

Islamic Philanthropy in the Digital Era: Intercultural Communication Strategies for Effective ZISWAF Campaigns

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Abstract

The main issue in the Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF) campaign in the digital era is how to effectively manage communication in a multicultural context. The objective of this research is to identify communication strategies that can inclusively reach multicultural communities. The core statement of this research is that effective intercultural communication is crucial for increasing participation in the ZISWAF campaign. The theory used is John Fiske's semiotic theory, which explains how messages are encoded and decoded by different audiences. The analysis shows that the use of cultural symbols and technology-based approaches can enhance the effectiveness of the ZISWAF campaign. The conclusion of this research is that culturally sensitive communication strategies, supported by digital technology, can increase community engagement in ZISWAF management and strengthen the impact of Islamic philanthropy.

Introduction

Multiculturalism plays an important role in the collection of Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF) funds in Indonesia, especially in the context of effective intercultural communication. In a diverse society, an inclusive and culturally sensitive approach is essential to reach various communities in fundraising efforts. Research shows that a deep understanding of different cultural values and norms can enhance the effectiveness of ZISWAF fundraising strategies. For example, by understanding the social and cultural backgrounds of

the target communities, ZISWAF management institutions can design messages that are more relevant and appealing to those audiences.

As explained in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:177):

[illegible]

“Righteousness is not in turning your faces towards the east or the west. Rather, the righteous are those who believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Books, and the prophets; who give charity out of their cherished wealth to relatives, orphans, the poor, ‘needy’ travellers, beggars, and for freeing captives; who establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and keep the pledges they make; and who are patient in times of suffering, adversity, and in ‘the heat of’ battle. It is they who are true ‘in faith’, and it is they who are mindful of Allah”. This verse emphasizes the importance of giving wealth and doing good to others, which is the essence of ZISWAF.

Digitalization has also changed the way ZISWAF is managed, allowing institutions to reach a wider audience through digital platforms. Research shows that the use of digital technology in ZISWAF fundraising not only increases efficiency but also extends its reach to the younger generation, who are more familiar with technology. In this context, intercultural communication becomes very important, as institutions must be able to convey messages that align with the values and expectations of various ethnic and cultural groups in Indonesia. Thus, communication strategies that consider cultural diversity can enhance community participation in ZISWAF programs.

Furthermore, a multicultural approach in ZISWAF fundraising can also help address the issues faced in fund management. For example, research shows that institutions implementing inclusive communication strategies based on shared values can be more effective in building trust and community participation. In this context, ZISWAF institutions need to develop programs that not only focus on fundraising but also on community empowerment through social activities involving various cultural groups. Thus, ZISWAF fundraising not only becomes a tool for collecting funds but also serves as a means to build social solidarity among different communities.

The importance of Muslims contributing in the form of ZISWAF in life is also emphasized in the Hadith narrated by Abu Dawud, which states:

[illegible]

"It has been narrated to us by [Ar Rabi' bin Sulaiman Al Muadzdzin], who was narrated to us by [Ibnu Wahb] from [Sulaiman bin Bilal] from [Al 'Ala' bin Abdurrahman], from [his father] from [Abu Hurairah] that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: 'When a Muslim dies, his deeds are cut off except for three things: ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, or a righteous child who prays for him.'" (HR Abu Dawud, Hadis No. 2880). This hadith emphasizes that good deeds, including charity, will have a lasting impact, so the management of ZISWAF must be done well so that its benefits can be felt by the community.

Additionally, the importance of intercultural communication in ZISWAF fundraising is also evident in the use of social media and other digital platforms. Research results show that institutions that successfully integrate effective communication with the use of new media can increase community engagement in ZISWAF programs. By utilizing social media, institutions can reach a wider and more diverse audience, as well as create spaces for better dialogue and interaction between various cultural groups. This indicates that the success of ZISWAF fundraising heavily depends on the institution's ability to adapt to existing social and cultural dynamics.¹

Overall, multiculturalism and intercultural communication are key elements in effective ZISWAF fundraising. By understanding and appreciating cultural diversity, ZISWAF institutions can design more inclusive and responsive strategies to the needs of the community, thereby increasing public participation and trust in the programs being implemented. Therefore, it is important for ZISWAF management institutions to continuously develop approaches that consider cultural diversity in every aspect of management and fundraising.

Method

Data in this study were collected through several methods. First, a literature review was conducted by examining various sources that discuss Islamic philanthropy, intercultural communication, and John Fiske's semiotic theory. The literature reviewed includes scholarly articles, books, and previous research relevant to the use of communication strategies in ZISWAF campaigns. Next, case studies were carried out to analyze several ZISWAF campaigns in Indonesia and other countries with significant multicultural populations. The selected campaigns include both successful digital campaigns and those that faced challenges in attracting audiences from various cultures.

¹ Hyunseok Hwang and Tiffany Amorette Young, "Considering the Effectiveness of Philanthropic Collective Action: A Community Ecology Perspective," *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 39, no. 1 (2018).

Results and discussion

A. The use of cultural symbols and signs in the ziswaf campaign and their influence on meaning.

Communication in the Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF) campaign is greatly influenced by the cultural symbols and signs used. These cultural symbols play a crucial role in conveying messages that can be accepted and understood by various segments of society. By utilizing cultural codes, the ZISWAF campaign seeks to create relevant and effective meanings, thereby encouraging community participation in charity and philanthropy.² This understanding can be analyzed through the speech code theory, which highlights the importance of encoding and decoding in communication.

