo citizens have several preconceptions that create a psychological distance from boarding schools (pesantren). Therefore, Solo Peduli established a formal school and it is expected that the suburban society of Solo will enrol in the school. After being educated for three years, it is expected that there will be a change in the religious attitude of the child (the student of the free vocational school) that will also occur in his family. However, according to Supomo, the Provincial Education Office released data showing that 43% of children alumni of SMP /MTs do not go on to the next level of education. Solo Peduli tries to solve that problem. Similarly, for other programmes such as Mother and Child Clinic, according to Supomo, the programme was developed based on research that found that the maternal mortality rate in Solo is still high.

Second, a programme should be liked by the community. Therefore, before creating a programme, Supomo researched whether the public, especially the rich (aghniya), would like the programme. It is important to do even though a programme that is needed by the poor will not be supported by donors if they do not like it. An example is the programme to save street children. The rehabilitation of street children is a programme really needed by the poor. However, donors are not interested in this. Therefore, the programme will not obtain funding support.

With these considerations, there are various distribution programmes and utilization of ZIS funds by Solo Peduli, until finally, it has a huge donor number, 3,500 donors. Moreover, the number of donors is an implication of the public's trust in social institutions, such as Solo Peduli. whilst public trust is an implication of branding built by Solo Peduli.

Social Responsibility based on Islamic Values

The most important institutional theories is understanding that an institution is rules of the game in society⁸. The rules include regulations that enable people to interact. Of course, the rules do not just directly exist. The rules are held because values and objectives to be realized and agreed upon by a social community, long before. A value is something that is valuable and upheld in society. The value in this case can be based on religion and culture (Gazalba, 1983). From this value, the goals that want to be achieved by a social group born. Because these values and goals, the rules of the game are created and agreed upon as guidelines for all members of the community. The rules of play here can be formal rules such as order, rules of law, and non-formal rules of custom as far as the rules of the game can form a behaviour system in society. Therefore, in the perspective of Institutional Theory, the existence of a value, the rules, the social structure, and the real behaviour of the members of the social community, constitute a unity that cannot be separated.

⁸ (Yeager, 1999)



In OPZ context, because the institution is religious organization (Islam) and in the same time is social organization; therefore, the Islamic values become the primary basis. It can be identified from the following: *first*, the understanding of the founding father of the institution towards the Islamic values, and *second*, the elaboration of Islamic values that then become the guidance for the society under its management. From this, Solo Peduli has created Syariah Board (Dewan Syariah) that then becomes the reference for OPZ.

Islam as a universal religion has regulated a comprehensive rule (syariah) for both how to do worship (man-God interaction/ *ibadah*) and how to do interaction among people (man-man interaction/ *muamalah*). Islam is the source of values for the Muslim life as an individual or communal, including the value of social responsibility. ZIS is the implementation of Muslim's social responsibility based on Islamic value. It is then ruled in *syariat (fiqh)* as an informal rule for the Moslem.

In fact, all of the founding fathers of Solo Peduli, Danie Su'ud, Arie Sadewo, and dan Mulyanto Utomo, are Muslim figures. As Muslims, they attempted to implement all Islamic teaching in their daily life, especially in their daily works. Islamic values have become their spirit in doing all activities. As Arie Sadewo is the Head of Harian Republika, a daily newspaper affiliates to Indonesian Moslem Scholars Association (ICMI), Danie Su'ud is one of the chiefs of Harian Umum Solo Pos. Both of these two figures are indeed not the members of any Islamic organization but their Islamic spirit cannot be questioned.

However, in the early days of its establishment, the Islamization of Solo Peduli had not been so strong. This is partly due to the lack of Islamic programmes owned by Solo Peduli at that time. It was nothing more than a general philanthropic organization, which was raising social funds from society and then channelled to other needy communities. The re-enforcement of Islamic nuance occurred in the following development periods.

Aside from being a Muslim, the other side of the founders of Solo Peduli is their position as middle and upper society in the social structure of the time. All three were selected scholars from leading universities, Danie Su'ud and Arie Sadewo graduated from the University of Indonesia, and Mulyanto Utomo graduated from Sebelas Maret University; therefore, with their capacity at that time, they obtained the top leadership position of both mass media outlets (Harian Republika and Solo Pos). This is important to mention because the background is certainly influential on their religious understanding. For them – as Muslim scholars - Islam is a religion that not only teaches worship (*hablum minallah*) but also teaches how to create positive interaction/ *muamalat (hablum minannas)*. Therefore, if we look back at the history of Indonesia, every historical stage was mostly led by educated people, and most of them are Muslims. The social struggle - independence - is a source of their religious practise as Muslims.

