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Bridging Islamic Philanthropy and Digital Economy: A *Maqashid Shariah* Model for Zakat on Digital Assets

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Abstract. *The rapid digital transformation has given rise to various new forms of assets which challenge the zakat framework in Islamic finance. This research explores the integration of Maqashid Shariah in development of zakat model for digital assets to ensure compliance with Islamic economic principles. An exploratory qualitative approach is used to analyze classical fiqh literature, contemporary fatwas, and experts' views. The results show that digital assets that fulfill the criteria of full ownership and growth potential can be subject to zakat. Blockchain technology and smart contracts can potentially increase transparency and efficiency in zakat management. The proposed model contributes to Islamic financial inclusion, regulatory strengthening, and modernization of zakat institutions.*

Keywords: *zakat; maqashid sharia; digital assets; blockchain; islamic finance*

Abstrak. *Transformasi digital yang pesat telah melahirkan berbagai bentuk aset baru yang berimplikasi pada kerangka zakat dalam keuangan Islam. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi integrasi Maqashid Syariah dalam pengembangan model zakat untuk aset digital guna memastikan kepatuhan terhadap prinsip ekonomi Islam. Pendekatan kualitatif eksploratif digunakan dengan menganalisis literatur fiqh klasik, fatwa kontemporer, dan pandangan para ahli. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa aset digital yang memenuhi kriteria kepemilikan penuh dan berpotensi berkembang dapat dikenakan zakat. Selain itu, teknologi blockchain dan smart contracts berpotensi meningkatkan transparansi dan efisiensi dalam pengelolaan zakat. Model yang diusulkan berkontribusi pada inklusi keuangan Islam, penguatan regulasi, dan modernisasi lembaga zakat.*

Kata kunci: *zakat; maqashid syariah; aset digital; blockchain; keuangan islam*

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Introduction

The digital revolution has changed the global economic landscape, including in the aspects of wealth ownership and management (Han, 2022). Technological innovations such as blockchain have introduced various forms of digital assets, such as cryptocurrencies, non-fungible tokens (NFTs), and other digital tokens (Behl et al., 2024). In the context of Islamic economics, the emergence of digital assets has led to debates on their legal status in Sharia, particularly in relation to the obligation of zakat (Muhammad Tajdudin Bin Engku Ali & Nur Izzah Binti Wan Muhammad Fokri, 2023). As the main instrument of wealth distribution in Islam, zakat has a crucial role in maintaining socio-economic balance (Zaman et al., 2023). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive study to ensure that digital assets can be accommodated in the zakat system without contradicting the principles of Maqashid Sharia.

In Islamic law, the protection of wealth (*hifz al-mal*) is one of the main objectives of *Maqashid Shariah* that must be considered in the regulation of zakat on digital assets (Rosele et al., 2025). Although zakat on conventional assets such as gold, silver, and property has a clear standard, uncertainty still surrounds digital assets due to different views among scholars and academics (Shaikh & Amin, 2024). Some consider cryptocurrencies as digital currencies that follow the rules of gold and silver zakat (Rosele, Muneem, Seman, et al., 2022). In contrast, others classify them as investment assets that are subject to the provisions of trade zakat (Muneeza et al., 2023). In addition, the volatility of value, decentralization, and varying regulations between jurisdictions further add to the challenge of establishing an appropriate zakat model (Abd. Wahab et al., 2017).

Studies on zakat on digital assets are still limited and have not provided practical solutions that can be widely applied (Muneeza et al., 2023). Most studies only highlight the legal aspects and Shariah status of digital assets without discussing specific zakat models (Robbana et al., 2024). Moreover, existing zakat models tend to adopt conventional approaches without considering the unique characteristics of digital assets, such as their decentralized nature and their potential use in speculative activities (Tahiri Jouti, 2020). This gap suggests the need for a new approach that is not only theory-based but also considers the technical and operational aspects of digital asset zakat.

Based on these challenges, this research asks two main questions. First, how can the characteristics and classification of digital assets, such as cryptocurrencies, NFTs, and digital tokens, be established as zakat objects within the framework of Sharia law, given the different interpretations of scholars regarding their status

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as currencies or commodities? Second, how can a *Maqashid Shariah*-based zakat model be developed and integrated with digital technology innovations, such as blockchain and smart contracts, to optimize zakat collection and distribution mechanisms in the digital economy era?