The coding process in the ZISWAF campaign involves the selection of symbols and signs that reflect the cultural values and beliefs of the target audience. For example, Islamic symbols such as the crescent moon and star, as well as references to verses from the Qur'an, are often used to evoke a sense of religious responsibility and community solidarity among Muslim donors.³ These symbols not only serve as markers of Islamic identity but also as strong motivators for charitable giving. The success of these symbols greatly depends on their cultural relevance; these symbols must align with the audience's understanding of philanthropy and social responsibility.⁴

Moreover, the use of culturally specific language and imagery can enhance the emotional appeal of the ZISWAF message. Campaigns often integrate local dialects, proverbs, or visual elements that reflect the cultural heritage of the targeted communities. This approach aligns with findings that show culturally tailored communication can build stronger relationships with the audience, thereby increasing the likelihood of engagement and support.⁵ Integrated narratives and cultural stories can also provide context and meaning, making the campaign more acceptable and impactful.⁶

On the other hand, the process of decoding ZISWAF messages is influenced by the cultural background and experiences of the recipients.

² Donghai Chu, "Philanthropic Behavior and Culture Difference," *Advances in Education, Humanities and Social Science Research* 6, no. 1 (2023): 488.

³ Jonna Koponen and Saara Julkunen, "Consumers' Experiences of Appropriate Sales Interaction - A Speech Code Theory Perspective," *Studies in Communication Sciences* 17, no. 1 (2017): 25-41.

⁴ Danika Hiew N et al., "Communication and Relationship Satisfaction in Chinese, Western, and Intercultural Chinese-Western Couples.," *Journal of Family Psychology* 30, no. 2 (2016): 193-202.

⁵ Afidatul Aqma Mohamad Sabre and Eliyas S. Mohandas, "Analysis of Cross-Cultural Communication Challenges in the Movie 'Outsourced' (2006)," *European Journal of Social Sciences Studies* 9, no. 3 (2023): 1-19.

⁶ Changyi Wu, Hiroshi Yama, and Norhayati Zakaria, "How Do Japanese and Chinese View Each Other? Understanding the Meaning of Low-Context Culture in Intercultural Communication," *Global Networks* 24, no. 1 (2024).

Various cultural groups may have different understandings of the symbols and signs used in the campaign, leading to varied interpretations of the intended message. For example, individuals from high-context cultures, such as many Asian societies, tend to rely on non-verbal cues and implicit meanings, whereas individuals from low-context cultures, such as in the United States, might prioritize explicit and direct communication.⁷ These differences can lead to misunderstandings if the cultural codes embedded in the message do not align with the audience's interpretive framework.⁸

Furthermore, the role of cultural codes in shaping perceptions of philanthropy cannot be overlooked. Cultural codes often determine behaviors that are considered appropriate or desirable in charitable giving, influencing how individuals respond to ZISWAF campaigns. For example, in some cultures, collective giving is emphasized, while in others, individual contributions may be more valued.⁹ Understanding these cultural nuances is crucial for organizations that want to effectively engage with diverse communities, as this can influence the design and delivery of their fundraising messages.

In conclusion, the use of cultural symbols and signs in ZISWAF campaigns is a critical factor in shaping the meaning and effectiveness of communication efforts. By carefully encoding messages that align with the cultural values of the target audience and paying attention to the decoding process, organizations can enhance their philanthropic reach and encourage greater community engagement. This approach not only promotes successful fundraising but also strengthens the relevance of Islamic philanthropic culture in diverse contexts.

B. ZISWAF Digital Campaign and Intercultural Communication

Digitalization has brought significant changes in the management and implementation of fundraising campaigns for Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf. (ZISWAF). The use of digital platforms not only expands the audience reach but also enhances the effectiveness of the communication strategies implemented by the organization. In this context, the use of digital tools becomes key in reaching various diverse cultural groups, as well as building better interactions between the organization and the donors. One of the main advantages of digital platforms is their ability to reach a wide audience at relatively low costs. Research shows that digital

⁷ Agostino Vollero, Alfonso Siano, and Maria Palazzo, "Hoftsede's Cultural Dimensions and Corporate Social Responsibility in Online Communication: Are They Independent Constructs?," *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* 27, no. 1 (2019): 53–64.

⁸ Odilia Yim and R. Clément, "'You're a Juksing': Examining Cantonese-English Code-Switching as an Index of Identity," *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 38, no. 4 (2019): 479–495, <https://colab.ws/articles/10.1177%2F0261927x19865572>.

⁹ Yim and Clément, "'You're a Juksing': Examining Cantonese-English Code-Switching as an Index of Identity."

marketing significantly enhances the efficiency of outreach efforts, allowing organizations to connect with potential donors across geographical and cultural boundaries. For example, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter allow ZISWAF campaigns to spread messages quickly and widely, capturing users' attention through visually appealing content and interactive features. This approach not only increases the visibility of the campaign but also creates a sense of community among diverse audiences, as individuals can share and discuss the campaign message within their networks.¹⁰

Furthermore, digital tools also enable the implementation of targeted marketing strategies, which can be tailored to specific cultural demographics.¹¹ By leveraging data analytics and audience segmentation, organizations can design messages that align with the values and preferences of different cultural groups.¹² For example, campaigns can use culturally relevant symbols, language, and narratives, thereby increasing the likelihood of positive engagement and support. This targeted approach is very important in a multicultural context, where a one-size-fits-all message will not be effective.¹³

Multimedia content also becomes an important aspect of the ZISWAF digital campaign. Digital platforms allow the integration of various forms of media, such as videos, infographics, and interactive content, which can enrich the storytelling aspect of fundraising efforts.¹⁴ This multimodal approach not only captures attention but also allows for a deeper emotional connection with potential donors.

