

**AL AZHAR ZAKAT COLLECTION INSTITUTION'S PUBLIC RELATIONS
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY IN INCREASING DONOR
PARTICIPATION THROUGH INSTAGRAM SOCIAL MEDIA**

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Abstract

The development of social media has changed the communication patterns of philanthropic organizations in reaching the public. The Al Azhar Zakat Institution (LAZ) utilizes Instagram to strengthen its image and increase donor participation amid challenges of trust and declining fund collection growth. This study aims to analyze the communication strategies implemented by LAZ Al Azhar's Public Relations in increasing donor participation through the Instagram social media platform, as well as identifying the challenges faced and their impact on donor interest. Using a descriptive qualitative method with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, Instagram content observation, and documentation, the results show that the strategies implemented include targeting a young audience (aged 24–35 years), an edutainment approach, the use of soft selling techniques, and the utilization of social momentum. These findings were examined through the Agenda Setting theory, which emphasizes the role of the media in influencing public perception of important issues such as Zakat, Infak, and Sedekah (ZIS). This study contributes to the development of digital communication strategies for Islamic philanthropic institutions in expanding their reach and increasing donor participation in the social media era.

Keywords: *Communication Strategy, Public Relations, Zakat, Instagram, Agenda Setting, Philanthropic Institutions.*

Abstrak

Perkembangan media sosial telah mengubah pola komunikasi organisasi filantropi dalam menjangkau publik. Lembaga Amil Zakat (LAZ) Al Azhar memanfaatkan Instagram untuk memperkuat citra dan meningkatkan partisipasi donatur di tengah tantangan kepercayaan dan penurunan pertumbuhan penghimpunan dana. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi komunikasi yang diterapkan oleh Humas LAZ Al Azhar dalam meningkatkan partisipasi donatur melalui platform media sosial Instagram, serta mengidentifikasi tantangan yang dihadapi dan dampaknya terhadap minat donatur. Menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi konten Instagram, dan dokumentasi, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi yang diterapkan meliputi penetapan audiens muda (usia 24–35 tahun), pendekatan edutainment, penggunaan teknik soft selling, dan pemanfaatan momentum sosial. Temuan ini dikaji melalui teori Agenda Setting, yang menekankan peran media dalam memengaruhi persepsi publik terhadap isu penting seperti Zakat, Infak, dan Sedekah (ZIS). Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dalam pengembangan strategi komunikasi digital lembaga filantropi Islam dalam memperluas jangkauan dan meningkatkan partisipasi donatur di era media sosial.



Kata Kunci: Strategi Komunikasi, Humas, Zakat, Instagram, Agenda Setting, Lembaga Filantropi.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology in recent decades has brought about fundamental changes in the way organizations interact with their publics. Social media, as one of the innovations in digital technology, has become a primary platform used by various institutions, including philanthropic organizations, to convey messages, build image, and garner support from the wider community. Instagram, a visual-based social media platform that is very popular among the younger generation, offers a strategic opportunity for philanthropic organizations to reach a broader and more diverse audience in a more interactive and engaging manner.

The Al-Azhar Zakat Institution (LAZ) is one of the institutions that manages Zakat, Infaq, and Sedekah (ZIS) funds and plays a vital role in distributing funds to those in need. However, in recent years, LAZ Al-Azhar has faced significant challenges related to declining donor participation rates and slowing growth in ZIS fundraising. Data from the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) shows that the potential for ZIS funds in Indonesia reaches IDR 237 trillion, but the realization of collection is still far below this potential, which is around IDR 41 trillion in the period 2018 to 2024. In addition, the growth rate of ZIS fund collection decreased from 43.80% in 2023 to 26.86% in 2024, which indicates the need for a more effective communication strategy to overcome this challenge.



