

EFFECT OF *TA'AWUN* ON MANAGEMENT STICKINESS OF ADMINISTRATIVE ZAKAT INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Zakat institutions are special administrative entities strictly under state law regulations. The basic formation entity embedded management stickiness. Economic phenomenon of stickiness hampered efficiency and productivity of organizations. Management orientation, key stakeholders political actions, and inflexible organisational design contribute to severe management stickiness. This is added with political organizational actions create stickiness phenomenon. Ta'awun enhances teamwork spirituality and religiosity to address management stickiness. This study postulates that the influence of ta'awun reduces stickiness in managing zakat institutions with efficiency and productivity. This study obtains the opinions of residential association leaders through personal interview on the influence of ta'awun in addressing stickiness in zakat institutions. The results of the study suggest that there has been adhoc ta'awun between the community and zakat institutions on seasonal and activism basis.

Key words: *Ta'awun*; Stickiness, Zakat Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Zakat institutions are special administrative entities strictly under state law regulations. The basic formation entity embedded management stickiness. Economic phenomenon of stickiness hampered efficiency and productivity of organizations. Management orientation, key stakeholders political actions, and inflexible organisational design contribute to severe management stickiness. This is added with political organizational actions create stickiness phenomenon. *Ta'awun* enhances teamwork spirituality and religiosity to address management stickiness.

The presence of Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4.0) encourages for integration and mutual networking to enhance quality of life with efficient high contents in production and service delivery (Kalitanyi & Goldman, 2020; Sosik & Zhu, 2020). The artificial intelligence, block chain technology and wide networking allows for trade and social liberalisation (Mäntymäki & Riemer, 2016; Kalitanyi & Goldman, 2020; Sosik & Zhu, 2020; Rahman et al, 2020). Nevertheless, the automation has no role in avoiding error and chaos due to human's role.

The influence of human in organisational activity reduces efficiency and effectiveness. The situation has been described as stickiness (Rousseau, 2007; Blackman & Benson, 2012; Venieris, Naoum & Vlismas, 2015). Stickiness hampered efficiency and productivity of organizations. Political organizational actions, inflexibility structure, deficit of trust and leadership, and divergence in organisational motives are among stickiness phenomenon (Wahab, Zainol & Bakar, 2017; Taha et al, 2017; Nahar, 2018). *Ta'awun* or spiritual driven mutual cooperation enhances teamwork spirituality and religiosity.

Zakat institutions are not spared from organisational stickiness. Essentially, the main components of any organisation, purpose, people and structure are embedded with people action and reaction (Kalitanyi & Goldman, 2020; Sosik & Zhu, 2020). Religious institutions are just the nature of the business. There are still operating within the characters of organisations. Thus, zakat institutions are subject to cooperation and sticky factors that hindered the efficiency, productivity and effectiveness. This study aims to explore the influence of *ta'awun* in addressing stickiness in managing zakat institutions and postulates that the influence of *ta'awun* reduces stickiness in managing zakat institutions with efficiency and productivity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

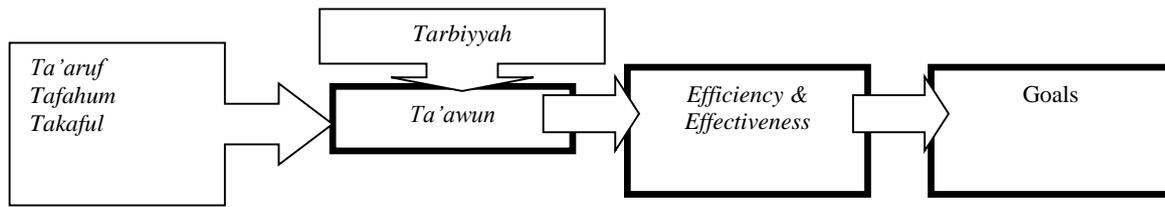
This section reviews key literature of the study, namely *ta'awun*, stickiness and zakat institutions. The epistemology discussion is essential to review what has been studied in the past in terms of contribution to the body of knowledge, policy and practice.