By presenting a strong narrative that highlights the impact of contributions, organizations can motivate a diverse audience to participate in the ZISWAF initiative. In addition, the interactive nature of digital platforms encourages two-way communication between organizations and their audience. This interactivity is important for building trust and good relationships, as potential donors can engage with the campaign through comments, shares, and direct messages.¹⁵ Such engagement allows organizations to address questions and concerns in real-time,

¹⁰ Suraj Arshanapally et al., "Use of a Paid Digital Marketing Campaign to Promote a Mobile Health App to Encourage Parent-Engaged Developmental Monitoring: Implementation Study," *JMIR Pediatrics and Parenting* 5, no. 2 (2022): 1–13.

¹¹ Susan Konyeha, "Exploring Cybersecurity Threats in Digital Marketing," *NIPES Journal of Science and Technology Research* 2, no. 3 (2020): 12.

¹² María Elena Gutiérrez-Rentería, Cristina Eccius-Wellmann, and Alfonso Vara-Miguel, "Classification of Mexican Audiences by Their Interest in Digital News Content and Socioeconomic Characteristics," *Communication and Society* 37, no. 1 (2024): 205–218.

¹³ A.N Agafonova, Rna Yakhneeva, and G.R Mukhametshna, *Human-Centric Marketing in the Digital Era*, 2021.

¹⁴ Chuan Chuan Low et al., "Multi-Audience Tracking with RGB-D Camera on Digital Signage," *Heliyon* 6, no. 9 (2020): e05107, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e05107>.

¹⁵ Ifeanyi Okonkwo and Emmanuel Namkoisse, "The Role of Influencer Marketing in Building Authentic Brand Relationships Online," *Journal of Digital Marketing and Communication* 3, no. 2 (2023): 81–90.

creating a more personal experience that can enhance donor loyalty and commitment to the campaign's goals.

Finally, the role of influencers and community leaders in the digital ZISWAF campaign cannot be overlooked. Collaboration with trusted figures in various cultural communities can strengthen the reach and credibility of fundraising efforts.¹⁶ Influencers can help bridge cultural gaps by providing authentic support and facilitating conversations about the importance of ZISWAF, encouraging broader participation from their followers. Thus, digital platforms play a crucial role in the success of ZISWAF fundraising campaigns by enabling organizations to effectively reach diverse audiences. Through targeted marketing, multimedia content, interactive communication, and partnerships with influencers, this campaign can drive greater engagement and support across cultural boundaries. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, the potential for innovative approaches in intercultural communication within ZISWAF fundraising will become even broader, offering new opportunities for collaboration and community development.

C. Social Media and Audience Engagement

The role of social media influencers in the Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF) campaigns is very significant, especially in the context of multicultural societies. The use of influencers who have trust and influence over their followers can enhance the effectiveness of these philanthropic initiatives.¹⁷ This is due to the influencer's ability to connect culturally relevant content with a diverse audience, thereby creating more meaningful and impactful communication. In an increasingly digitally connected world, the role of influencers becomes more important in bridging the goals of ZISWAF campaigns and the values upheld by diverse communities.

One of the main advantages of leveraging social media influencers for ZISWAF campaigns is the credibility and relationships that influencers have built with their followers. Influencers often succeed in creating a strong sense of trust and authenticity, which is an important aspect when promoting charitable causes.¹⁸ Research shows that audiences are more likely to respond positively to messages delivered by individuals they perceive as trustworthy and relevant to their daily lives. In this context, the selection of influencers who align with specific cultural groups is very

¹⁶ Okonkwo and Namkousse, "The Role of Influencer Marketing in Building Authentic Brand Relationships Online."

¹⁷ Fei Fan et al., "How Influencers' Social Media Posts Have an Influence on Audience Engagement among Young Consumers," *Young Consumers* 24, no. 4 (2023): 427–444.

¹⁸ Fan et al., "How Influencers' Social Media Posts Have an Influence on Audience Engagement among Young Consumers."

important, as it can increase reach and deepen connections with potential donors.¹⁹

Furthermore, influencers have the ability to create culturally relevant content and speak directly to the diverse values and beliefs of the audience. For example, an influencer from a certain cultural background can share personal stories related to ZISWAF, making the campaign feel closer and more impactful for the audience.²⁰ Cultural content adaptation is crucial in a multicultural context, where a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective. By using language, symbols, and narratives specific to the culture, influencers can effectively bridge the gap between campaign goals and the audience's cultural identity.²¹

Social media also provides a dynamic environment for interaction and engagement. Influencers can facilitate two-way communication by encouraging their followers to participate in discussions, share opinions, and ask questions about the ZISWAF initiative.²² This interactive character not only enhances audience engagement but also allows organizations to receive real-time feedback, enabling them to adjust their messages and strategies based on audience responses. Such engagement fosters a sense of community and shared purpose, which is crucial for the success of fundraising efforts.²³

Furthermore, the use of multimedia content by influencers—such as videos, live broadcasts, and interactive posts—can enhance the appeal of the ZISWAF campaign. Visual storytelling is a powerful tool for conveying complex messages in an accessible and engaging manner.²⁴ By showcasing the impact of donations through engaging visuals and compelling narratives, influencers can motivate their audience to contribute to ZISWAF initiatives, thereby increasing participation and support.