Figure 1. Growth of ZIS Collection

In this context, LAZ Al Azhar utilizes Instagram as a primary communication channel to strengthen the institution's image and increase donor participation. Instagram is used not only as a medium for disseminating information about social programs and activities, but also

as a means of educating about the importance of ZIS and as a platform for building emotional connection with the public through engaging visual content and compelling narratives. This approach is expected to address the issue of public trust, which has historically been a barrier to fundraising, and increase public motivation to actively participate in religious social programs.

This study aims to analyze the communication strategies implemented by LAZ Al Azhar's Public Relations Department in utilizing Instagram to increase donor participation. The research focuses on identifying the communication strategies used, challenges faced in social media management, and the impact of Instagram content on donor interest and behavior. The Agenda Setting theory approach is used as a conceptual framework to understand how social media can influence public perceptions and priorities regarding ZIS issues, as well as how media shapes the public agenda and policy through strategic content presentation.

Unlike previous studies that focused more on the technical aspects of social media use or donor behavior in general, this study focuses on analyzing PR communication strategies specifically in the context of Islamic philanthropic institutions that manage zakat through Instagram. Several previous studies, such as those by Kamilah et al. (2020) and Ramadhan & Bara Kusuma (2023), focused more on the lifestyles of social media users and commercial product promotion strategies through Instagram. Meanwhile, other studies discussing online donations (Maulidasari, 2019) and Kharima et al. (2021) tended to examine the technical aspects and donor motivations without delving deeply into the role of PR and integrated communication strategies.



Figure 2, LAZ Al Azhar Instagram

This study also expands the existing research by integrating Agenda Setting theory into the context of social media, a relatively rare application in philanthropic communication studies in Indonesia. Thus, this study not only provides a practical overview of how LAZ Al Azhar manages its digital communications but also makes a theoretical contribution to understanding the mechanisms by which social media influences the formation of donor perceptions and behavior. This is crucial given the ever-evolving dynamics of social media and its strategic role in building public trust and loyalty toward philanthropic institutions.

By understanding effective communication strategies and the challenges they face, this research is expected to provide a practical contribution to the development of digital communications for philanthropic institutions, particularly in the context of zakat management and online donations. Furthermore, the results of this study are also expected to serve as a reference for other institutions seeking to optimize the use of social media to build better relationships with donors and the wider community.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to provide an in-depth description of the Al Azhar Zakat Collection Institution (LAZ)'s public relations communication strategy to increase donor participation through Instagram. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand communication phenomena contextually and comprehensively, based on data obtained from primary sources.

The research location was the LAZ Al Azhar operational office at Jl. Cirendeu Raya No. 89, East Ciputat, South Tangerang. The research was conducted from May to June 2025, focusing on communication activities taking place on the Instagram platform.

The unit of analysis in this study was LAZ Al Azhar's public relations communication practices, including the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Instagram content aimed at building the institution's image and increasing donations from the public. The research informants were selected purposively, consisting of two key informants: the Public Relations Manager and the Public Relations Coordinator of the LAZ Al Azhar Social Media Content Division, as well as four active donors who also follow the LAZ Al Azhar Instagram account. Data collection was conducted using three main techniques:

1. Observation: Researchers conducted direct observations of LAZ Al Azhar's Instagram account management activities, including the types of content published, posting frequency, and interactions with followers.

2. In-depth interviews: Conducted with key informants and donors to gather information regarding communication strategies, challenges faced, and donor perceptions and motivations in responding to Instagram content.
3. Documentation: Secondary data collection included Instagram content archives, activity reports, and internal documents relevant to the communication strategy and donation campaign results.

The collected data was then analyzed qualitatively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. This analysis process aimed to identify patterns, themes, and relationships between variables related to the communication strategy and its impact on donor participation.

To ensure data validity, this study employed source and technique triangulation, comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation to obtain a valid and reliable picture.