Ta'awun

Ta'awun or spiritual driven mutual cooperation enhances teamwork spirituality and religiosity. In general term, *ta'awun* focuses on building good bonding among people with goodness (*al-birr*) and integrity (*al-Taqwa*) (Sarif, 2015; Sarif, 2017; Mazlan & Khairuldin, 2018). The selective measurement is spiritual and religious guidance.

Ta'awun or mutual cooperation is not social phenomenon. It requires conviction (*iman*), practice (*'amal*), and ecosystem of education (*tarbiyyah*) (Sarif, 2017). The pre-requisites of mutual cooperation (*ta'awun*) from religious context include state of knowing (*ta'aruf*), cognitive ability to comprehend and empathy (*tafahum*) and collective responsibility to provide mutual protection (*takaful*) (Sarif, 2015; Sarif, 2017; Mazlan & Khairuldin, 2018). Figure 1 depicts conceptually the influence of *ta'awun* in assuring goals attainment with efficiency and effectiveness. A few factors enhance and sustain *ta'awun*, namely *ta'aruf*, *tafahum* and *takaful*, within the *tarbiyyah* ecosystem.

Figure 1: Ta'awun Ecosystem

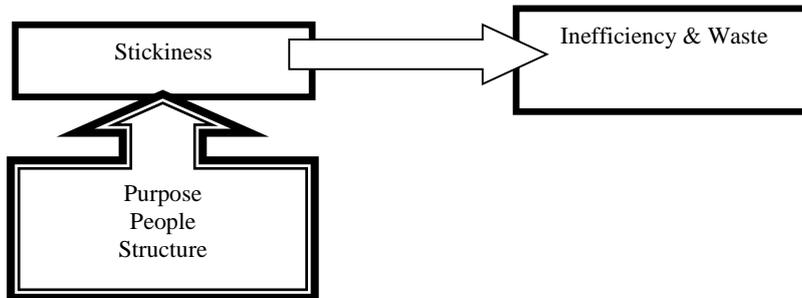


Tarbiyyah or education ecosystem creates nurtures, maintains and sustains the manifestation of conviction (*iman*), practices (*'amal*), and integrity (*ihsan*) (Sarif, 2017). In contemporary terms, it refers to contingency ecosystem with education, reinforcement, and enforcement. In the context of organisations, the three components in organisations, namely people, structure and purpose, are coordinated with structure and goals to achieve goals or purpose of existence.

Stickiness

Stickiness is an economic phenomenon of sticky cost reduces inefficiency (Rousseau, 2007). Stickiness is related to organizational political actions to meet personalised advantage and goal by making organisational context leads to inflexibility structure, deficit of trust and leadership, and divergence in organisational motives are among stickiness phenomenon (Wahab, Zainol & Bakar, 2017; Taha et al, 2017; Nahar, 2018). Figure 2 illustrates stickiness phenomenon.

Figure 2: Stickiness Phenomenon



Zakat Institutions

In Malaysia, zakat institutions are Islamic institutions regulated under state Islamic administration laws placed in His Royal Highnesses of State Rulers (with different honorific, DYMM Sultan, DYMM Yang Dipertuan Besar, and DYMM Raja). This unique administration is directly managed by state Islamic councils and departments as executives. There is no direct influence from federal government's agencies. Ab Rahman, Alias & Omar (2012) argued that the administrative and traditional approach to zakat management in Malaysia had led to inadequacy of management efficiency in terms of management capability, creativity and innovation. Razimi et al (2016) contended that while the potential of resources is exponential, there is a need to rejuvenate organizational design of zakat insitutions in Malaysia.