Thus, social media influencers play a crucial role in communicating the ZISWAF campaign to a multicultural audience. Their ability to create culturally relevant content, encourage engagement, and leverage the interactive nature of social media significantly enhances the effectiveness

¹⁹ Ifeyinwa Nsude, Titilayo Remilekun Osuagwu, and Emeka Williams Etumnu, "Perceived Influence of Social Media on Multiculturalism in Southern States, Nigeria," *Journal of Sociology: Bulletin of Yerevan University* 14, no. 1 (37) (2023): 29–49.

²⁰ Nsude, Osuagwu, and Etumnu, "Perceived Influence of Social Media on Multiculturalism in Southern States, Nigeria."

²¹ Yan Huang and Fuyuan Shen, "Effects of Cultural Tailoring on Persuasion in Cancer Communication: A Meta-Analysis," *Journal of Communication* 66, no. 4 (2016): 694–715.

²² Nguyen Minh Ngoc, "Journalism and Social Media: The Transformation of Journalism in the Age of Social Media and Online News," *European Journal of Social Sciences Studies* 7, no. 6 (2022): 54–64.

²³ Geqi Wu and Chunlei Pan, "Audience Engagement with News on Chinese Social Media: A Discourse Analysis of the People's Daily Official Account on WeChat," *Discourse and Communication* 16, no. 1 (2022): 129–145.

²⁴ Fan et al., "How Influencers' Social Media Posts Have an Influence on Audience Engagement among Young Consumers."

of fundraising efforts. Through collaboration with influencers who resonate with specific cultural groups, organizations can strengthen their reach and promote a culture of giving that transcends cultural boundaries. This is in line with the ideas put forward by Huda et al. regarding the importance of utilizing influencers to support economic development through ZISWAF. With this strategic step, it is hoped that ZISWAF can be more optimal in empowering communities and broadly enhancing social welfare.

D. Case Study of the ZISWAF Campaign in a Multicultural Context

1. Southeast Asia: Cultural Audience Diversity

In the context of Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF) in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia and Malaysia, ZISWAF campaigns demonstrate how local cultural norms significantly influence fundraising strategies. These two countries are known for their rich cultural diversity, necessitating tailored approaches to effectively engage various segments of society. In Indonesia, ZISWAF campaigns often leverage strong community ties and Islamic values to foster a culture of giving. The concept of "gotong royong," or mutual cooperation, is deeply ingrained in Indonesian society and serves as a cultural foundation for charitable activities.²⁵ Campaigns that emphasize community involvement and collective action resonate strongly with the local audience. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, various ZISWAF initiatives utilized social media platforms to mobilize community support, encouraging collective donations to help those affected by the crisis. The use of local influencers, such as popular figures on Instagram, is very effective in reaching a young audience, as these influencers can communicate the importance of ZISWAF in a way that is easily understood and resonates with them.²⁶

Meanwhile, in Malaysia, the ZISWAF campaign reflects the country's multicultural landscape, which includes a significant Malay, Chinese, and Indian population. This diversity requires a more nuanced approach in delivering messages that respect and integrate the cultural values of various groups. For example, the campaign can use multilingual content to ensure inclusivity by providing messages in Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil to reach a wider audience.²⁷ Additionally, the incorporation of local traditions and customs into fundraising activities, such as Ramadan iftar

²⁵ Tijs A. van den Broek et al., "The Influence of Network Structure and Prosocial Cultural Norms on Charitable Giving: A Multilevel Analysis of Movember's Fundraising Campaigns in 24 Countries," *Social Networks* 58 (2019): 128–135, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socnet.2019.04.001>.

²⁶ Joyce Cheah Lynn-Sze and Nurul Nazielah Bt Fathi, "The Roles of Social Media Influencers on Online Fundraising in Indonesia," *Journal of Indonesian Economy and Business* 38, no. 2 (2023): 105–118.

²⁷ Abhishek Bhati and Diarmuid McDonnell, "Success in an Online Giving Day: The Role of Social Media in Fundraising," *onprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (2019): 74–92.

events, helps create a sense of familiarity and relevance for the participants.

The development of digital fundraising platforms in both countries also contributes to the ease of ZISWAF contributions. These platforms often feature culturally relevant narratives and visuals that capture the attention of the local community. For example, the use of storytelling that highlights the impact of donations on community welfare aligns closely with the cultural emphasis on social responsibility.²⁸ Campaigns that showcase real beneficiaries of ZISWAF contributions can evoke empathy and encourage participation, as they align with the values of compassion and community support held by the audience.

Social media plays an important role in this campaign, enabling real-time engagement and interaction with potential donors. The ability to share stories and personal experiences related to ZISWAF on platforms like Facebook and Instagram enhances the emotional appeal of fundraising efforts.²⁹ For example, during the pandemic, many organizations utilized social media to share updates about their initiatives, fostering a sense of togetherness and encouraging sustained support. This digital engagement not only expands the reach of the ZISWAF campaign but also allows for message adjustments based on audience feedback, ensuring cultural sensitivity and relevance.

Overall, the ZISWAF campaign in Indonesia and Malaysia demonstrates the importance of cultural adaptation in fundraising efforts. By leveraging local cultural norms, using multilingual content, and engaging communities through social media, this campaign can effectively reach a diverse audience. The integration of cultural values into ZISWAF messages not only enhances participation but also strengthens the overall impact of Islamic philanthropy in this multicultural context.