III. RESEARCH RESULTS

1. LAZ Al Azhar Public Relations Communication Strategy on Instagram

LAZ Al Azhar Public Relations implements a structured and planned communication strategy in managing its Instagram account as the primary medium for building the institution's image and increasing donor participation. This strategy begins with determining a specific target audience: young people aged 24 to 35 who actively use social media and have the potential to be active donors. This segmentation is based on demographic data and digital behavior, which indicates that this age group is most responsive to digital content and possesses a high social awareness.

The content presented adopts an edutainment approach, a combination of education and entertainment, aimed at conveying messages about zakat, infaq, and sadaqah in an engaging and easy-to-understand manner. This approach avoids being patronizing or pushy, but instead builds emotional and intellectual engagement in the audience. For example, the content includes short videos featuring beneficiary stories, infographics on zakat calculations, and interactive quizzes educating about the obligation of zakat.

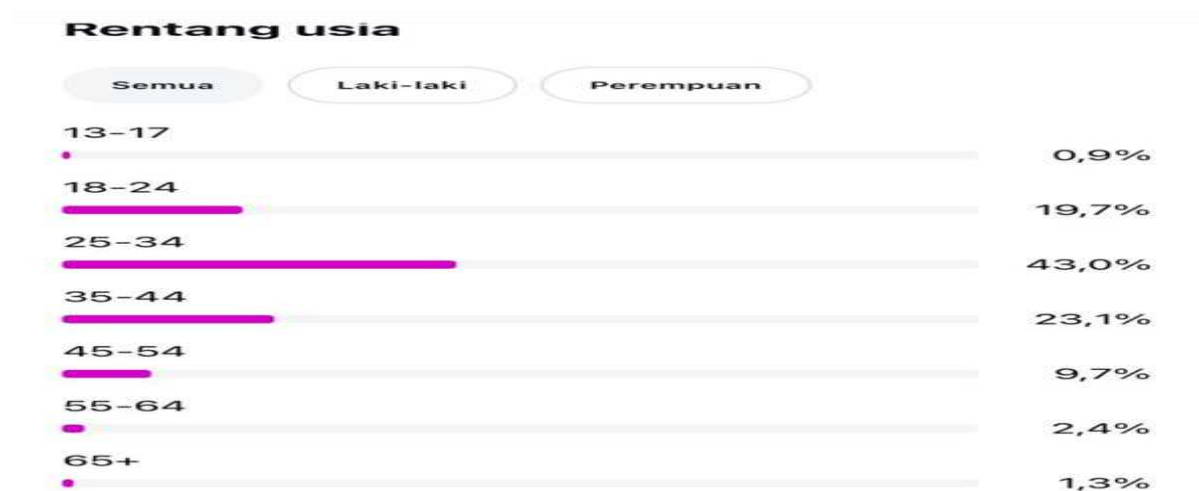


Figure 3. Age range of LAZ Al Azhar's Instagram account audience

Furthermore, soft-selling techniques are used in conveying donation messages. Rather than explicitly inviting donations, the content emphasizes building awareness and empathy first, so that the audience feels compelled to voluntarily participate. This approach is also supported by utilizing social and religious moments, such as Ramadan, Islamic holidays, and payday, which psychologically increase donors' readiness and motivation to contribute.



Figure 5. Soft-selling message inviting LAZ Al Azhar's Instagram audience to engage

Cross-division collaboration within the organization is also a crucial part of this strategy. The Public Relations team works closely with the program and field teams to obtain

accurate and engaging data and documentation of activities. This ensures that published content is valid, transparent, and builds public trust.

The use of Instagram Ads as a paid promotional medium is also utilized to expand the reach of content beyond organic followers. Internal data shows that paid advertising effectively increases content visibility and drives interactions and donations, especially when campaigns are integrated with referral codes that facilitate tracking of results.