Indeed, four features of administration deserve a review and rejuvenation. In terms of structure, all states are ruler-led structure, with slight adjustment for states without Their Royal Highness Rulers. Nevertheless, there is not much different from other states (Ab Rahman et al, 2012; Razimi et al, 2016). Likewise, there is no apparent difference in the governance, management and designs. The traditional legacy of public administration into Islamic Councils has a strong influence on the rigidity and mechanistic administrative structure. Table 1 summarizes the analysis of management of zakat administration in Malaysia based on four features, namely structure, governance, management and designs.

Table 1: Administrative Features of Zakat Management in Malaysia

States	Structure	Governance	Management	Designs
Perlis	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Mechanistic
Kedah	Ruler-led	Ruler-led	Ruler-led administrative	Mechanistic with some flexibility
Pulau Pinang	Federal-led	State-Federal	Public administrative	Administrative mechanistic
Perak	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Administrative mechanistic
Selangor	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Administrative mechanistic
Negeri Sembilan	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Administrative mechanistic
Melaka	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Administrative mechanistic
Johor	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Administrative mechanistic

Pahang	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Administrative mechanistic
Terengganu	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Administrative mechanistic
Kelantan	Ruler-led	State legislative	State administrative	Administrative mechanistic
Sarawak	Federal-State	Federal-State	State administrative autonomy	Administrative
Sabah	Federal-State	Federal-State	State administrative autonomy	Administrative

Distinctive Features

There is uniqueness in Islamic social institutions in Malaysia. Besides the four features of administrative nature, namely structure, governance, management and designs, there are religious and spirituality elements as well. Zakat institutions aim to execute a religious duty that has religiosity and spirituality dimensions. The main aim of management is basically to get things done with efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency is measured in terms of optimisation of resources (Wahab, Zainol & Bakar, 2017; Nahar, 2018). Effectiveness is terms of goals attainment within stipulated time.

Another unique feature is the corporate way of managing zakat institutions. Zakat institutions have been managed with corporate management approach. This is different from traditional administration of charitable organisations. Nevertheless, zakat institutions are found to have achieved a moderate efficiency level (Wahab & Rahim, 2012). The moderate efficiency is due to the speedy in responding to expected services.

Measurement of efficiency is related to goals outcomes regardless of organisation. Efficiency is not just measured in terms of the ability to reduce waste, but also to optimise resources. Organisational reputation, corporate communication, access to service, contact to personal, and corporate image are important to zakat institutions to gain trust (Ab Hamid & Jusoh, 2017). Stickiness may occur in the practice of measurement.

Branding

Branding is precious for organisations. Corporate image may be impressive to the public. More importantly, besides public visibility, trust in governance and accountability is essential (Nahar, 2018). Governance and accountability are referring to having trustworthy and integrity workforce.

Branding and trust are good companions. Branding is reflection of patronage. As for trust, it is a manifestation of loyalty. Trust may be perception of the public. Any reduction of deficit leads to serious deficit of trust. In fact, deficit of trust is apparent (Owoyemi, 2020). In the presence of deficit of trust and malpractices, they are just hampered the image of institutions (Masruki, 2020).

