

Almsgiving in Qur'anic Perspective

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Abstract

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Charity (sedekah) is one of the most emphasized practices in Islam. In addition to being an act of worship, charity is believed to bring numerous benefits both in this world and the Hereafter. However, the understanding of the different types of charity and their impact on social and spiritual life still requires further exploration. This study aims to examine the concept of charity from the perspective of the Qur'an, explain the various types of charity, and discuss the benefits that can be gained from this practice, both materially and spiritually. This study uses a literature review methodology, analyzing Qur'anic verses and Hadiths, along with a review of related literature on charity. The analysis involves interpreting Qur'anic verses related to charity with the help of major Tafsir works, such as Tafsir Ibn Kathir and Tafsir Jalalayn, to understand the contextual meanings. Charity is divided into two main categories: obligatory charity (sedekah wajib) and voluntary charity (sedekah sunnah). Obligatory charity includes zakat, kafarat, and nazar, while voluntary charity consists of ongoing charity (sadaqah jariyah) and regular charity. The findings indicate that charity has significant benefits, both for improving social conditions and for earning immense rewards from Allah SWT. From the Qur'anic perspective, charity is not only meant to help others but also serves as a means to purify one's wealth and increase one's piety. Charity is a primary means of drawing closer to Allah SWT. Through charity, individuals not only open the doors to provision but also gain various social and spiritual benefits. Therefore, this practice is highly recommended in Islam and should be done with sincere intention and without seeking praise from others. The rewards promised by Allah SWT for those who give charity sincerely will continue to flow, even after their death.

Keywords: Charity, Zakat, Kafarat, Nazar, Sadaqah Jariyah, Qur'an, Benefits of Charity

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INTRODUCTION

In Islam, people are encouraged to have a pure soul, be generous, and compassionate. As the final religion, Islam urges its followers to improve their lives and help, love, and care for one another through charity to eliminate poverty. Islamic education is based on teachings given by Allah SWT to His servants through His Prophets. This religion contains many teachings that encompass both social and ritual aspects. Islam offers pluralistic and integrated values, with its main goal being *Rahmatan Lil' alamin*, which touches every aspect of life. (Malik, 2019)

Experts from various backgrounds strive to interpret and experience Islamic sermons according to their capabilities. To achieve salvation in this world and the hereafter, educators, education practitioners, and educational theorists must engage with this knowledge, which is packaged in education.

Islam achieves salvation both in this world and the hereafter by emphasizing obedience, cleanliness from sin, and peace. This stems from the literal meanings of the word *Islam*, such as *al-salam*, which means to submit, obey, and surrender; *al-salam* and *al-slim*, which mean peace and security; and *al-salam* and *al-salamah*, which mean physical and mental purity and safety.

Muslims must be obedient and humble in practicing good behavior to maintain both external and internal cleanliness. This leads to trustworthiness and peace, both in this world and the hereafter. The Qur'an and Hadith are the main sources of Islamic law, including laws that establish and resolve issues. The content of the Qur'an is a comprehensive collection of laws (Ramayulis, 2013)

Moreover, the Qur'an is the primary source of Islamic teachings because it outlines how we must obey the Prophet Muhammad SAW and explains the expressions in the Qur'an, while the Hadith serves as the second source of law after the Qur'an, providing guidance on what should and should not be done in everyday life. It teaches ethics, worship, beliefs, and laws (Lubis & Ritonga, 2023; Lubis, 2023).

Although the Qur'an is not a book of knowledge or philosophy, it provides explanations on everything humans need to survive. However, within it, there are discussions filled with lessons on knowledge and philosophy. The Qur'an has transformed the Arab world and humanity as a whole since it was first revealed. With the teachings and knowledge contained in the Qur'an, many aspects of human life have been improved. Some people believe that the Qur'an encompasses all knowledge and sciences, both in this world and the hereafter, including the command to give charity.

The Qur'an contains detailed instructions advising Muslims to give charity to others who are also Muslim. This is highly encouraged in Islam, as it is one of the actions taught by the Prophet Muhammad SAW and beloved by Allah SWT. Giving a portion of one's wealth to those in need not only helps improve the welfare of the community but also brings one closer to Allah SWT. Therefore, it is important to continue increasing the practice of charity in daily life as an act of worship and care for others. (Nata, 2021)

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in writing the scientific journal titled "Charity from the Qur'anic Perspective" is a literature study with a bibliographic review. This method aims to strengthen the analysis by supporting it with robust theoretical sources. To analyze the concept of charity from the perspective of the Qur'an, the literature study process involves gathering data from various sources, including the Qur'an, books, and scholarly articles.