Answering this question, this research seeks to develop a zakat model that is in accordance with the principles of *Maqashid Sharia* and relevant to the development of the digital economy. The model will identify digital assets that fulfill the criteria of zakat, establish a calculation mechanism that considers volatility and ownership of assets, and design an efficient distribution system using digital technology. Thus, this research aims to create a framework that is not only normative but also practically applicable to the Islamic financial system (Abdul-Jabbar & Bin-Nashwan, 2022).

The research approach is based on an exploratory qualitative method with analysis of academic literature, the fatwas of scholars, and regulations related to digital assets in Islam. In addition, interviews with experts in Islamic economics and financial technology will be conducted to obtain a more in-depth perspective on the challenges and opportunities of implementing digital zakat. Triangulation techniques are applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings so that the resulting model can contribute to academics, regulators, and zakat practitioners in managing digital assets in a Sharia-compliant manner.

The main advantage of this research lies in the interdisciplinary approach that combines Islamic economics, Sharia law, and technological innovation in one systematic analytical framework. By taking into account the regulatory, operational, and Shariah validity aspects of digital assets, the proposed zakat model can serve as a guideline for zakat institutions in managing digital-based donations transparently and efficiently. In addition, this study is also expected to expand the scope of zakat revenue and increase its utilization for the welfare of the people (Tahiri Jouti, 2020).

Through this study, it is hoped that zakat on digital assets can be integrated into the Islamic financial system in a more inclusive and sustainable manner. By presenting *Maqashid Shariah*-based solutions that are adaptive to technological developments, this research contributes to enriching academic literature and offering practical strategies for regulators and zakat institutions in facing the challenges of the digital economy.

Methods

The research method applied in this study adopts an exploratory qualitative approach, with the aim of exploring the relationship between Islamic philanthropy

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and the digital economy through the *maqashid syariah* perspective (Azam, 2015). This approach was chosen because it is able to capture the complexity of the interaction between traditional zakat principles and the dynamics of technological innovation, especially in the context of emerging digital assets. This research seeks to develop a model of zakat that is not only relevant to contemporary needs but also firmly rooted in the values of justice and balance that are at the core of Islamic economics (Yasmeen, 2024).

Table 1. Profile of Research Informants

No	Name	Affiliation/Position	Expertise Category
1	Dr. Yusep Rafiqi, S.Ag., M.M.	Universitas Siliwangi	Islamic Economics Academic
2	Hatib Rachmawan S.Pd., S.Th.I., M.Ag.	Universitas Ahmad Dahlan	Islamic Law/Hadith Academic
3	Amrullah S.E.I., M.A.	Universitas Ahmad Dahlan	Islamic Social Finance Academic
4	Adi Irfan Marjuqi, M.Pd	Lazismu Ciamis	Zakat Institution Manager
5	Musliman., M.M	ULAZ MKU (Surya Utama Nusantara)	Zakat Practitioner
6	Fahrudin Ahmad	BAZNAS	Digital Fundraising Practitioner
7	Muhammad Zulfikar Yusuf, M.E.	CISIC UMY	Sharia Science Researcher
8	Andy Putra Wijaya, S.E.I., M.S.I.	Lazismu UAD	Zakat Institution Manager

Source: Processed by researchers 2025

The selection of experts was conducted using purposive sampling to ensure representation of perspectives from academics, practitioners, and zakat administrators relevant to digital asset zakat. A total of eight experts were interviewed, comprising three Islamic economics academics (with research experience of at least 10 years), three sharia digital finance practitioners (in managerial positions with experience of at least 5 years), and two managers of national zakat institutions. The detailed profiles of these informants, including their affiliations and areas of expertise, are presented in Table 1. The main criteria included expertise relevant to the topic of zakat and digital assets, a minimum of 5 years of professional experience, and willingness to participate in in-depth interviews. The literature reviewed includes classic works of fiqh, contemporary

fatwas, Islamic financial regulations, and scientific publications related to digital economic transformation (Napitupulu et al., 2024). Semi-structured interviews are used to explore the perceptions, experiences, and practical recommendations of the informants so that the data obtained have a contextual richness that supports the development of innovative and applicable zakat models (Withorn et al., 2020).