The social roles of Arie Sadewo, Danie Su'ud, and Mulyanto Utomo in the social fields have become evidence of their understanding on Islamic social responsibility doctrine in their religion. As Muslims, they believe that Islam is not merely a religion of individual-ritual dimension, which is sufficiently practised by the execution of various worship services but a religion with a social dimension that must be practised in social life. Among the social dimensions of Islam is its teaching



about caring for the weak (fakir, poor, orphan, thus, on)

Thus, it can be concluded that, the establishment of Solo Peduli was driven by the spirit of the value of social responsibility in Islam. Even in its founding process related to Solo Pos, Solo Peduli is organically not related to Solo Pos. Solo Peduli is not some of Solo Pos. Solo Peduli's relationship with Solo Pos can be said to be a coincidence relationship, because at that time Harian Peduli was established by one of Solo Pos's leaders; therefore, Solo Peduli obtained several corroborates and facilities from Solo Pos such as the support in form of publication and free advertisement, and secretarial room facility subsidized by such of CSR Solo Pos. However, after Danie Su'ud no longer led Solo Pos, all of these facilities no longer exist.

Further development of Solo Peduli occurred over the leadership of Supomo at the end of 2005. At that phase, there was a process of strengthening the spirit of Islamization. This development must certainly be understood as an integral some of what the founding father of Solo Peduli had performed at the beginning of its establishment. Strengthening the spirit of Islam is characterized by strong commitment of the leaders of Solo Peduli to make this institution fully run according to the norm of sharia. As a guarantee that this institution runs according to sharia, the existence of Sharia Board becomes important. Therefore, at the beginning of his leadership phase, Supomo formed Sharia Board as the organizational structure of Solo Peduli. In addition, there was also a development and conceptualization of programmes that not only used Islamic terminology but also represented the spirit of social responsibility based on Islamic values. The establishment of Sharia Council is not just a matter of institutional strengthening but must also be interpreted as a declaration of quality assurance of Islamic value standards. As the institution with Islamic quality assurance, the concept of Sharia Board on social responsibility according to Islam must be understood before we understand the actualization of the concept on the empirically in the form of Solo Peduli institution.

According to the Shariah Board of Solo Peduli, the existence of social responsibility in Islam should not be doubted. In addition to having individual responsibility for himself, Muslim also has a social responsibility, responsibility to help and save others in the world to hereafter. There are many verses of the Qur'an and al Hadith explain the values of social responsibility, such as the verses about preaching, paying zakat, infak, sedekah, and waqf. In terms of donating to others, the value of social responsibility in Islam results in S. Al Maun, 1-3. "(1) Do you know (people) who belie the religion? (2) Then, it is the person who rebukes the orphan, (3) and does not encourage the feeding of the poor."

OPZ is an institution established by the government or Muslims to implement and realize all Islamic values and shariah (teachings) on ZIS. To be able to implement this basic task, OPZ has three functions: 1) mobilizing the community to realize zakat, 2) assisting the community in managing zakat, and 3) being a partner of government or state in empowering society from religious side.

As a derivation of Islamic values and shari'ah, the OPZ in carrying out its primary duties and functions needs to be accompanied by expert institutions and have the authority to ensure that everything that the OPZ does is within the Islamic sharia corridor. At that point, the Sharia Board should be positioned in the



institutional structure of the OPZ.

In terms of distribution programmes, the Solo Peduli Sharia Board believes that the distribution of ZIS funds should follow the Sunnah of the Prophet and his former companions. According to him, over the time of the Prophet zakat funds are distributed in two forms, consumptive and productive. Consumptive distribution is given to the non-productive mustahik resulted by the age factor or the condition of the soul and body. This consumptive distribution is given over time, as long as the mustahik still requires. While the productive distribution is given in the form of working capital to mustahik who is still productive, if at this time, he becomes a mustahik, then next, he will become a muzaki.

For the functions and responsibilities of LAZ to work properly, public trust is one of the key words. To gain trust from the community, then LAZ must be managed with trustfully, accountably and professionally.

