

Integrating Zakat and Waqf in Islamic Social Finance: Models, Governance, and Implementation Challenges in Recent Literature

Integrasi Zakat dan Wakaf dalam Keuangan Sosial Syariah: Perkembangan Model dan Tantangan Tata Kelola dalam Literatur Terkini

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ABSTRAK

Zakat dan wakaf dikelola melalui dua jalur kelembagaan yang terpisah meskipun memiliki tujuan yang sama dalam meningkatkan kesejahteraan dan mengurangi kemiskinan, sehingga membatasi potensi dampak keduanya secara terpadu. Penelitian ini memetakan perkembangan kajian mengenai integrasi zakat dan wakaf serta mengidentifikasi kondisi yang memungkinkan integrasi tersebut dijalankan secara akuntabel. Penelitian menggunakan studi kepustakaan dengan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis kualitatif terhadap 21 artikel peer-reviewed terbitan 2020–2022 yang terindeks Scopus, DOAJ, SINTA, dan Garuda. Data dianalisis melalui analisis isi, reduksi, kategorisasi tematik, dan sintesis, serta diverifikasi melalui triangulasi antarsumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan tiga temuan. Pertama, literatur bergeser dari perdebatan normatif menuju rancangan operasional yang

menghasilkan empat model integrasi, yaitu layanan hibrida antara pembiayaan fasilitas melalui wakaf dan akses penerima manfaat melalui zakat, wakaf uang yang terhubung dengan instrumen negara, bank wakaf mikro, dan pemanfaatan produktif tanah wakaf. Kedua, hambatan utama integrasi bersifat kelembagaan, terutama fragmentasi regulasi, keterbatasan kapasitas pengelola, dan belum seragamnya standar pelaporan, bukan perbedaan yurisprudensi Islam. Ketiga, digitalisasi memperluas penghimpunan dana dan meningkatkan keterlacakan transaksi, tetapi tidak dapat menggantikan pembenahan tata kelola karena integritas pencatatan tidak serta-merta menjamin ketepatan informasi. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa zakat dan wakaf dapat diintegrasikan pada tingkat program dan penerima manfaat dengan tetap memisahkan pencatatan dan pertanggungjawaban kedua dana, serta mengidentifikasi lima prasyarat tata kelola yang dapat diterapkan lembaga pengelola dan regulator tanpa perubahan legislasi.

ABSTRACT

Zakat and waqf are administered through two separate institutional tracks although both pursue the same objectives of welfare and poverty alleviation, and this separation limits their combined effect. This study maps the direction of research on their integration and establishes

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the conditions under which integration can operate accountably. It applies a library research method with a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach, drawing on content analysis of twenty one peer-reviewed articles published between 2020 and 2022 and indexed in Scopus, the Directory of Open Access Journals, SINTA, and Garuda, analysed through reduction, thematic categorisation, and synthesis, with claims triangulated across independent sources. Three findings emerge. The literature has shifted from normative argument towards operational design, producing four models: a hybrid service model in which endowment funds a facility and zakat funds recipient access, cash waqf linked to sovereign instruments, micro waqf banks supporting micro-entrepreneurs, and the productive use of endowed land. The binding constraint is institutional rather than jurisprudential, since regulatory fragmentation, limited administrator capacity, and the absence of uniform reporting standards restrict practice far more than any disagreement over Islamic law. Digitalisation widens collection and improves traceability but secures the integrity of records rather than the accuracy of what is recorded, so it cannot substitute for governance reform. The study concludes that integration is feasible at the level of programmes and beneficiaries while the two funds remain separately accounted for, and it specifies five governance prerequisites that institutions and regulators can apply without legislative amendment.

INTRODUCTION

Zakat and waqf are two instruments of Islamic social finance that pursue the same ultimate purpose through different institutional routes. Zakat is obligatory, restricted to eight categories of recipients, and oriented towards rapid redistribution. Waqf is voluntary, withholds the principal of the endowed property, and is oriented towards benefits that endure across generations. Both are increasingly positioned as instruments of development rather than of charity alone, a shift that Tok et al. (2022) describe as the move from a policy divide towards policy coherence between Islamic social finance and the sustainable development agenda. Yet in most Muslim-majority countries the two instruments continue to operate under separate legal and institutional frameworks, and that separation is the point of departure for this study.

