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Digital Transformation of Islamic Philanthropy: A Case Study of the Bedug Sedekah Subuh Program at LAZ Dompet Sejuta Harapan

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Abstract

This study analyzes the digital adaptation of the Bedug Sedekah Subuh Program at LAZ Dompet Sejuta Harapan, Klaten, Indonesia, amid the shift from traditional donation practices to digital and hybrid giving. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through interviews with program managers and donors, observations of Bedug Sedekah Subuh implementation, and document analyses of program reports, social media posts, and digital campaign materials. The data were analysed thematically through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing, with source and technique triangulation used to strengthen the validity. The findings show that the program adapts through three main mechanisms: maintaining the physical bedug as a symbolic and relational fundraising medium, expanding communication through social media and WhatsApp-based campaigns, and integrating QRIS into the bedug to facilitate cashless donations. This adaptation forms a hybrid philanthropy model in which digital channels complement rather than replace face-to-face relationships with donors. The main challenges are uneven digital literacy, donor trust in digital transactions, and the need for transparent reports. This study contributes to the Islamic philanthropy literature by demonstrating how a traditional donation symbol can be repositioned within a digital ecosystem while preserving relational and spiritual values.

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INTRODUCTION

In Islamic tradition, sedekah represents a form of social worship that integrates spiritual devotion with concern for others. This practice is not merely understood as the giving of wealth, but also as an expression of goodness that may be manifested through various forms of contribution. In the context of modern institutions, the value of sedekah is managed through Badan Amil Zakat (BAZ) and Lembaga Amil Zakat (LAZ) so that the collection and distribution of religious social funds can be carried out in a more directed, accountable, and socially impactful manner. Thus, the normative foundation of sedekah should be understood alongside the development of contemporary Islamic philanthropy, which increasingly demands professionalism, transparency, and service innovation.

Digital transformation has reshaped patterns of public generosity. Donations are no longer made only through charity boxes, piggy banks, or door-to-door collections, but also through digital channels such as websites, applications, e-wallets, bank transfers, and QRIS. Bank Indonesia defines QRIS as a QR code-based payment standard designed to make transactions faster, easier, more affordable, secure, and reliable (Bank Indonesia, 2024). At the same time, national zakat management reports show that the collection of ZIS-DSKL continues to increase and that strengthening digital services has become an important direction in contemporary zakat management (BAZNAS, 2024; BAZNAS, 2025). This condition indicates that LAZ institutions are not only required to preserve the spiritual value of sedekah, but also to adjust the ways they communicate, collect funds, and report to donors.

One program that deserves scholarly attention is the Bedug Sedekah Subuh (BSS) program managed by LAZ Dompet Sejuta Harapan (DSH) in Klaten. This program uses a bedug-shaped donation box to cultivate the habit of regular almsgiving, particularly at dawn. The symbol of the bedug carries local and religious meaning because it is closely associated with communal memories of the call to worship, togetherness, and mosque traditions. Through BSS, DSH not only collects funds but also builds philanthropy education from an early age through networks of families, schools, mosques, religious study groups, and local communities.

Existing studies on digital philanthropy generally discuss online donation intentions, crowdfunding, platform transparency, trust, and the adoption of digital payments. However, limited attention has been given to how a donation program based on a physical object and a traditional symbol adapts to the digital ecosystem without losing its emotional closeness to donors. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the forms of digital adaptation in the Bedug Sedekah Subuh program, the changing donation patterns of donors, the challenges encountered, and the implications for developing a hybrid model of Islamic philanthropy in the following manner.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study. The case study design was selected because the research focuses on a single program with specific characteristics, namely Bedug Sedekah Subuh at LAZ Dompet Sejuta Harapan Klaten, Indonesia. This approach enabled the researcher to understand the program adaptation process in depth, including its historical emergence, changes in fundraising media, digital communication strategies, and donor responses to shifting donation patterns during the pandemic.

The research data were obtained using three techniques. First, in-depth interviews were conducted with purposively selected informants, including DSH administrators who understood the BSS program, active donors, donors who still used the physical bedug, donors who had used digital channels, and school partners. Second, observations were conducted on program implementation, particularly the use of the bedug, the door-to-door donation collection process, interactions between

LAZ officers and donors, and the use of QRIS in the new version of the bedug. Third, documentation studies were conducted on program reports, donor data, digital campaign materials, social media posts, and official institutional information. The categorisation of informants was intended to allow changes in donation patterns to be examined from the perspectives of program managers, donors and program partners.