On the other hand, to gain trust from the public, an OPZ must obtain the legitimacy from the institution that has the authority for it, for example the Sharia Board. To that end, Muinudinillah emphasized the importance of empowering the Sharia Board. This institution can serve to provide sharia consultation, as well as a controlling institution.

From the standpoint of institutional theory, the values adopted by an institution or social organization will be implemented in the form of conventions and other elements of the social interaction framework structure both within the institution's internal sphere and the interaction of the institution with outside elements. For Solo Peduli, a positive norm system based on the teachings of Islam and the constitution of the government, demands to be broken down and implemented in the structure, behaviour and culture of Solo Peduli institution. The Islamic values mentioned are of course the value of social responsibility and especially in its relation to the status, duties and functions as Zakat Management Organization.

Poor community empowerment as social responsibility

The background of the poor community empowerment by Solo Peduli is Islamic concept and social responsibility. It means that it is conducted as the implementation of the concept of social responsibility based on Islamic values. Islam as a religion that wants to create a fair and egalitarian society in all aspects including economy, has a rule (*syariat*) that the rich people must help the poor. The rule is implemented in form of ZIS. Thus, Solo Peduli has obtained a mandate to alleviate the poverty in society so the social inequality can be reduced. The poverty alleviation is primarily design by using society empowerment approach. Therefore, it can be said that ZIS is the primary input in the empowerment of the poor programmed by Solo Peduli. Without ZIS funding, the empowerment of the poor will not occur.

In carrying out community empowerment, Solo Peduli has the concept of "utilizing ZIS funds to serve the needs of the poor all the time." As we know that poverty often blocks the poor to access the primary resources of life. Therefore, Solo Peduli utilizes the collected ZIS funds to provide various resources needed by the poor, which include education, health, and economics.

Another input contributing to the empowerment programme implemented by



Solo Peduli is the existence of other institution or partner that was deliberately established by Yayasan Solo Peduli to manage their programmes. The partner institutions include the Smart Cendekia Foundation, which manages educational empowerment; Smart Medika Foundation, which manages the implementation of health empowerment; and the Empowering and Charity Division, which later became the responsible of community empowerment activities in the field of economics.

The success of empowerment implemented by Solo Peduli is also corroborated by the existence of mustahik who voluntarily send their children to follow the education process at various education institutions owned by Solo Peduli. The presence, dedication, commitment, and genuineness of the students of this dhuafa family in following the entire step and empowerment process are the primary subjects in the transformation process that later will change them to be a powerful impoverished society. In empowerment through education, mustahik or beneficiaries as well as the primary subjects of empowerment are not ordinary people but people who have been qualified to become agents of change. To obtain the educational empowerment, they must fulfil the requirements including such as being identified as a member of poor family, having several achievements and positive religious spirit. Such requirements must be treated by Solo Peduli primarily because of the limited capacity of education institutions owned by Solo Peduli. For empowerment in other areas - health and economics - the requirements of the beneficiaries of the empowerment programme are not as restrictive as education. Among the requirements for joining the empowerment programme in the last two areas is the genuineness to be involved in the empowerment process.

When compared to other institutions that choose to provide money to support education, health and economics, Solo Peduli chooses a different strategy. With ZIS funding, Solo Peduli has built various facilities in the form of educational institutions from elementary, junior high school, vocational school, and boarding school, even to universities, - the latter is still a plan - all of which are dedicated free of charge to the poor and needy. There are also various facilities courses, educational institutions (LPK), and health facilities. By establishing these facilities, Solo Peduli feels more able to design and realize the various education, training and health facilities in accordance with their idealism. In the case of educational institutions, for example, Solo Peduli can create vision-mission design, curriculum, determine the human resources needed, and the infrastructure needed as they wish. By taking students from underprivileged families to be educated at these institutions, Solo Peduli feels more able to ensure that they have implemented the task of saving and empowering children from underprivileged families, without having to worry about the influence of contamination of undesirable factors.

In the field of education, Solo Peduli uses formal and non-formal education channels to empower the poor. The formal education channels include SD IT, SMP IT, and SMK IT. To be able to implement the concept of education fully, the students of those schools are required to enter in boarding schools or dormitories. Therefore, pesantren and dormitories are non-formal educational institutions established by Solo Peduli as a complementary institution of various formal education institutions.



With dormitories and boarding schools, Solo Peduli can provide religious education as well as build mentality of independence, simplicity, not easily despair, etc. that important for the students in their future.