In Indonesia the separation is structural. Zakat administration is governed by Law Number 23 of 2011, with the National Board of Zakat as coordinator, while waqf is governed by Law Number 41 of 2004, with the Indonesian Waqf Board as regulator. The two regimes carry different supervisory authorities, accounting standards, and reporting mechanisms. An Islamic philanthropic organisation that collects both zakat and waqf must therefore operate two governance systems simultaneously, with an administrative burden that is frequently disproportionate to its human resource capacity. Bakar et al. (2020) show that the governance of waqf funds under the Indonesian Waqf Board still depends heavily on how consistently the principles of good governance are applied by individual nazhir, while Widiastuti et al. (2021) identify the limited capacity of zakat administrators, particularly in technology, as the priority problem in zakat governance. The consequence is visible in practice: institutions that manage both funds tend to run them as parallel programmes rather than as a single poverty reduction strategy.

The gap between potential and realisation sharpens the urgency of the discussion. The issuance of cash waqf linked sukuk by the Indonesian government in 2020 demonstrated that waqf can be mobilised at national scale through sovereign instruments (Tanjung & Windiarto, 2021), yet Yasin (2021) finds that public preference for channelling social funds through zakat, infaq, and sadaqah has made the new instrument less attractive than its designers anticipated. The problem is therefore not the volume of collection alone, but how collected funds are converted into productive assets whose benefits recur for the same beneficiaries. Without that conversion, social funds sustain consumption without altering the structural position of the poor.

Scholarship on zakat and waqf is abundant, but it largely proceeds along parallel lines. In their bibliometric review of zakat literature, Alshater et al. (2021) map a field concentrated on compliance, distribution, and institutional performance. In a companion review of 319 Scopus-indexed works on waqf, Alshater, Hassan, Rashid, et al. (2022) find that research motivations and findings on waqf are diverse and fragmented. A third review of Islamic accounting research covering four decades likewise shows that accountability for social finance institutions remains a comparatively underdeveloped area (Alshater, Hassan, Sarea, et al., 2022). Taken together, these reviews point to a single gap: the two instruments are rarely studied together, and discussions of integration are rarely accompanied by a design for its governance.

A second gap is methodological. Studies that explicitly combine zakat and waqf are generally single case studies of one institution or one scheme, such as the hybrid model proposed for financing healthcare for zakat recipients in Selangor (Ahmad et al., 2021). Such studies are valuable, but their findings are difficult to generalise. Cross-study synthesis that reads the evidence as a whole remains rare, even though the period from 2020 to 2022 produced a considerable body of work on cash waqf, digital zakat, micro waqf banks, and productive waqf land. The absence of such synthesis leaves practitioners without a comparative view of the options available to them and leaves researchers without a shared map of what has already been established.

This study accordingly pursues three objectives. The first is to map the direction of research on zakat and waqf integration in the literature published between 2020 and 2022. The second is to identify the integration models proposed in that literature together with the financing logic and institutional prerequisites of each. The third is to establish which obstacles most strongly determine whether integration succeeds, and to derive from them a set of governance conditions that institutions can apply. The study is guided by three questions: where is research on zakat and waqf integration heading, what models are being proposed, and what must be in place for those models to operate accountably.

The contribution of this study lies in treating governance as the determining variable rather than as a closing remark. Much writing on zakat and waqf integration stops at the

claim that integration is possible and beneficial. This study goes further by specifying the conditions that must be met if integration is not to blur the ownership boundary between funds and weaken accountability to both muzaki and waqif. In doing so it offers a framework relevant to regulators designing joint guidance, to institutions sequencing their own reforms, and to researchers seeking testable propositions in a field that has so far been rich in proposals and thin in comparative evidence.

METHOD

This study applies a library research method with a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach. All data are drawn from written material and no field data were collected. The method was chosen because the research questions concern the direction and patterns of thought within a body of literature rather than the behaviour of actors at a particular site. Following Kraus et al. (2022), a literature review of this kind is treated as an independent study in its own right, which requires an explicit search strategy, transparent selection criteria, and a structured procedure for synthesis rather than an informal survey of sources.