In this way, we can search for references about charity in the Qur'an. In the creation of the journal "Charity from the Qur'anic Perspective," we also employ the method of interpreting verses using major tafsirs such as Tafsir Ibn

Kathir, Tafsir Jalalayn, or Tafsir Al-Misbah to understand the contextual meaning of those verses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Charity (Sedekah)

Charity, or sedekah, is a term frequently used by Muslims. The word sedekah comes from the Arabic word "shadaqah," which is derived from the root word sidq (or sidiq), meaning "truth." Charity is an action that is beloved by Allah SWT. There are many verses in the Qur'an that encourage giving charity, one of which is found in Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 271:

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

“If you disclose your charity, it is well; but if you conceal it and give it to the poor, it is better for you. And He will remove from you some of your misdeeds. And Allah is All-Aware of what you do.”(Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah: 271)

This verse explains that charity should be given with sincerity, without the intention of showing off or boasting. Charity can be in the form of obligatory zakat or voluntary *sedekah*, as long as it is given with a pure intention and without pride over the wealth that is donated. (Maulana, 2020)

The verse also highlights that giving charity to the poor without announcing it to others is better. This helps prevent arrogance and greed, while also preserving the dignity of the poor who receive the charity. However, in certain situations, it may be necessary to show one's charitable acts if it serves a greater purpose, such as encouraging others to follow suit. By giving charity sincerely from lawful wealth, Allah will forgive some of your mistakes. (Firdaus, 2017)

Charity is a highly recommended practice in Islam. Whoever gives charity for the sake of Allah SWT will receive rewards that are multiplied by 700 times from Allah SWT, and even more than that, including the wealth that has been donated. Great rewards await those who distribute their wealth to help the poor, orphans, widows, and those in need. This will benefit them both in this world and in the hereafter. (Saputra, 2022)

The Prophet Muhammad SAW said that the reward for giving charity is equivalent to the reward of those who strive in the way of Allah SWT. The Prophet SAW also said that anyone who helps a widow or the poor will receive a reward as if they are someone who is striving in the path of Allah, or as someone fasting during the day and worshipping at night. (Hadith from *Muttafaq 'Alaih*)

Types of Charity (Sedekah)

Charity brings one closer to God, helps others, and brings blessings to those in need. (Hadziq, 2013) As previously mentioned, charity is not limited to money; it can also be in the form of goods or services. Charity (*hadaqah*) is divided into two main categories: obligatory charity (*sadaqah wajib*) and voluntary charity (*sadaqah sunnah*). These types of charity include:

1. Obligatory Charity (*Sedekah Wajib*)

The charity that a Muslim is obligated to give is in accordance with Islamic law. The following is an explanation of the mandatory charity:

a. Zakat

Zakat is one type of mandatory charity that must be given by Muslims who meet certain criteria. Zakat is due on wealth that reaches the *nisab* (minimum amount) after one year. The obligatory zakat is 2.5% of the total wealth that reaches the *nisab*. Zakat is given to eight categories of recipients, including the poor, the needy, debtors, and the like. (Hadziq, 2013)

Zakat is used to purify wealth by helping those in need and improving social conditions. (Paslah et al., 2021)

b. Kafarat

Kafarat is a mandatory charity given as compensation for a mistake or violation. The payment of *fidyah* must be made according to the prescribed amount, as outlined in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Maidah, verse 89.

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَّدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ ۖ فَكَفِّرْتُمْ ۖ إِطْعَامَ عَشْرَةِ مَسْكِينٍ ۖ
مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ۖ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ۚ ذَلِكَ كَفْرُهُ
أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ ۚ وَاحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ ۚ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

This verse explains various types of atonement for sins and the penalties for those who intentionally or unintentionally violate their oaths. However, in this verse, unintentional oaths are not subject to atonement. Allah SWT will not punish someone who unintentionally swears by saying, "No, by Allah," or "Indeed, by Allah," but Allah SWT will punish those who swear intentionally. If someone takes an oath, they must feed ten poor people, providing the same type of food they typically offer to their family or buy them new clothes. (Nainggolan, Yuni Martha, 2012)

If someone is unable to perform one of the prescribed methods of atonement, they must fast for three days, with the hope that Allah will forgive the sins associated with the oath they took. This is the rule for the punishment of an intentionally broken oath. (Putri, 2020) It is important to keep your promises so that you do not swear unnecessarily, especially when making false oaths. This is a reminder from the Qur'an to make you grateful for the blessings Allah has given you. (Sami & Nafik HR, 2015)