If compared to the number of poor students served, the existence of educational institutions established by Solo Peduli is unequal. There are too many students and too limited institutions number. To extend the empowerment in the field of education, Solo Peduli also has foster parent programmes for junior to senior high school/ vocational students not covered by the various formal schools of Solo Peduli. To optimize the achievement of educational goals, Solo Peduli has a mentoring programme for beneficiary students of foster parent programmes. Mentoring contains religious, ethical and moral coaching, and in the same time the mentoring programme is used to observe the student progress.

Solo Peduli also carries out the empowerment of university students from poor families in form of scholarships. Similar to the foster parent programmes, scholarships are also corroborated by mentoring programmes to these students. This mentoring programme is given to provide mental spiritual coaching, as well as consultation and monitoring; therefore, the students can complete the targeted lecture on time.

Through the various educational programmes aforementioned, Solo Peduli carries out empowering programmes starting from building awareness and building capacity to life skill debriefing as a power to the beneficiaries of the programme. The awareness is given in the form of spiritual development through the implementation of various types of worship as their habit such as habituating praying in congregation at the beginning of time, maktsurat dzikir, reciting al Quran in groups, tahfidzul Quran, and so forth. By following these programmes, the students will have a high commitment to practise their religious teachings throughout their lives. Through this awareness building step, Solo Peduli also tries to build the students' confidence so they can interact with all people from different social levels. The building of self-confidence is also important to avoid the students from limiting their self from actualization and potential development

After building the awareness, the beneficiaries are also given capacity-building programmes. This capacity building includes enlightening, strengthening the knowledge, and developing the business skills. This entrepreneurship capacity-building is performed by involving them in various training forums and business seminars. By strengthening their capacity, students not only gain knowledge and skills from their school but also obtain preparation to be self-employed through entrepreneurship when they have graduated from school or college.

Empowerment through education can be said to be the primary empowerment programme conducted by Solo Peduli. Among the reasons is that education is a strategic area for poverty alleviation. Thus, as the primary area, the field of education requires more financing compared to other areas.

Empowerment for the poor is also conducted by Solo Peduli through the health sector. Health is a primary need for human beings. With their poor status, many people cannot access health facilities. For that reason, Solo Peduli with ZIS fund collected established health institution in the form of Inpatient Polyclinic (PRI) of Mother and Child. Through this institution the poor can obtain free health care



facilities by becoming members. Through these health institutions, Solo Peduli not only provides health facilities but also empowers the poor. The steps of empowerment include awareness raising, capacity building, and empowering.

In addition, empowerment for the poor is also performed by Solo Peduli through the field of economics. Empowerment in the field of economy was implemented by Solo Peduli in Dusun Sepondok Ngargoyoso Karanganyar. It was selected based on the potential of the area, where guavas are the easiest plant to grow. However, due to the lack of skilled people to utilize the guava fruit, the guava harvest cannot be utilized optimally. Seeing the issue, Solo Peduli collected the people of Dusun Sepondok to make them aware that they have more potential. Several trainings are given then about the utilization of guava fruit for various types of food, such as dodol, dumplings, and chips. They were also taught the technique of packing. In addition, after they were skillful in processing and packing their new products, Solo Peduli provided the equipment needed along the process.

Moreover, guava, Sepondok is also suitable for growing grass plants. On the side lines of the guava plants, there were large grass plants. In addition, again, due to the lack of awareness, skill and capital, the stock farmers cannot observe the potential from these grass plants. Seeing this potential, Solo Peduli through the Empowerment and Charity Division started to empower the people of Sepondok from farming sector.

There were several steps. First, the community is made aware of the programme to motivate them to maximize the potential benefits to their village. The people were designated as goat farmers. The group of farmers consisted of 7 people. The group was then given the ability to build capacity through goat fattening training. In addition, once they were capable of completing and had mastered farming techniques, Solo Peduli provided funds for the establishment of a shared cage in the garden belonging to one of the group members, Mrs. Dwi Haryanti. Finally, Solo Peduli provided the livestock seed of 40 goats to be fattened.

This cattle fattening was performed through a system of profit sharing. After cutting the price of the seeds, the results were divided, 60% for farmers and 40% for Solo Peduli. Only once they were sufficiently fat, in 40 days, the goats were sold and, as a result, each person earned income from the profits equalling Rp.850.000,00 (eight hundred and fifty thousand rupiah).