Primary data consist of peer-reviewed journal articles. Searches were conducted in Scopus, the Directory of Open Access Journals, Garuda, SINTA, and Google Scholar using combinations of the terms zakat, waqf, cash waqf, Islamic social finance, integration, and governance, in both Indonesian and English. Sources were included if they were published between January 2020 and December 2022, addressed zakat or waqf within the framework of Islamic social finance, appeared in a peer-reviewed journal, and were available in full text with a traceable publication identifier. Sources were excluded if they addressed a single instrument without institutional implications, took the form of popular commentary without references, or duplicated the substance of a more complete source. Twenty one articles met all criteria and form the corpus analysed in this study.

Analysis proceeded through content analysis in three stages. The first stage was reduction, in which the objective, method, principal findings, and recommendations of each source were recorded on an extraction sheet. The second stage was thematic categorisation, in which findings were grouped into categories that emerged inductively from the data: research direction, conceptual foundation, integration models, governance, digitalisation, and obstacles. The third stage was synthesis, in which the categories were read against one another to identify points of convergence and disagreement among sources. Validity was maintained through source triangulation, so that every substantive claim was checked against at least two sources with different authors; statements resting on a single source are identified as such in the presentation of results. The study is limited to sources in Indonesian and English and to a three-year window, so Arabic-language literature and longer-term shifts in the field are not captured.

RESULT

The first result concerns the direction of the field. Across the corpus, research on zakat and waqf between 2020 and 2022 moves away from establishing the religious and moral case for the two instruments and towards examining how they are operationalised, who manages them, and through which financial channels. The bibliometric reviews by Alshater et al. (2021) and Alshater, Hassan, Rashid, et al. (2022) confirm that both fields grew rapidly in this period while remaining thematically fragmented. Table 1 sets out the six research streams that were most prominent in the analysed corpus.

Research stream	Principal focus	Key references
Mapping the field	Bibliometric structure of zakat and waqf research	Alshater et al. (2021); Alshater, Hassan, Rashid, et al. (2022)
Cash waqf and sukuk	Mobilising waqf through sovereign instruments	Tanjung & Windiarso (2021); Yasin (2021)
Hybrid zakat and waqf models	Combining both funds for a single service	Ahmad et al. (2021)
Governance and accountability	Good governance and administrator capacity	Bakar et al. (2020); Widiastuti et al. (2021)
Digitalisation and giving behaviour	Adoption of online zakat and cash waqf	Kasri & Yuniar (2021); Berakon et al. (2022)
Sustainability and development	Alignment with sustainable development goals	Tok et al. (2022); Ali & Kassim (2020)

The corpus also displays a consistent geographical concentration. Most studies draw on Indonesian and Malaysian data, and no study in the corpus tests an integration model across more than one national jurisdiction. The sustainability stream is the most internationally oriented, with Al-Jayyousi et al. (2022) reviewing how sustainable development is conceived within Islamic worldviews and Tok et al. (2022) examining the policy relationship between Islamic social finance and the development goals at a global level, while Anam et al. (2022) map a growing body of work linking waqf to environmental objectives.

The second result concerns the conceptual basis on which integration is argued. Authors across the corpus converge on the position that zakat and waqf pursue the same objectives of welfare and poverty alleviation through different routes. What distinguishes them is the time horizon of the benefit and the treatment of the principal, as summarised in Table 2. Saputra et al. (2021) add a further dimension, showing that Islamic philanthropy increasingly overlaps with social entrepreneurship, so that the boundary between giving and productive investment has become a central concern of the literature.

Table 2. Characteristics of Zakat and Waqf as Reported in the Literature

Aspect	Zakat	Waqf
Legal status	Obligatory once nisab and haul are met	Voluntary
Treatment of principal	Transferred and consumed	Withheld; only the benefit is distributed
Beneficiaries	The eight prescribed categories	Determined by the waqif within sharia
Benefit horizon	Short term	Long term and recurring
Economic function	Income redistribution	Capital and asset formation

The third result concerns the models themselves. Four distinct schemes appear in the corpus, each with its own financing logic. The first is the hybrid service model, in which waqf finances a durable facility while zakat finances access to it for eligible recipients; Ahmad et al. (2021) propose this arrangement for improving healthcare for zakat recipients in Selangor. The second is cash waqf linked to sovereign sukuk, in which waqf funds are placed in government sukuk and the returns finance social programmes while the principal remains intact (Aldeen et al., 2020; Sasongko et al., 2021; Tanjung & Windiarto, 2021; Yasin, 2021). The third is the micro waqf bank, which Soemitra et al. (2022) examine as a channel for empowering women micro-entrepreneurs through Islamic social finance combined with mentoring. The fourth is the productive use of waqf land, examined through anchor company models for agribusiness (Ali Azizan et al., 2022) and through waqf forests that combine conservation with livelihood objectives (Ali & Kassim, 2020). Table 3 positions the four within a single financing chain.