2. ZISWAF Campaign in Western Countries

Involving the Muslim diaspora in multicultural societies such as the United States and Europe presents both challenges and opportunities for the Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf campaign. (ZISWAF). In this context, the ZISWAF campaign must be able to navigate the existing cultural diversity while effectively conveying messages that can resonate with various audiences. An important point to consider is how the ZISWAF campaign adjusts its strategies to reach Muslim communities in both regions.

²⁸ Zulkifli Zulkifli, "Strategies For Enhancing Zakat Fundraising Through The Utilization Of Social Media And Digital Campaigns," *International Conference on Digital Advance Tourism, Management and Technology* 1, no. 2 (2023): 34–44.

²⁹ Ernan E. Haruvy and Peter T.L. Popkowski Leszczyc, "Social Media and Nonprofit Fundraising: The Influence of Facebook Likes," *European Journal of Marketing* 58, no. 1 (2024): 33–65.

In the United States, the ZISWAF campaign often utilizes digital platforms to reach the Muslim diaspora, which has a highly diverse cultural background and experiences. Social media has become a very important tool for this campaign, allowing organizations to disseminate messages quickly and interactively. Research shows that effective use of social media can break through traditional communication strategies, allowing organizations to engage audiences in a more participatory manner.³⁰ For example, campaigns can leverage platforms like Facebook and Instagram to share compelling stories about beneficiaries, which in turn creates a sense of community and encourages donations.

The importance of adapting messages to reflect local cultural norms cannot be overlooked in the effort to achieve successful engagement. ZISWAF campaigns in the United States often incorporate elements that resonate with broader societal values, such as social justice and community welfare. By framing ZISWAF contributions as part of a larger narrative of social responsibility, organizations can attract the attention of both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences. In Europe, especially in countries with significant Muslim populations such as the UK and France, ZISWAF campaigns also tailor their messages to the local cultural context. The use of multilingual content has become a common strategy, ensuring that the messages conveyed are accessible to various linguistic groups within the diaspora. Additionally, the campaigns often highlight the contributions of Muslims to the local community, thereby creating a sense of ownership and encouraging participation in ZISWAF initiatives.³¹

The role of community leaders and influencers is also very important in engaging the Muslim diaspora in this multicultural society. Influencers can help bridge cultural gaps by providing authentic support and facilitating discussions about the importance of ZISWAF. Their ability to connect with the audience on a personal level enhances the campaign's relatability, making it more effective in encouraging participation. For example, influencers can share their personal experiences related to ZISWAF, highlighting the impact of contributions on community welfare, which can resonate deeply with their followers. Furthermore, ZISWAF campaigns in Western countries often use a participatory approach that encourages community engagement. This can include organizing events that bring together various groups to discuss philanthropic efforts and their impact on the local community. Such initiatives not only promote awareness of ZISWAF but also build a sense of unity among Muslims and non-Muslims.

³⁰ Bridget Tombleson and Katharina Wolf, "Rethinking the Circuit of Culture: How Participatory Culture Has Transformed Cross-Cultural Communication," *Public Relations Review* 43, no. 1 (2017): 14–25.

³¹ Eva Nurul Huda, Achmad Tohirin, and Muhammad Afiat Anang Luqmana, "A Bibliometric Analysis of Islamic Philanthropy," *Journal of Islamic Economic and Business Research* 3, no. 1 (2023): 97–124.

In conclusion, engaging the Muslim diaspora in multicultural societies like the United States and Europe requires ZISWAF campaigns to be culturally sensitive and adaptive. By leveraging digital platforms, using multilingual content, collaborating with influencers, and encouraging community engagement, this campaign can effectively resonate with a diverse audience. This approach not only enhances fundraising efforts but also strengthens the overall impact of Islamic philanthropy in this multicultural context.

E. Challenges in Intercultural Communication for ZISWAF Campaign

1. Language Barrier

Language is a very important communication tool in the fundraising campaigns for Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF). However, the challenges faced in intercultural communication related to ZISWAF are very significant, especially when linking these messages in different language and cultural contexts. These challenges often result in misunderstandings, incorrect interpretations, and ultimately can reduce the level of engagement in fundraising efforts. One of the main issues in translating ZISWAF messages is the complexity of accurately conveying cultural nuances and religious meanings.

In this context, some terms and concepts in Islamic philanthropy may not have exact equivalents in other languages, leading to difficulties in preserving the original meaning and intent of the message. This becomes even more complicated when considering the diverse interpretations of Islamic teachings across different cultures. Ogie and Perez note that language and cultural differences can hinder effective communication, especially in multicultural settings where individuals may not fully understand the official language used in the campaign. Misinterpretations can also arise from the meticulous use of language that is not handled well.³² For example, humor, idiomatic expressions, and specific cultural references may not be well translated, potentially alienating the audience rather than attracting their attention. Translating humor is often challenging, as what is considered funny in one culture may be seen as inappropriate or confusing in another culture.³³ Therefore, it is important for the ZISWAF campaign to involve culturally competent translators who can bridge these complexities and ensure that the messages conveyed are appropriate for the intended audience.

Dependence on machine translation tools can also exacerbate language barriers. Although these tools have made significant progress, they often

³² R. I. Ogie and P. Perez, "Collaborative Translation of Emergency Messages (Co-TEM): An Australian Case Study," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 50, no. October (2020): 101920, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2020.101920>.

