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Exploring the Potential of Professional Zakat among Digital Content Workers: A Study on Facebook Pro Creators in Rarampadende Village, Sigi Regency

Sitti Aisya[1]*, Sindy Pratiwi[2] & Nadia Nadia[3]
[1] *Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University Datokarama Palu*
[2,3]*Faculty of Sharia, State Islamic University Datokarama Palu*

***Corresponding Author:** **Sitti Aisya**, E-mail: sittiaisya@uindatokarama.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the potential of professional zakat among digital workers who earn income through Facebook Pro monetization in Rarampadende Village, Dolo Barat District, Sigi Regency. The emergence of digital professions such as content creators, YouTubers, and social media influencers has transformed the modern economy, presenting new challenges and opportunities for Islamic financial obligations, particularly zakat. Using an empirical legal approach combined with qualitative descriptive analysis, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving local Facebook Pro content creators. The findings reveal that despite having considerable income potential, most digital workers lack awareness regarding the obligation of zakat on their professional earnings. The implementation of the Fatwa Ijtima' Ulama Komisi Fatwa Se-Indonesia VIII No. 04/VIII/2024 concerning zakat on digital income provides a relevant framework for guiding these professions toward compliance with Islamic law. The study concludes that digital zakat has significant potential to enhance socio-economic justice if effectively managed through institutional and technological integration.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of digital technology has given rise to new forms of professional activity that make significant contributions to the modern economy. Among these professions, digital workers—such as Facebook Pro creators—represent a growing community of individuals who earn income independently, with revenue sources that differ fundamentally from conventional employment. Although their economic contributions are clearly visible, their level of compliance with Islamic financial obligations, particularly *zakat*, remains uncertain.
In fact, the potential *zakat al-mihan* (professional zakat) from workers in the digital sector presents an opportunity to increase awareness and participation in fulfilling zakat obligations, which in turn can positively contribute to the economic welfare of the Muslim community (Aziz, 2019).

*__Sitti Aisya__ is an Teacher Trainin of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University Datokarama Palu,Indonesia. This paper was presented at the 4th International Conference on Islamic and Interdisciplinary Studies (ICIIS) 2025, as a presenter, organized by the Postgraduate School of State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

The concept of *professional zakat* (*zakat al-māl al-mustafād*) originates from the broader framework of economic justice in Islam. Classical scholars such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi (2007) and Didin Hafidhuddin (2022) assert that income derived from professional activities is subject to zakat once it reaches the *nisab* (minimum threshold) and *haul* (one-year period). Modern interpretations have further expanded this concept to include new forms of income generated through digital platforms. Content creators, therefore, can be categorized under *al-māl al-mustafād*, which refers to wealth or earnings acquired from work that is not directly subject to taxation (Suryorini, 2012).

According to Yusuf al-Qaradawi (2005), *zakat al-mihnah* (professional zakat) is analogous to zakat on monetary wealth. The *nisab* amount and the applicable zakat rate are equivalent to that of cash—namely, 2.5% of the remaining annual net income (gross income minus necessary living expenses such as food, clothing, and housing installments, if applicable). Regarding professions subject to zakat, al-Qaradawi explains that anyone whose income is not less than that of a farmer who is obligated to pay agricultural zakat must also pay zakat on their professional income, regardless of the capital or working conditions involved.

The obligation of professional zakat can be established through *qiyas* (analogical reasoning), by drawing a parallel between professional zakat and other types of zakat, such as zakat on gold, silver, or agricultural produce. In the Qur'an, Allah commands zakat on agricultural yields that reach a *nisab* of five *wasq* (equivalent to approximately 815.758 kilograms of rice), with a rate of 5% for irrigated crops requiring expenses, and 10% for rain-fed crops that incur no additional cost. Based on this reasoning, if agricultural output of relatively lesser value is subject to zakat, then income from certain professions with significantly higher economic value is certainly more deserving of zakat as an expression of social justice and religious responsibility (Faharuddin, 2024). Several previous studies, including those by Fitri Handari et al. (2024) and Dian Burdijaya (2019), have examined the zakat obligations of YouTubers and other digital income earners, indicating a growing recognition of digital zakat within contemporary Islamic economic discourse.

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3. Methodology

This study employs an **empirical legal method** combined with **qualitative descriptive analysis**. Data were collected through direct interviews, field observations, and document analysis conducted in Rarampadende Village, Dolo Barat District, Sigi Regency. The key informants in this research include two active Facebook Pro creators, community leaders, and local religious figures.

Data obtained from the field were analyzed through the processes of data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. The validity of the data was then examined using triangulation techniques, which encompassed methodological triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and source triangulation to ensure the credibility and reliability of the findings.

4. Results and Discussion

The results of the study show that digital workers in Rarampadende Village have varying levels of income. Aan Setiawan, a Facebook Pro digital worker, earns approximately IDR 8,000,000 (eight million rupiah) per month, while Kurnia Sandi earns around IDR 3,000,000 (three million rupiah) per month. These variations in income are derived from Facebook Pro monetization. The sources of income for Facebook Pro digital workers come from features such as Stars, Reels ads, bonuses, and in-stream ads.