Service Quality

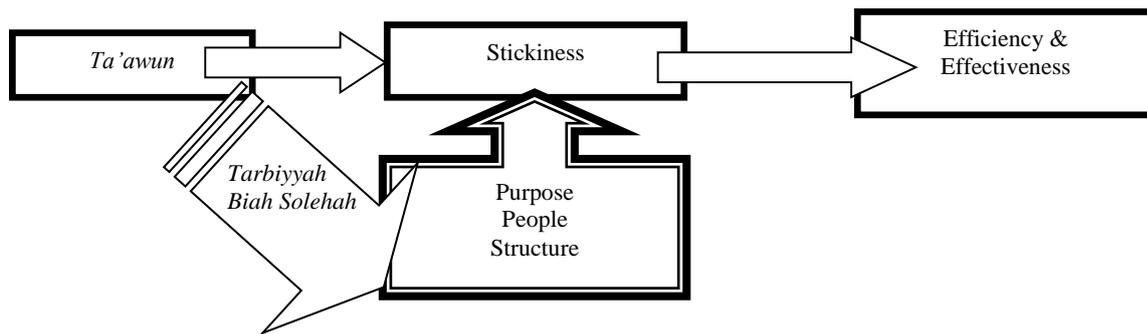
Service quality is essential. Organizations with poor service quality may hamper trust in service and perception of management efficiency (Wahab, Zainol & Bakar, 2017). Efficiency and trust are in terms of reliability, tangibles, empathy, responsiveness, and compliance. The use of technology may increase service delivery (Rachman & Salam, 2018). However, trust is about confidence in financial, customer, management process, achievement growth and religiosity (Taha et al, 2017).

In comparison with other zakat institutions in ASEAN region and other parts of the world, there is not much difference in the four features of administration and the distinctive features. In Brunei, the administrative design is based on the public administration approach (Abdullah, 1991; Hamdan & Hoon, 2019; Ismail, Zaenal & Haron, 2020; Ummulkhayr, 2020). Indonesia is independent from the public administrative nature. As public entities, there are subject to public audit for transparency and credibility (Hasan & Pasyah, 2019; Hakim et al, 2020).

Nevertheless, there is dynamism to make the institutions giving the highest value both material and spiritual (Utami, 2019; Kailani & Slama, 2020). Singapore has modernized approach to zakat management due to the legislative nature of the country (Abdullah, 1991; Mustafa et al, 1996). Nigeria has combined public administrative design into the zakat administration. This is related to socio-economic situation (Farouk, 2020; Ibrahim & Ashafa, 2020).

Based on the ontological and epistemological analyses the study postulates that the influence of *ta'awun* has an ability to reduce stickiness in managing organisations with efficiency and productivity. *Ta'awun* provides the avenue for mutual cooperation due to the good surrounding (*biah Solehah*) and continuous education (*tarbiyyah*) process. Eventually, the mindset of Tawhidic (adherence to Islamic teachings), reduces stickiness due to purpose, people and structure in organizations, to produce high productivity and performance. Figure 3 illustrates the proposition of the study into the research model of the study.

Figure 3: Research Model of the Study



METHODOLOGY

This study postulates that the influence of *ta'awun* reduces stickiness in managing organisations with efficiency and productivity. This study solicits the opinions of community leaders through personal interview on the influence of *ta'awun* in addressing stickiness in zakat institutions. The use of qualitative research method qualitative research method allows for rich in answering research inquiry (Cho et al, 2020; Kyngäs, 2020). The study selects community leaders on convenient sampling method. The feedback from community leaders has merit due to their functions, roles, and duties with all levels of society profiles. There have been acceptance trends in solicit community leaders for opinions (Valente & Davis, 1999; Iyengar et al, 2011; Haymer et al, 2020).

Qualitative research allows for exploration and explanation in understanding deeply about events, contexts, and situations. The words, expressions and explanation are provided by the participants in the fieldwork. The collection of data is through interview, observation, and experimentation (Farah et al, 2019; Natow, 2020). The study uses personal interview method with systematic research protocol. This study uses personal interview to obtain in-depth insights of respondents (Lessy, 2014; Kasri & Putri, 2018; Farah et al, 2019; Natow, 2020).

The selection of the respondents is essential to ensure the valid source of insights (Lessy, 2014; Natow, 2020). The study selected the respondents was based on the recommendation of researchers in zakat. Prior to the fieldwork, the targeted respondents were approached for informed consent. The research instruments were validated by subject matter experts in the field of zakat research. Subsequently, the study also conducted a pilot study with neighbourhood watch members who are familiar with zakat institutions.