³³ Julija Korostenskien and Miglė Pakrosnytė, "Analysis of Humour in Tv Series Friends" 2019 (2019): 155–178.

struggle with context and cultural nuances, leading to translations that may be technically correct but not contextually appropriate. For example, gender bias in machine translation has been documented, where translations can inadvertently reinforce stereotypes or fail to accurately represent gender-neutral terms. This is particularly problematic in the ZISWAF campaign, which seeks to promote inclusivity and equality.³⁴

The lack of professional translators and interpreters in many multicultural societies can also hinder the effectiveness of the ZISWAF campaign. Reports indicate that even in countries with strong multicultural policies, linguistic minority groups often face challenges in accessing information due to the shortage of quality translators.³⁵ This shortage can result in significant barriers to understanding and participating in ZISWAF initiatives, which in turn affects fundraising outcomes.

In conclusion, language barriers are a substantial challenge for ZISWAF campaigns that aim to engage diverse audiences across various cultural contexts. By recognizing the complexities of translation, using culturally competent translators, and overcoming the limitations of machine translation, organizations can enhance their communication strategies and encourage greater engagement in their fundraising efforts. Ensuring that ZISWAF messages are culturally relevant and accurately translated is essential for building trust and encouraging participation among multicultural audiences.

2. Trust and Transparency Across Cultures.

Trust plays an important role in the success of Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF) campaigns, especially when involving diverse cultural groups. Perceptions of trust can vary significantly among different cultural audiences, affecting their willingness to participate in charitable activities. In this context, it is important to understand how trust is built and maintained in ZISWAF campaigns and how this differs in various cultural contexts.

One of the key factors influencing trust in ZISWAF campaigns is transparency. Research shows that transparent communication can foster trust among stakeholders, as it allows individuals to understand how their contributions are used and the impact of the donations made.³⁶ In a

³⁴ Won Ik Cho et al., "On Measuring Gender Bias in Translation of Gender-Neutral Pronouns," no. Figure 1 (2019): 173–181.

³⁵ Judith Ansaa Osae-Larbi, "Bridging the Language Barrier Gap in the Health of Multicultural Societies: Report of a Proposed Mobile Phone-Based Intervention Using Ghana as an Example," *SpringerPlus* 5, no. 1 (2016): 1–7.

³⁶ Dayah Abdi Kulmie, Abdikarin Adde Mohamud, and Mohamed Salad Ibrahim, "Good Governance, Public Service Delivery and Public Trust: Case of Banadir Regional Administration of Somalia," *International Journal of Religion* 5, no. 9 (2024): 60–68.

multicultural context, where the audience may have varying levels of understanding of Islamic philanthropy, clear and transparent messaging becomes very important. For example, a campaign that provides detailed information about the allocation of funds and beneficiaries of ZISWAF contributions can build trust among potential donors. This becomes increasingly important in cultures that may have skepticism towards charitable organizations due to past experiences or broader social issues.

Cultural differences also play an important role in shaping perceptions of trust. In collectivist cultures, such as many found in Southeast Asia, trust is often built through community relationships and shared values. The ZISWAF campaign, which emphasizes community benefits and collective responsibility, tends to resonate more with this audience.³⁷ Conversely, in individualistic cultures, such as in the United States and parts of Europe, trust may be more related to personal relationships and individual accountability. Campaigns that highlight personal stories and individual impact can be more effective in this context.³⁸

Furthermore, the role of cultural symbols in building trust cannot be overlooked. Symbols that resonate with certain cultural groups can enhance the perceived legitimacy of ZISWAF campaigns. For example, the use of Islamic symbols and references in campaigns targeting Muslim audiences can strengthen trust by aligning with their cultural and religious identity. However, if these symbols are not understood or misinterpreted by individuals from different cultural backgrounds, it can lead to distrust or indifference. This highlights the importance of cultural sensitivity in the design and implementation of ZISWAF campaigns.

Additionally, the presence of community leaders and influencers can significantly impact trust in the ZISWAF campaign. In many cultures, support from respected figures can enhance the campaign's credibility and build trust among potential donors.³⁹ Collaborating with local influencers who understand the cultural nuances of their communities can help bridge gaps and facilitate trust-building efforts.

Overall, trust is a fundamental component of ZISWAF campaigns, and its perception varies among cultural groups. By prioritizing transparency, understanding cultural differences, using appropriate symbols, and involving community leaders, organizations can enhance trust and encourage participation in their fundraising efforts. This culturally

³⁷ Wenyuan Yu et al., "In Whom Do We Trust? Critical Success Factors Impacting Intercultural Communication in Multicultural Project Teams," *International Journal of Information Systems and Project Management* 9, no. 3 (2021): 21–40.

³⁸ Yu et al., "In Whom Do We Trust? Critical Success Factors Impacting Intercultural Communication in Multicultural Project Teams."

³⁹ Irma Wulandari, "Cross-Cultural Auditing: Challenges in Global Practice," *Golden Ratio of Auditing Research* 3, no. 2 (2023): 107–120.

sensitive approach is crucial for the success of ZISWAF initiatives in various contexts.