Data analysis was conducted through thematic and interpretative approaches with a systematic coding process to identify patterns and key themes that emerged from the literature review and interviews (Given et al., 2023). Data triangulation techniques were applied to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings by integrating various sources of information (Withorn et al., 2021). This analytical approach allows the development of a zakat model that synergizes classical theories with the latest developments in the digital realm, resulting in a new scientific contribution that is able to bridge Islamic philanthropy and the digital economy in accordance with *maqashid syariah* principles (Sumi et al., 2024).

Results and Discussion

Conceptualisation of Digital Assets in Islamic Economic Perspective

The development of digital technology has created various forms of assets that have economic value and can be owned individually or institutionally. In the context of Islamic economics, digital assets are defined as any form of wealth that is available in digital format and has a value that is widely recognized by society (Wiwoho et al., 2024). The general classification of digital assets includes cryptocurrencies, which serve as a medium of exchange and store of value; non-fungible tokens (NFTs), which represent unique ownership of a digital-based asset; and other digital tokens, which include assets used in the digital financial ecosystem, such as utility tokens and blockchain-based securities. These three categories have different characteristics in terms of ownership, liquidity, and regulation, which also have implications for their legal status in Islam, especially in relation to zakat obligations (Chong, 2021).

Based on data from Bappebti (2024), the value of crypto asset transactions in Indonesia reached Rp 475.13 trillion in January–October 2024, representing a 352.89 percent increase compared to the same period in the previous year. The number of registered customers was 21.63 million, with dominant assets such as Tether (USDT), Ethereum (ETH), Bitcoin (BTC), Pepe (PEPE), and Solana (SOL). The majority of users (75 percent) were aged 18–35, reflecting the

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significant potential of the digital asset market (BAPPEBTI, 2024). This scale of adoption underscores the relevance of developing zakat mechanisms for digital assets to expand zakat fund collection in accordance with the principles of *maqashid syariah*.

Cryptocurrencies, as one of the most developed forms of digital assets, have the characteristics of decentralization, anonymity, and high volatility in value. These assets are not controlled by a central authority such as a central bank but rather operate based on blockchain technology that enables peer-to-peer transactions in a transparent and secure manner. Meanwhile, NFTs are unique in that each token represents a specific digital or physical asset that cannot be exchanged equally with other tokens. Other digital tokens, such as stablecoins or security tokens, often have more stable values because they are backed by specific physical assets or regulations (Chong, 2021). These different characteristics affect the way digital assets are classified and how they are treated in the Islamic financial system, especially in the aspect of zakat calculation.

In the perspective of Islamic law, the status of digital assets is still a matter of debate among scholars. Most conservative scholars view cryptocurrencies as assets that have no intrinsic value, are high in speculation, and potentially contain *gharar* (uncertainty), so they cannot be categorized as legitimate currencies or commodities in Islam (Katuk et al., 2023). A number of prominent scholars and fatwa institutions, such as Mufti Taqi Usmani (Qadri et al., 2023), Sheikh ʻAbd Sattār Abū Ghuddah (Rosele, Muneem, Che Seman, et al., 2022), Sheikh Haytham Bin Jawwād al-Haddād, Sheikh ʻAlī Muḥyī al -Dīn al-Qarahdāghī, Prof. Dr. Munzer Kahf, Dār al-Iftā' al-Miṣriyyah, the Indonesian Ulama Council, and the Turkish High Council for Religious Affairs (Rosele et al., 2025), have also expressed their rejection of the validity of cryptocurrency. The reasons cited include high price volatility, the absence of intrinsic value or real asset backing, a lack of centralization under official authority, contradiction with the objectives of Islamic law particularly the protection of property and vulnerability to speculation and illicit activities. In contrast, some progressive scholars see cryptocurrencies as modern financial instruments that can be categorized as *mal mutaqawwim* (treasures of value in Islam) as long as they meet Shariah principles, such as not containing elements of usury, excessive *gharar*, or maisir (gambling) (Izadin et al., 2025). Some of them, such as Dr. Mohd Daud Bakar, Sheikh ʻAlī el-Garī, Mufti Faraz Adam, Darul Uloom Zakariyya, Zakat Foundation of America, and researchers such as Rosele, Abu Bakar, and Abubakar, believe that cryptocurrency can be a new form of legitimate asset in

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the modern era (Rosele et al., 2025). Their arguments include the fiqh principle that 'the default ruling in transactions is permissibility' as long as there is no violation of sharia; cryptocurrency meets the criteria for an asset as it can be owned and transferred; its value fluctuations are comparable to fiat currency; it is recognised as a valuable asset in society; it is used as a medium of exchange in various countries; and in some countries, it is recognised as a digital commodity with strict regulations. Meanwhile, NFTs and other digital tokens are considered to have legitimate economic value if they have clear ownership, have benefits that are allowed in Islam, and can be traded halal.