The output of the community empowerment activities is as follows: First, the development of human resources for the poor who have spiritual wealth. Spiritual wealth is characterized by obedience to worship in their lives, ranging from diligent practise of prayer, dhikr, Qur'an memorization, etc. The goal of the commitment to worship is the development of noble characters of the beneficiaries of the Solo Peduli empowerment programme. In addition, the new human resources also have an improved mentality, such as increased confidence, discipline, persistence, and the audacity to be independent.

Second, the goal is not only to improve mentalities but also for the new human resources to have sufficient entrepreneurship skills. SMK IT alumni, for example, are not only experts in terms of assembling and repairing computers, making graphic designs and other IT skills but also they are skilled in marketing and business.

Third, in terms of institutional elements, several alumni of SMK IT (several of which are the informants of this study), own moderate businesses with a turnover of about Rp. 12.000.000,00, - (twelve million rupiah) every month. Indeed, not all alumni became entrepreneurs first, several of them continued to study at several famous universities in Indonesia, such as Universitas Gajah Mada (UGM), Sebelas Maret University (UNS), Universitas Brawijaya (UB), IAIN, etc.

Fourth, from the environmental aspect, the alumni of education institutions of Solo Peduli have established various networks. This is similar to the alumni of SMK IT who have an association, KLASIKA (Keluarga Alumni SMK Smart Informatika Surakarta). The alumni network not only functions to tie the alumni emotionally but also becomes the medium to form a business network. An example is Siyami Andriani, the owner of a Muslim clothing wholesale shop, who has on-line marketing network that is mostly composed of alumni of SMK IT.

The outcome of the programme for the empowerment of the poor organized by Solo Peduli include: First, the birth of new entrepreneurs who diligently worship and have a positive morality. Second, the increase of the independence and welfare of the poor. Third, the continuity of network-based businesses between musthik and muzaki/ donatur. Fourth, the availability of sustainable donations as the capital of social transformation.

Based on the above description of the implementation of the empowerment of the poor by Solo Peduli, the model of empowerment can be depicted using the chart shown in Figure 01.

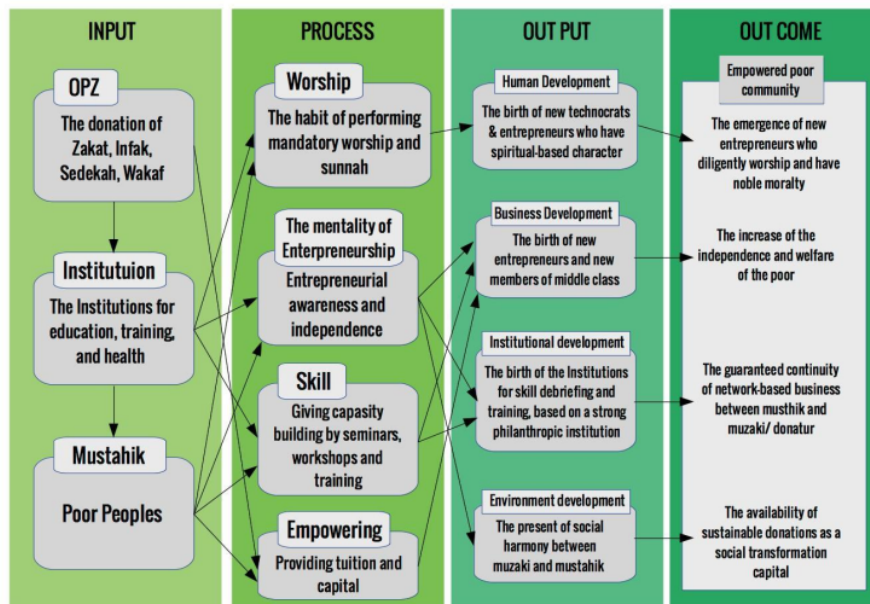


Figure 01. The model of the empowerment of the poor by Solo Peduli



Conclusion

The integration of Islamic values with the concept of social responsibility can optimize the empowerment of the poor. An empowerment model based on Islamic values and social responsibility in Solo Peduli resulted in the emergence of new entrepreneurs who diligently worship and have noble morality, an increase in the independence and welfare of the poor, the guaranteed continuity of network-based businesses between musthik and muzaki/ donatur, and the availability of sustainable donations as social transformation capital.

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