2. Challenges and Obstacles in Instagram Management

Although the implemented strategy is quite effective, LAZ Al Azhar Public Relations faces several challenges:

- a. Consistency and Accuracy of Publication: Limited human resources, networks, and the readiness of the documentation team in the field hinder the rapid and accurate publication of content, potentially reducing credibility.
- b. Limited Content Assets: The lack of quality visual and narrative data from the field makes it difficult for the design/editorial team to create engaging and informative storytelling.
- c. Engaging Educational Content Format: Packaging ZIS education in a light yet substantial format on an entertainment platform like Instagram is challenging. Content must be engaging, compliant with Sharia principles, and ethical.
- d. Instagram Algorithm Changes: Unpredictable algorithms impact engagement stability, forcing teams to balance following trends and fulfilling mandated content.
- e. Lack of Convenience in the Online Donation System: Donors often complain about the cumbersome donation flow from Instagram links (manual copying required, complicated registration process), resulting in low donation conversions even when awareness has been established.

3. Instagram Content Exposure from a Donor's Perspective

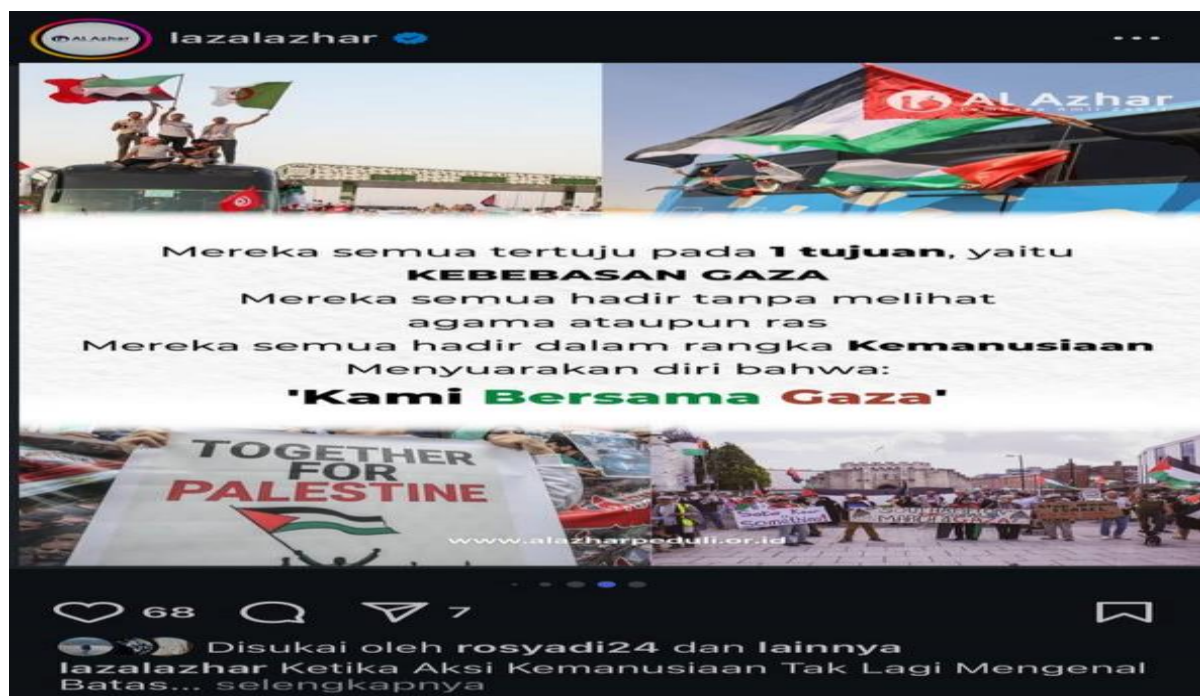
From a donor perspective, LAZ Al Azhar's Instagram content has a significant positive impact on their perceptions and motivation to donate. Donors report frequently encountering informative and inspirational content on their Instagram feeds, especially during important moments such as Ramadan and global humanitarian issues. Content featuring documentation of social activities and testimonials from beneficiaries is considered most effective in building trust and empathy.