Table 3. Four Integration Models and Their Position in the Financing Chain

Model	Waqf role	Zakat role	Reported output
Hybrid service model	Finances the facility	Finances recipient access	Services for zakat recipients
Cash waqf linked sukuk	Principal placed in sukuk	Complementary at distribution	Returns fund social programmes
Micro waqf bank	Capital for financing	Mentoring and risk buffer	Micro-business empowerment
Productive waqf land	Land as productive asset	Support for beneficiary groups	Livelihoods and conservation

The fourth result concerns the obstacles reported. Four groups recur across the corpus and are summarised in Table 4. Fragmented regulation and uneven governance are reported most frequently, with Bakar et al. (2020) and Sawmar and Mohammed (2021) both treating

good governance as the condition on which public trust and compliance depend. Limited administrator capacity is reported almost as often, and Widiastuti et al. (2021) identify it as the priority problem for zakat institutions. Public literacy is reported as a constraint on collection: Alifiandy and Sukmana (2020) find that knowledge shapes the intention to give waqf, and Yasin (2021) finds that public preference for zakat, infaq, and sadaqah reduced demand for cash waqf linked sukuk. Doubt over the sharia status of combining the two funds appears least often and is generally resolved within the sources that raise it.

Table 4. Obstacles to Integration Reported in the Corpus

Obstacle	Manifestation reported	Reported difficulty
Regulatory fragmentation	Separate statutes, regulators, and standards	High; requires policy change
Administrator capacity	Limited technical and reporting ability	Moderate; addressable by training
Public literacy	Waqf understood mainly as land and mosques	Moderate; requires sustained effort
Sharia boundaries	Doubt over combining the two funds	Low; resolved within the literature

A final result is negative but consequential. The corpus contains no study comparing the effectiveness of the four models in comparable settings, and no study measuring their effect on beneficiary income over the medium term. Most models are presented as conceptual designs or single case studies, and their reported outputs are drawn from programme documentation rather than independent measurement.

DISCUSSION

The pattern across these results supports a single interpretation: the binding constraint on zakat and waqf integration is institutional rather than jurisprudential. This runs against the emphasis of earlier writing, which treated the sharia status of combining the two funds as the central question. The corpus suggests that question is largely manageable. Zakat funds become the property of eligible recipients once allocated and cannot be converted into waqf assets held in the name of the managing institution, but zakat can finance recipients' access to a waqf-funded facility, as the hybrid model of Ahmad et al. (2021) illustrates. What remains unavailable is technical guidance that institutions can apply directly, which means the doubt encountered in practice is administrative rather than substantive.

A second interpretation follows from the structure of the four models. Integration occurs at the point of output, not at the point of collection. Zakat funds and waqf funds continue to be collected, recorded, and accounted for separately; what is brought together is programme planning and the targeting of beneficiaries. This distinction is frequently left implicit in the literature, yet it carries practical weight, because merging the administration

of funds risks breaching sharia requirements while aligning programmes does not. Reading the models in this way also clarifies the division of economic roles: zakat functions as a consumption buffer and a means of access for those below the threshold of basic needs, while waqf functions as capital generating a recurring stream of benefits. The two are complements in sequence rather than substitutes in kind.

The third interpretation concerns governance, which the results identify as the point where integration succeeds or fails. Bakar et al. (2020) show that the sustainability of waqf funds depends on the consistent application of good governance, and Sawmar and Mohammed (2021) argue that good governance is the foundation of zakat compliance because it determines whether muzaki trust the institution. In Indonesia the relevant accounting standards are PSAK 109 for zakat, infaq, and sadaqah and PSAK 112 for waqf. Two separate standards make the boundary between funds easier to draw, but they demand technical capacity that smaller institutions seldom possess. Synthesising the corpus yields five governance prerequisites for integration.