The data were analysed thematically by following the stages of data condensation, data display, and conclusion-drawing. Interview, observation, and document data were grouped into themes related to changes in donation patterns, forms of digital adaptation, literacy and trust barriers, and opportunities for program improvement. Data validity was maintained through source and technique triangulation by comparing the administrators' explanations, donors' experiences, observation results, and program documents. Thus, the findings were not based solely on general claims about digitalisation but were directly linked to the specific context of the BSS program at DSH.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Bedug Sedekah Subuh Program

According to the official website of Dompet Sejuta Harapan, the Bedug Sedekah Subuh program began with concerns over small coins and loose change that were often neglected, kept in pockets, scattered around, or left unproductively unused. Through a bedug-shaped donation box, these small funds are collected regularly and then used to support various social programs, such as Rumah Yatim, Rumah Tahfidz, Ambulance Sejuta Harapan, funeral-bier assistance, mobile libraries, kafalah for ustadz, assistance for orphans and the poor, and other religious activities (Dompet Sejuta Harapan 2025). This model shows that micro-fundraising based on daily habits can generate a social impact when managed consistently and institutionally.

Based on program documents and information from administrators, Bedug Sedekah Subuh was launched in 2010. Initially, the medium used was an ordinary donation box, which was later developed into a bedug-shaped box to create a distinct visual identity compared to similar charity programs run by other institutions. The choice of bedug shape does not merely function as a product design but also as a religious symbol. The bedug is closely associated with the call to prayer and the social space of the mosque, allowing DSH to position it as a call for giving. The change in colour from green to orange also strengthened the program's visual identity, because orange is associated with the atmosphere of dawn.

Figure 1. Old Bedug Sedekah Subuh

Figure 2. New Bedug Sedekah Subuh

Source: Media documentation of LAZ Dompet Sejuta Harapan 2025.

In its early phase, Bedug Sedekah Subuh was conventionally distributed from one donor to another through a door-to-door donation collection system. This pattern functioned not only as a fundraising mechanism but also as a space for maintaining social ties between LAZ officers and donors. Since 2012, DSH has expanded its cooperation with educational partners, such as early childhood education centres, kindergartens, and elementary schools, to cultivate the habit of giving from an early age. According to internal program documents, the highest monthly collection once reached approximately IDR 70,000,000, whereas the current average monthly collection is around IDR 20,000,000. These data indicate that BSS occupies a strategic position as one of DSH's main fundraising channels and provides a basis for understanding the direction of program adaptation in the digital age.

Table 1
Development of Donors and School Partners in the Bedug Sedekah Subuh Program, 2021-2025

Year	Number of Donors (persons/units)	School Partners (institutions)
2021	224	345
2022	317	454
2023	238	489
2024	455	545
2025	513	663

Source: Internal data of LAZ Dompet Sejuta Harapan, 2021-2025 (processed by the author).

Table 1 shows that the number of donors increased from 224 in 2021 to 513 in 2025, although it declined in 2023. Meanwhile, the number of school partners continued to increase from 345 in 2021 to 663 in 2025. This pattern indicates two things. First, school networks serve as an important channel for institutionalising the habit of almsgiving from early childhood. Second, the decline in donors in 2023 does not necessarily indicate a weakening of the overall program because the number of school partners continued to expand. Thus, the BSS program has been developed through a combination of individual donors and institutional networks.

Changing Donation Patterns

The digital era has transformed the way people donate, moving from a pattern fully based on direct interaction to a more flexible and technology-based one. Digital donation was chosen because it offers ease of access, faster payment, and the possibility of more immediate reporting. Studies on online donations and crowdfunding show that transparency, ease of use, platform quality, and trust are important factors in digital donation decision-making (Hariwibowo, 2022; Indriyani, 2024; Hamidah et al., 2024). In the context of ZIS, digitalisation is also understood as a strategy to expand service outreach, particularly to younger donors who are more familiar with cashless payment methods.

In the case of DSH, changes in donation patterns cannot be understood as a complete shift from physical donation to digital donation. Some donors, especially older donors or those living in areas with limited digital literacy, continue to choose the physical bedug because they feel emotionally closer to the program itself. Filling the bedug after the dawn prayer is understood as both a spiritual routine and a family habit. The bedug collection process also creates space for direct interaction with LAZ officers, so donors feel a sense of social control and closeness to the institution they are donating to. This segment demonstrates that personal relationships remain an important form of social capital in Islamic charitable giving.