After the pilot study, the study revised the research instruments. The instruments were improved to enable the study obtain detail feedback about effect of *ta'awun* in managing zakat institutions for sustainable performance. The study asked the participants among community leaders about the nature of mutual cooperation in managing zakat institutions in both exploratory (Kasri & Putri, 2018) and explanatory (Farah et al, 2019). The grounded feedback through exploratory is essential to get in-depth insights from the respondents. The interviews were conducted between 30 to 40 minutes and with note taking approach as consent given. The notes were type-written for verification of the respondents for explanation and triangulation purpose (Lessy, 2014; Natow, 2020). Then, the study approached independent researchers for another round of triangulation purpose (Lessy, 2014). This study develops research protocol and instruments and validated by subject matter experts, practitioners and researchers. There is a pilot study to assure the acceptance of the research protocol and instruments. The study assures research ethics, validity, reliability and replicability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

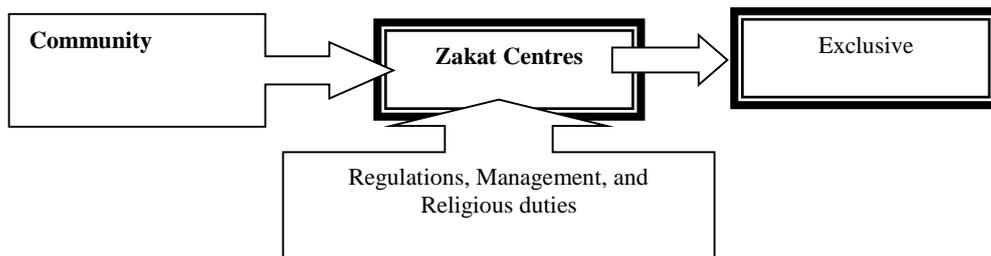
This section presents the opinions of community leaders about the influence of *ta'awun* or mutual cooperation in addressing stickiness.

CL 1 argued that zakat institutions with corporate management orientation are able to gain confidence of the stakeholders. CL 1 said:

"In my community, we helped zakat centres to give awareness about paying zakat and also provide data about our community, especially zakat recipients (asnaf). Masjid has zakat collectors or 'amil appointed by zakat centres. Zakat payers can pay zakat through online payment. This is good. There will be no more issues about cash zakat collected by 'amil. In the past, 'amil collects zakat from zakat payers from door to door. Or awaits at masjid for zakat payers to pay zakat."

CL 1 contended that the stickiness situation in terms of regulatory requirements, management preferences and perceived inflexibility religious duties execution. The stickiness in CL 1 context could lead to inefficiency (Wahab, Zainol & Bakar, 2017; Nahar, 2018). Figure 4 depicts CL 1's feedback.

Figure 4: *Ta'awun* attempt to reduce administration stickiness in CL 1 context

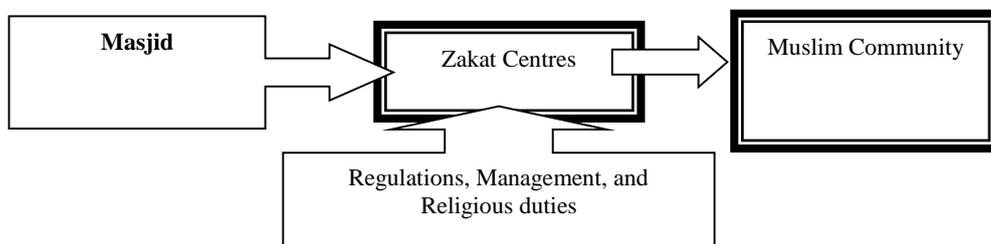


CL 2 contended that community centres should collaborate with zakat centres. However, zakat centres prefer to collaborate with masjid.