1. Separation of accounts and bookkeeping, so that zakat funds, waqf funds, and the returns on waqf management are recorded separately from the moment of receipt rather than at the point of reporting.
2. Clarity of ownership over the benefit, with documentation affirming that any benefit financed from zakat accrues to eligible recipients.
3. Uniform reporting, following the applicable accounting standard and published at regular intervals so that performance can be compared across institutions and periods.
4. Independent audit, carried out by an external auditor rather than by internal supervisors or the sharia supervisory board alone.
5. Measurable impact indicators, assessing change in beneficiary circumstances rather than the amount disbursed and the number of recipients.

The fifth prerequisite is the least often satisfied and the most consequential. Reports issued by Islamic philanthropic institutions still emphasise collection and disbursement figures, which measure activity rather than result, and the absence of outcome measurement is precisely what prevents the four models from being compared. Administrator capacity is the node on which all five prerequisites depend, since every control mechanism presupposes managers able to prepare statements, assess viability, and manage risk. This is consistent with Widiastuti et al. (2021), whose expert panel ranked the capacity of zakat administrators, especially in technology, as the priority solution for improving zakat governance.

A fourth interpretation concerns technology, where the results counsel more caution than the literature generally displays. Kasri and Yuniar (2021) find that performance expectancy, effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, and zakat literacy significantly shape the intention to pay zakat online, while social influence does not. Berakon et al. (2022) show

that digital sharia banking systems affect cash waqf behaviour among young Indonesian Muslims. Digitalisation therefore widens access to collection, which matters because small-denomination cash waqf is viable only where transaction costs are low. Its most valuable contribution to integration, however, would be the consolidation of beneficiary records, allowing an institution to recognise that a zakat recipient is also a waqf beneficiary; this contribution is the least discussed in the corpus. Digital systems secure the integrity of records rather than the accuracy of what is recorded, so they improve procedural accountability without by themselves improving substantive accountability.

These interpretations carry three implications. For regulators, the most feasible step requires no statutory amendment: joint guidance from the zakat and waqf authorities on programmes that draw on both funds, governing the separation of bookkeeping, ownership of benefits, and a combined reporting format without merging the two legal regimes. For institutions, a defensible sequence begins with what lies within their control, namely separated bookkeeping and documented ownership of benefits, followed by capacity building, with investment in digital systems placed last, once processes and indicators are in order. For researchers, the negative result reported above defines the agenda: empirical comparison of the four models in comparable settings, measurement of medium-term effects on beneficiary income, analysis of the administrative cost of managing two funds against the benefit obtained, and extension of the evidence base beyond Indonesia and Malaysia. The sustainability stream identified by Tok et al. (2022) and Al-Jayyousi et al. (2022) offers a natural framework for that agenda, since it already demands outcome indicators comparable across sectors.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to map the direction of research on zakat and waqf integration between 2020 and 2022, to identify the models proposed, and to establish the conditions under which they can operate. The literature of this period moves from normative argument towards operational design, and four models stand out: the hybrid service model, cash waqf linked sukuk, the micro waqf bank, and the productive use of waqf land. Integration in each case occurs at the level of programmes and beneficiaries rather than at the level of funds, which is both what sharia permits and what institutional practice can sustain.

The principal finding is that the constraint on integration is institutional. The sharia boundary between the two funds is manageable, while regulatory fragmentation, limited administrator capacity, and the absence of uniform reporting remain substantive impediments. Five governance prerequisites follow: separated bookkeeping, documented ownership of benefits, uniform reporting, independent audit, and measurable impact indicators. Digitalisation supports the first four but cannot substitute for them, since technology secures the integrity of records rather than the accuracy of what is recorded.

The study contributes a comparative framework in a field that has been rich in proposals and thin in evidence, and it offers regulators a step that requires no legislative change. Its limitations lie in its linguistic and temporal coverage and in the conceptual character of most sources analysed, so its conclusions are better read as propositions awaiting empirical testing than as tested recommendations. Comparative measurement of the four models, and of the administrative cost that integration imposes, remains the most urgent task for subsequent research.

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