Conversely, younger donors tend to be more open to digital channels, but they still require assurances regarding transaction security, transparency in fund utilisation, and ease of access to reports. The literature on QRIS adoption shows that ease of use, perceived benefits, trust, and security influence the acceptance of digital payment methods (Muchtar et al., 2024; Nurqamarani et al., 2024; Santika et al., 2024). Therefore, changes in donation patterns in the BSS are more appropriately understood as a hybrid model: the physical bedug preserves symbolic and emotional dimensions, while QRIS and digital media expand access, accelerate transactions, and facilitate program communication.

Program Adaptation Process

The adaptation carried out by LAZ Dompet Sejuta Harapan is evident in the combination of conventional and digital strategies. Conventional strategies are maintained through the distribution of bedug donation boxes, door-to-door donation collection, and direct communication with donors. Simultaneously, DSH began using social media, particularly Instagram and WhatsApp, to disseminate program information, document activities, invite donations, and narrate the virtues of giving at dawn. Social media functions as a campaign and education space, while WhatsApp serves as a more personal communication channel for donors and program partners.

The most concrete form of adaptation is the integration of QRIS into the latest version of the bedug. QRIS allows donors to continue responding to the symbolic presence of the bedug while having the option of cashless payment. This mechanism is important because it does not eliminate the program's identity; rather, it adds an option for donors who are more comfortable using e-wallets or mobile banking. Within this framework, the bedug no longer functions merely as a physical donation box but also as a connecting medium between traditional almsgiving practices and digital payment systems. To evaluate the effectiveness of digital channels, conventional transactions and QRIS transactions need to be recorded separately in internal program reports.

Adaptation challenges arise because donors are not homogeneous. Older donors tend to maintain conventional methods because putting money into the bedug has become a routine after dawn prayer. On the other hand, limited digital literacy causes some donors to lack confidence in using digital payments. Limited technological understanding can hinder the adoption of online donations because donors do not fully understand transaction procedures, proof of payment, data security, and fund distribution mechanisms (Akbar & Wijaya, 2023; Meilany et al., 2024). Among younger donors, the more prominent issue is not merely the ability to use technology, but trust in transaction security and transparency in donation distribution.

Digitalisation nevertheless offers substantial opportunities for DSH. Digital channels enable broader donor reach, faster promotion, and more efficient reporting and communication. The experience of philanthropic institutions shows that information technology can support ZIS fundraising; however, its success is strongly influenced by the quality of education, system security, and institutional accountability (Dompet Dhuafa, 2020; Suselo, 2025). In the case of BSS, these opportunities should be directed toward strengthening monthly digital reports, QRIS educational content, program achievement announcements, and documentation of distribution impacts to ensure that donor trust continues to increase.

Thus, the presence of digital donations does not automatically replace the physical bedug. For DSH, the bedug remains the program's identity and a means of maintaining emotional relationships with donors. The main contribution of this adaptation lies precisely in the program's ability to preserve a traditional symbol while opening digital access. This hybrid model is relevant for other LAZ institutions that wish to pursue digitalisation without breaking the social relationships that have long been the strength of community-based philanthropy.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the Bedug Sedekah Subuh program at LAZ Dompet Sejuta Harapan adapts to changing donation patterns through a hybrid model. Adaptation is carried out by maintaining the physical bedug as a symbol of dawn almsgiving and as a relational medium, while adding digital channels through social media promotion, WhatsApp communication, and QRIS integration in the latest version of the bedug. Changes in donation patterns do not occur as a total shift from conventional to digital methods, but rather as an expansion of donation options. Donors who have emotional attachments to the bedug continue to use conventional methods, while donors who are more familiar with technology begin to use digital channels.

The main challenges of the program are uneven digital literacy, concerns about transaction security, and the need for reporting transparency. These findings affirm that the digitalisation of Islamic philanthropy should not be understood merely as the use of payment technology but also as a process of building trust, education, and accountability. The main contribution of this article is to show that digital adaptation can proceed without eliminating traditional symbols as long as technology is positioned as a complement to established social and spiritual relationships.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on these findings, DSH is advised to strengthen digital donation education through simple QRIS training for donors, short videos on how to donate digitally, and assistance through schools or mosques as literacy agents. Transparency should also be strengthened through monthly digital reports, easily accessible information on the amount of funds collected and distributed, and the documentation of program impacts. In addition, DSH needs to separate conventional and digital fundraising data so that the effectiveness of QRIS and social media can be evaluated more accurately. Future research should compare the BSS hybrid model with digital donation programs at other LAZ institutions and include quantitative data on the contribution of digital channels to total fundraising.

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