Figure 4. Exposure to Ramadan content in donation drives

Education about the obligation of zakat, presented in a visual and interactive format, also helps donors understand the calculation and benefits of zakat more clearly. This increases their awareness and commitment to fulfilling this obligation regularly.

Furthermore, the use of referral codes in donation campaigns allows donors to feel more involved and motivated because they can see the direct impact of their contributions. This approach also strengthens donor loyalty to the institution. Overall, the communication strategy implemented through Instagram not only increases awareness and engagement but also contributes to increased donation conversion, which is the primary goal of philanthropic institutions.



Akad Tujuan	Program Donasi	Kantor	Input By	Channel	Jumlah
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Kantor Layanan Cirendeu	ADMIN	REK BSI 7000 192 826 KEMANUSIAAN	3.873.200,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	50.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	50.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	15.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	250.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK BCA 0703031011 ZAKAT	125.005,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Kantor Layanan Cilacap	PETUGAS	Cash	500.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Kantor Layanan Pusat LAZWAF	DONATUR	Virtual Account BCA	100.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	50.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	50.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	15.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	200.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Korban Bencana Nasional	Kantor Layanan Pusat LAZWAF	DONATUR	Virtual Account BCA	30.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	50.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Kantor Layanan Bersama ZISWAF	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	100.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	50.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	15.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK BCA 070 303 6691 INFAQ	1.000.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	50.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Kantor Layanan Bersama ZISWAF	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	200.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1122 INFAQ	400.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	15.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK BSI Kemanusiaan 1000 749 563	100.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Kemanusiaan Internasional	Kantor Layanan Bintaro	ADMIN	REK Mandiri 126 000 711 1114 KEMANUSIAAN	50.055,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Konter Bintaro Jaya Exchange	PETUGAS	EDC BRI 121101000399560 (INFAK)	500.000,00
Kemanusiaan	Bantu Saudara Kita di Gaza	Kantor Layanan Pusat LAZWAF	DONATUR	Virtual Account BCA	10.000,00

Figure 5, Public donations in support of actions to defend Palestine

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the Al Azhar Zakat Collection Institution (LAZ)'s public relations communication strategy through Instagram plays a crucial role in building awareness and increasing donor participation. The strategy employed included identifying a specific target audience, specifically young people aged 24 to 35 who actively use social media, and packaging content with an edutainment approach that combines educational and entertainment elements. This approach successfully captured the audience's attention and built emotional engagement without appearing pushy, creating a more persuasive and effective communication environment.

Furthermore, the use of soft-selling techniques in conveying donation messages allowed the audience to gradually understand the value and urgency of Zakat, Infaq, and Sedekah (ZIS), ultimately motivating them to participate voluntarily. Utilizing social and religious moments, such as Ramadan and payday, has also proven effective in increasing donor response through relevant and timely content.

However, this study also revealed several challenges faced by the LAZ Al Azhar Public Relations team, including limited human resources and adequate content assets, difficulties in maintaining consistent and timely publications, and technical constraints in the online donation system, which remains impractical for some donors. These challenges have the potential to hinder the optimization of communication strategies and require serious attention for future improvements.

From the perspective of Agenda Setting theory, LAZ Al Azhar's Instagram content successfully shaped the media agenda, influencing public perceptions and priorities regarding ZIS issues. Through transparent, informative, and emotional content, this social media platform not only informs but also builds trust and loyalty among donors. This is evident in the high level of audience engagement and the increase in donations, particularly for video content documenting social activities that showcase the tangible impact of aid.

Overall, the digital communication strategy implemented by LAZ Al Azhar Public Relations through Instagram has significantly contributed to strengthening the institution's image and increasing donor participation. This success demonstrates the importance of adapting philanthropic organizations to developments in communication technology and utilizing social media as an effective means of reaching and mobilizing the public to contribute to socio-religious activities.

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