In this verse, Allah instructs Muslims to avoid the actions of Satan. There are various types of atonement for sins, such as the atonement for an oath (Yamin), the atonement for a vow (Nazar), and the atonement for violations of Islamic law (Kafalah). Reconciliation is often in the form of food, such as feeding ten poor people or giving food of a certain value. (Arta Amaliah Nur Afifah, Riky Soleman, 2022)

c. Nazar

A *nazar* is a form of charity that must be fulfilled when a person makes a vow to Allah SWT to do something if their prayer or request is granted. For example, if someone recovers from an illness, they might vow to donate part

of their wealth to the poor. During the restoration process, the person must fulfill their vow by giving charity as promised. (Asy-syaqawy, 2009)

2. Voluntary Charity (*Sedekah Sunnah*)

One type of charity that is recommended and permissible in Islam is sedekah sunnah (voluntary charity). This type of charity is generally in the form of *waqaf* (endowment) or non-*waqaf*, and it is encouraged even though it is not obligatory because it brings many benefits and rewards. Here is a detailed explanation of *sedekah sunnah*

a. Sadaqah Jariyah (Ongoing Charity)

Ongoing charity (*sadaqah jariyah*) is a highly recommended form of sedekah in Islam. The reward for such charity continues to flow even after a person has passed away. This type of charity is also known as *waqaf*. The key element of *waqafis* that it must be productive, meaning it generates continuous benefit for others.

An example of a productive *waqaf* is one that enables a person to support themselves or others. A productive *waqafis* the management of *waqaffunds* in a way that generates sustainable returns. For example, *waqaf*land that is cultivated as a garden, with the proceeds from the produce used to fund public needs such as educational expenses. (Afifah et al., 2022)

Non-productive *waqaf* refers to endowments that do not generate ongoing profits. Examples include donating land or property for building a mosque. A mosque serves as a place of worship for Muslims and a center for religious activities. By contributing funds to build a mosque, a person participates in establishing a house of worship that will benefit many people.

b. Ordinary Charity (*Sedekah Biasa*)

Ordinary charity (*sedekah biasa*) involves giving money or material possessions to the poor, orphans, stray animals, disaster victims, and others in need. Common examples of *sedekah biasa* include donating money, food, or goods that can benefit those receiving them.

Muslims often give their wealth to help the poor. One of the encouraged forms of sedekah sunnah is helping orphans. This is done to assist children who are less fortunate, and sedekah biasa can take the form of food, clothing, education, and other necessities. Helping orphans is considered a righteous act that will be rewarded by Allah SWT. (Arifin, 2011)

The recommended voluntary charity also includes giving food to animals, especially those in need, such as street animals and neglected pets. In Islam, taking care of living creatures, including animals, is considered a good deed. Feeding animals can be done daily or on specific occasions. (Paslah, 2021)

One of the important charitable acts in Islam is helping those who suffer from the effects of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, and fires, which cause many people to lose their homes, food, and other basic necessities.

Benefits of Charity (Sedekah)

The benefits of charity have been discussed in several verses in the Qur'an, including:

Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 245:

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضْعِفُهُ لَهُ، أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْصُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

The verse you're referring to is from Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 245:

“Who is it that will loan to Allah a goodly loan, which Allah will multiply many times over? And it is Allah who withholds and grants provision, and to Him you will be returned.” (Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah: 245)

This verse invites believers to give charity in the form of a “goodly loan” to Allah, meaning that by giving in charity, a person is essentially lending to Allah, and Allah will repay them many times over. The verse highlights that Allah is the ultimate provider, and He has control over all wealth and sustenance.

The reward for charity is not just in the form of material returns, but also spiritual blessings. Charity purifies a person's wealth and soul, and the giver will be rewarded both in this world, with blessings, and in the hereafter, with greater rewards. This emphasizes the importance of generosity and the belief that everything ultimately belongs to Allah, and that giving in His name will lead to divine rewards and a purer heart.

The verse also reminds us that Allah controls all provisions and is aware of the intentions and actions of the giver. The act of charity, done with sincerity, is an opportunity for spiritual growth and closeness to Allah.

قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعُهَا أَذَىٰ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَنِّي حَلِيمٌ

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, charity (*sedekah*) holds significant spiritual and social value in Islam. It serves as a means to purify wealth, strengthen one's relationship with Allah SWT, and improve the welfare of society. Both obligatory charity, such as zakat, kafarat, and nazar, and voluntary charity, including ongoing charity (*sadaqah jariyah*), are encouraged to help those in need and to earn rewards in this world and the Hereafter. Charity, performed with sincere intentions, not only opens the doors of provision but also brings continuous blessings, even after death, making it a key practice for spiritual growth and social responsibility in Islam.

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