The potential for calculating professional zakat at BAZNAS (National Amil Zakat Agency) of Sigi Regency can be determined by multiplying the total net income (after deducting basic living expenses) by 2.5%. The *nisab* for professional zakat is equivalent to the value of 85 grams of gold per year. If a person's income reaches or exceeds the *nisab*, they are obligated to pay zakat. The calculation process for professional zakat is as follows:(a) Calculate the net income by summing total monthly earnings and deducting basic needs such as living costs and debt repayments;(b) Determine the *nisab*, which is equivalent to the value of 85 grams of gold; and(c) Calculate zakat by multiplying 2.5% with the net income if it meets or exceeds the *nisab*. The result is the total amount of professional zakat that must be paid. For example, the potential zakat of Facebook Pro content creators or digital workers in Rarampadende Village can be illustrated as follows: if the price of gold per gram is IDR 1,000,000, the *nisab* for professional zakat is 85 grams × IDR 1,000,000 = IDR 85,000,000 per year. If Mr. Aan Setiawan's net income is IDR 8,000,000 per month, then his annual income is IDR 96,000,000, which exceeds the *nisab*. Therefore, his professional zakat obligation is 2.5% × IDR 96,000,000 = IDR 2,400,000 per year. Meanwhile, for Mr. Kurnia Sandi, with a monthly net income of IDR 3,000,000 or IDR 36,000,000 annually, his income is below the *nisab* threshold. Thus, he is not yet obliged to pay zakat but is considered to have potential for zakat eligibility (Sindi, 2025).

Field findings reveal that, according to the researcher, the income of Facebook Pro digital workers is relatively high and should already be subject to zakat. However, most of them are unaware of the existence of professional zakat for digital workers and the required rate of payment. Mr. Aan Setiawan stated regarding zakat from his Facebook Pro income:
"I did not know that there is a professional zakat for digital workers. Therefore, I have never paid zakat from my content income. I do not know where to pay or to which institution I should distribute it. I have no information about zakat organizations or proper distribution channels."

Based on this, it can be concluded that Facebook Pro digital content creators in Rarampadende Village, Dolo Barat District, Sigi Regency, have significant potential for professional zakat contribution. However, they have limited understanding of the obligation to pay zakat on professions that yield substantial income. They are also unaware of the types and rates of zakat applicable to digital work. Although their income often exceeds the *nisab* level, their awareness of zakat obligations remains very low. The main challenges identified include the absence of institutional guidelines, low literacy regarding digital zakat, and the lack of integration between online income platforms and zakat management institutions such as BAZNAS. One major obstacle for digital workers in fulfilling their zakat obligations is the lack of educational outreach from local zakat institutions. Consequently, digital workers and content creators have insufficient understanding of zakat due to minimal education and socialization efforts from the village government or other responsible authorities. They are therefore unaware that digital professions are also subject to zakat obligations.

From an economic perspective, the digital economy presents significant potential. Facebook Pro digital workers can earn substantial income through their creativity and ability to promote products or services. The flexibility of digital work allows them to operate from anywhere and at any time, as long as there is a stable internet connection. Their creativity enables them to produce innovative content and market products or services effectively. From a *fatwa* (religious decree) perspective, digital workers—especially those using Facebook Professional Mode—are expected to understand the obligation of zakat and ensure that their content aligns with Islamic principles. This awareness enables them to conduct digital activities ethically and in accordance with Islamic teachings.

A *fatwa* holds an important position in Islamic jurisprudence, although it is not legally binding like formal laws or state regulations. It functions as a moral and religious guideline derived from collective *ijtihad* (scholarly interpretation). In this context, when addressing the legality of professional zakat, *fatwa* serves as an advisory mechanism that emphasizes moral responsibility within society. Based on the *Ijtima Ulama* (Scholars' Congress), the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI), through its Fatwa Commission, issued a ruling concerning zakat for digital economy actors. In the Ijtima Ulama Fatwa Commission of Indonesia VIII Decision No. 4/Ijtima Ulama/VIII/2024 on *Zakat for YouTubers, Instagram Influencers, and Other Digital Creative Economy Actors*, published in the *Indonesian Ulama Fatwa Consensus Book* in early July 2024, the MUI recognized the vast potential of zakat collection from digital creators—estimated at around two billion rupiah. The presence of digital technology is considered to have enormous potential in supporting economic and social welfare. The implementation of MUI Fatwa No. 04/VIII/2024 provides a strong legal and moral foundation for developing awareness of digital zakat among digital workers

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that professional zakat among digital workers, particularly Facebook Pro creators, holds significant potential for optimizing Islamic social finance. To actualize this potential, three strategic steps are recommended: (1) enhancing public literacy on zakat in the digital sector, (2) strengthening cooperation between digital platforms and zakat management institutions, and (3) developing technological innovations that simplify zakat collection and distribution. By integrating zakat into the digital ecosystem, the objectives of Islamic economic justice and social welfare can be more effectively achieved

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