F. Best Practices for Effective Intercultural Communication in ZISWAF

In the context of the Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF) campaign, effective intercultural communication becomes very important to achieve sustainable fundraising goals. Message adaptation strategies become crucial considering the existing multicultural context. A deep understanding of cultural backgrounds, values, and communication styles of various societal groups is the key to adjusting messages. According to Kojansow, audience analysis is an essential first step in the communication process, enabling message creators to formulate information that is relevant and appropriate to a specific cultural context.⁴⁰

First, it is important to understand the audience targeted by the ZISWAF campaign. Research shows that familiarity with the norms and cultural values of the audience will facilitate the formulation of an effective message. For example, in some communities, giving donations is not just a social act, but also a moral or religious obligation that holds certain significance.⁴¹ By understanding this perspective, the delivery of the message can be adjusted to be more resonant and relevant for a diverse audience.

The use of culturally relevant symbols is also an effective strategy. Cultural symbols can evoke emotions and create a sense of connection between the audience and the message being conveyed. However, it is very important to ensure that the symbols are understood and not misinterpreted in different cultural contexts. Chaika et al. emphasize that adequate research on the appropriate symbols can prevent misunderstandings that may arise from the use of inappropriate symbols.⁴² Multilingualism in communication is also crucial in linguistically diverse societies. Presenting messages in various languages not only shows respect for the audience's language preferences but also helps build trust. Roberts et al. show that communication involving multiple languages can enhance engagement and participation in charitable initiatives. The ZISWAF campaign needs to ensure that the translations used are not only linguistically accurate but also sensitive to the local cultural context.

⁴⁰ Angeline Lydia Kojansow, Leviane Jackelin Hera Lotulung, and Johnny Semuel Kalangi, "Communication Strategy in Socialising Analogue Switch off in North Sulawesi," *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi (Indonesian Journal of Communications Studies)* 7, no. 2 (2023): 555–570.

⁴¹ Nur Amelia et al., "Urgensi Ziswaf Dalam Pengembangan Perekonomian Di Indonesia," *Sharing: Journal of Islamic Economics, Management and Business* 2, no. 2 (2023): 157–168.

⁴² Amelia et al., "Urgensi Ziswaf Dalam Pengembangan Perekonomian Di Indonesia."

The storytelling method is also a very powerful tool in conveying culturally relevant messages. By sharing personal stories or testimonials from beneficiaries, the ZISWAF campaign can create a deep emotional connection with potential donors. Melati et al. assert that narratives reflecting the cultural values of the audience can enhance empathy and encourage action, making this approach highly effective in the context of fundraising. Additionally, the implementation of feedback mechanisms in campaigns also needs to be considered. By involving the audience through surveys, social media interactions, or community forums, organizations can assess the effectiveness of the messages conveyed and make the necessary adjustments. This process not only enhances engagement but also demonstrates the organization's responsiveness and adaptability to the needs and expectations of various cultural groups.

Speaking of influence, collaborating with local influencers who understand the cultural nuances of their communities can enhance the reach and credibility of the ZISWAF campaign. Influencers have the ability to convey messages in a more relatable manner, thereby fostering discussions about the importance of ZISWAF. Support from influencers can significantly impact audience perception and encourage their participation. Lastly, training staff in intercultural communication skills is crucial to enhance the overall effectiveness of the message. Training programs that focus on cultural sensitivity, adaptability, and awareness can equip staff with the skills needed to interact more effectively with diverse audiences. With these measures, the ZISWAF campaign can enhance intercultural communication efforts and encourage greater engagement in fundraising initiatives.

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G. The Role of Technology in Cross-Cultural Communication

The integration of technology, especially artificial intelligence (AI), into Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF) campaigns offers significant opportunities to enhance intercultural communication and engagement in multicultural environments. Future technology can facilitate more effective outreach efforts, improve message customization, and encourage greater community engagement. The various ways in which AI and other technological advancements can enhance ZISWAF campaigns demonstrate significant potential to create better communication bridges between organizations and diverse communities.

One of the main ways AI can enhance ZISWAF campaigns is through personalized messaging. By analyzing big data related to donor behavior and preferences, AI can help organizations design messages that are relevant and engaging for individuals based on their cultural backgrounds. Research shows that personalized communication significantly increases engagement and donation rates.⁴⁴ For example, AI-driven platforms can segment the audience into more specific groups, allowing messages to reflect different cultural values, thereby increasing the effectiveness of fundraising efforts.

Additionally, multilingual communication becomes very important in multicultural societies. AI-powered translation tools can facilitate

⁴⁴ Akhmad Zakky and Aurora Nurhidayah Rifani, "COVID-19 and Online Fundraising: Seeing the Pandemic on Social Media," *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy* 7, no. 2 (2022): 618–628.

communication in various languages, ensuring that ZISWAF messages are accessible to a diverse audience. These tools can provide real-time translations, enabling organizations to effectively reach non-native speakers. As shown by Hariyanto, the adoption of digital services in ZISWAF distribution can enhance communication with various cultural groups, making the campaigns more inclusive and effective.⁴⁵

The role of AI-driven chatbots is also very valuable. Chatbots can provide instant responses to questions from potential donors, offering information about the ZISWAF campaign in a culturally sensitive manner. With proper programming, this chatbot can understand cultural nuances and ensure that interactions occur in a respectful and relevant manner. Cherryhomes and Guillot-Wright (2023) emphasize the importance of timely communication in health campaigns, a principle that also applies to the ZISWAF initiative.⁴⁶ By providing instant support, chatbots can enhance donor engagement and satisfaction.