“The Chairman of Masjid announced to the congregation to pay zakat with zakat centres through the appointed agents. Masjid provides spaces for the zakat collection agents to deal with zakat payers. But not zakat recipients as they are handled by zakat distribution centres or baitulmal. As chairman of the community council, I did invite them to use our community spaces as well. They appreciated our offer, but until today, they are still operating at masjid. I know this is sensitive to them as community centre is meant for all community. The Muslim community prefer masjid as social and religious centre instead of community centre.”

In CL 2 context, stickiness occurs in the administrative preference between community and Islamic entities. Masjid itself is an official one-stop centre for religious and social activities in the designated neighbourhood (*kariah*). The linkages between masjid and other Islamic administrative institutions are officially institutionalised by the state religious authorities. The attempt to apply cooperation with *ta'awun* is hampered by administrative preferences (Ab Hamid & Jusoh, 2017; Masruki, 2020). Masjid is an official social religious entity within the neighbourhood is dedicated to establish strategic alliances with all religious institutions including zakat centres. The presence of zakat centres enables zakat centre to bridge masjid and the community. The relationship between masjid and zakat centres is official as directed by the state religious authority to bring more benefits to the society. Figure 5 summarises CL 2's context of *ta'awun* in addressing stickiness in zakat administration.

Figure 5: *Ta'awun* attempt to reduce administration stickiness in CL 2 context



CL 3 mentioned that zakat institutions are part of the community.

“Our reality is multiracial as well as multifaith society. Each religion prefers to execute religious duties at their own worship centres. We are fully aware of the reality. Zakat is Muslim religious duty. The zakat payers and zakat recipients are Muslims. The zakat administrators used to interact with the community through community programs.”

The informants argued that stickiness occurs in the management method or orientation, policy or regulatory requirements and societal preferences. The stickiness in regulatory is essentially contributes to deficit acceptance and trust of the public (Owoyemi, 2020). By opening up collaboration with community institutions will not compromised the religious image of zakat institutions. In fact, the stickiness in malpractices of service delivery, responsiveness to service inquiries, and leadership are hampered the image of institutions (Masruki, 2020). The presence of IR4.0 has not being fully appreciated in bringing *ta'awun* through integration and mutual networking to enhance quality of life with efficient high contents in production and service delivery (Kalitanyi & Goldman, 2020; Sosik & Zhu, 2020).

The results of the study suggest that *ta'awun* is with all stakeholders within the communities of practice and societal ecosystem. However, the *ta'awun* is subjected to regulatory requirements and societal preferences in the multiracial contexts.

IMPLICATIONS

This study has positive implications to the influence of *ta'awun* theory with contextual embeddedness of stickiness. The influence of *ta'awun* has positive impact to the policy of organisation that driven by management preferences. This is relevant with the inclusiveness networking target of the 4th Industrial Revolutionary context.

CONCLUSION

The ontological evaluation on management of zakat institutions has shown serious flaws in governance, designs and operations. The rigid administrative approach in the operation is evitable. As alternative, the use of social networking through *Ta'awun* or mutual cooperation between stakeholders yield mutual benefits. However, the rigid and mechanistic administration has created inflexibility which is sticky to every stakeholder. Thus, this study postulated that the influence of *ta'awun* is magnificent in reducing stickiness in managing organisations with efficiency and effectiveness.

When this study argued that there is a need to drive the relationship among stakeholders, the Tawhidic perspective of mutual cooperation has a strong religious practice called *ta'awun*. When the study approached community leaders, they contended that cooperation relationship among stakeholders is possible. The social leeway through *ta'awun* is acceptable to reduce stickiness in organizations that hampered efficiency and productivity of organizations. A few political actions escalate the severity of stickiness. The practice of *Ta'awun* or spiritual driven mutual cooperation reduces stickiness through teamwork spirituality and religiosity. This study found that the influence of *ta'awun* reduces stickiness in managing organisations with efficiency and productivity. This feedback from the opinions of community leaders suggests that *ta'awun* is with all stakeholders within the communities of practice and societal ecosystem despite the presence of regulatory restrictions and societal preferences.

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