The use of data analysis for data-driven insights is also important. AI is capable of analyzing donor data to provide insights into trends and preferences across various cultural groups. This information can guide campaign strategies, allowing organizations to tailor their approaches based on the specific needs and interests of the audience. For example, understanding the cultural significance of certain giving practices can help in crafting deeper and more touching messages for potential donors. Holloway (2024) discusses how data-driven strategies can enhance marketing effectiveness, which is highly relevant for the ZISWAF campaign.⁴⁷

Technology also enables more targeted outreach. AI technology can optimize targeting strategies for ZISWAF campaigns by identifying specific demographics that are more likely to engage with the campaign. By analyzing social media interactions and online behavior, organizations can focus their efforts on audiences that show a higher tendency to donate. This targeted approach can enhance the efficiency of fundraising efforts and ensure that resources are allocated wisely. As discussed by Hoferer et al, the use of targeting technology in political campaigns can enhance the reach of ZISWAF in the same way.⁴⁸

Additionally, interactive campaigns can leverage future technologies to engage the audience more meaningfully. For example, virtual reality

⁴⁵ Hariyanto Hariyanto et al., "Antecedents of Behavioral Intention to Adopt Sharia Digital Services in ZISWAF Distribution," *Etikonomi* 23, no. 1 (2024): 109–128.

⁴⁶ Ellie Cherryhomes and Shannon Guillot-Wright, "Dissemination and Implementation of a Text Messaging Campaign to Improve Health Disparities among Im/Migrant Workers," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 20, no. 7 (2023).

⁴⁷ Samuel Holloway, "The Impact of Supply Chain Visibility on Marketing Strategies in the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) Industry" (2024), www.preprints.org.

⁴⁸ Moritz Hoferer et al., "The Impact of Technologies in Political Campaigns," *Physica A: Statistical Mechanics and its Applications* 538 (2020): 122795, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physa.2019.122795>.

(VR) and augmented reality (AR) can be used to create immersive experiences that demonstrate the impact of ZISWAF contributions. These technologies can help potential donors visualize the benefits of their support, fostering a deeper emotional connection with the cause. The integration of interactive elements can enhance the overall campaign experience and encourage greater participation.

Finally, AI systems can continuously learn and adapt from donor interactions and feedback, allowing organizations to adjust their strategies in real-time. This capability allows ZISWAF campaigns to remain responsive to changing cultural dynamics and audience preferences. Fischer and Gilardi highlight that the ability to analyze and adapt to audience behavior is crucial for effective campaign management. This adaptability can lead to more successful fundraising outcomes.

Overall, the role of technology, particularly AI, in enhancing ZISWAF campaigns in multicultural environments is highly significant. By leveraging personalized messages, multilingual communication, chatbots, data-driven insights, targeted outreach, interactive campaigns, and continuous learning, organizations can enhance their intercultural communication efforts. This progress not only enhances engagement but also fosters a deeper understanding of cultural sensitivity, ultimately leading to more effective ZISWAF initiatives.

Conclusion

In the context of fundraising for Zakat, Infaq, Shadaqah, and Wakaf (ZISWAF), the application of John Fiske's semiotic theory can provide valuable guidance for designing more effective and culturally sensitive campaigns. This theory emphasizes the importance of understanding how messages are encoded and decoded within different cultural contexts, which is highly relevant in efforts to reach a diverse global audience.

One of the main implications of Fiske's theory is the need for organizations to understand that the messages conveyed are not always received in the same way by all audiences. For example, the symbols and language used in the ZISWAF campaign must be adjusted to align with local cultural values and norms. This is in line with research that shows that the use of culturally relevant symbols can enhance audience engagement and positive responses. (Mustaqim, 2024). Thus, organizations must conduct in-depth research on the cultural context before launching a campaign.

Furthermore, Fiske also highlights the importance of interaction between the sender and the receiver of the message. In the context of ZISWAF, this means that organizations must create communication channels that allow feedback from the community. Through open dialogue, organizations can understand the perceptions and needs of the audience, and adjust their messages to enhance the

effectiveness of the campaign.⁴⁹ This is in line with Mustaqim's findings, which show that a community-based approach to fundraising can enhance the relevance and impact of campaigns. Technology also plays an important role in implementing intercultural communication principles.

The use of digital platforms allows organizations to reach a wider audience and interact directly with them. By utilizing these tools, the ZISWAF organization can convey messages that are more relevant and engaging to various cultural groups. Shofiyyah emphasized that a deep understanding of diverse cultures can help the younger generation adopt an inclusive and effective approach in philanthropic practices. However, challenges remain, especially in building trust among diverse audiences. Fiske reminds us that trust is often influenced by past experiences and perceptions of the organization. Therefore, ZISWAF must commit to transparency in their operations and provide clear information about the use of funds and the impact of donations. This is important for building credibility and encouraging participation. Overall, the application of Fiske's theory in the ZISWAF campaign can help organizations design messages that are more culturally sensitive, increase audience engagement, and build trust. By understanding the dynamics of intercultural communication, organizations can expand their reach and enhance the impact of Islamic philanthropy worldwide.⁵⁰

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⁴⁹ Dede Al Mustaqim Mustaqim, "Development of Corporate-Based ZISWAF Fundraising Model in Realizing SDGs from Maqashid Syariah Perspective," *International Economic and Finance Review* 3, no. 1 (2024): 31–50.

⁵⁰ Nilna Azizatus Shofiyyah et al., "Empowering the Youth in Islamic Philanthropy: Cross-Cultural Perspectives and Global Experiences," *Setyaki : Jurnal Studi Keagamaan Islam* 1, no. 3 (2023): 58–74.

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