The debate on whether digital assets meet the criteria of *mal mutaqawwim* is central to this discussion. According to Dr. Yusep Rafiqi (Informant 1), digital assets possess legal value because they are recognized by the state and have clear utility (*manfa'ah*) in the digital era. This is supported by Muhammad Zulfikar Yusuf (Informant 7), who emphasizes that in the context of integrative science, the definition of wealth must evolve alongside technological shifts, as long as it does not violate Shariah principles.

This debate has direct implications for the determination of whether digital assets are subject to zakat or not. In the conventional zakat system, only assets that have the potential for value growth and legal ownership are subject to zakat. If digital assets are categorized as commodities or investments, then the zakat imposed can follow the trade or investment zakat model, with calculations based on the appropriate *nishab* and *haul*. However, if digital assets are recognized as currency, then the zakat can follow the provisions of zakat on gold and silver, with a certain percentage of the total value owned. The application of the *maqashid syariah* principle is key in ensuring that zakat on digital assets remains in line with the main objectives of zakat, namely equitable distribution of wealth and economic empowerment of the people (Bin-Nashwan et al., 2024).

Within the *maqashid shariah* framework, digital assets can be the object of zakat if they fulfill the criteria of protecting wealth (*hifz al-mal*) and contributing to social welfare. The main purpose of zakat is to ensure that wealth does not only accumulate in the hands of a few but can also be distributed to those in need. The challenge of setting zakat standards for digital assets can be resolved by referring to the principles of *maqashid shariah*, which provides flexibility in the application of Islamic law in accordance with changing times. Digital assets owned by individuals or institutions that fulfill the *nishab* requirements can be subject to zakat, with a more transparent and efficient distribution mechanism through digital technology (Tlemsani et al., 2023).

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This study asserts that to accommodate the development of the digital economy, a zakat model is needed that can adapt various types of digital assets without contradicting the principles of Shariah. This model should consider legal, economic, and technological aspects and ensure that digital assets subject to zakat actually have legitimate economic value and are accessible to zakat beneficiaries. Further research is needed to develop a more systematic approach to establishing zakat calculation methods, distribution models, as well as regulations that can ensure compliance with Islamic law (Aliyu et al., 2025).

Various scholars' perspectives and existing challenges point to the need for a more inclusive *maqashid shariah*-based approach in determining zakat on digital assets. Cooperation between Islamic financial authorities, zakat institutions, and technology experts is crucial in developing regulations that can accommodate the dynamics of the digital economy. By applying zakat on digital assets, asset owners can fulfill their religious obligations while increasing the contribution of zakat in strengthening the economic welfare of Muslims globally.

Tabel 2. Here is a table summarizing the key points from the conceptualisation of digital assets in the Islamic economic perspective:

Aspect	Cryptocurrencies	Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)	Other Digital Tokens
Definition	Digital currencies used for exchange and store of value.	Unique tokens representing specific ownership of digital or physical assets.	Includes tokens such as stablecoins and security tokens, often backed by physical assets or regulations.
Characteristics	Decentralized, anonymous, high volatility.	Unique, non-interchangeable, specific ownership.	More stable due to backing or regulation.
Ownership	No central authority, peer-to-peer transactions via blockchain.	Specific ownership; cannot be exchanged equally with others.	Ownership can vary based on token type (e.g., stablecoins or security tokens).
Regulation & Legal Status	Debate among scholars; some view as speculative and non-legitimate in Islam.	Considered legitimate if benefits align with Shariah principles.	Considered legitimate if backed by physical assets or regulatory frameworks.
Islamic Perspective	Debate on whether they are *mal mutaqawwim* (legitimate wealth) or speculative.	Considered legitimate if ownership is clear and allowed under Shariah.	Considered legitimate if they meet Shariah principles (clear ownership, halal trade).

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Aspect	Cryptocurrencies	Non-Fungible Tokens (NFTs)	Other Digital Tokens
Zakat Implications	If recognized as commodities or investments, zakat is calculated based on trade/investment models.	Zakat applicable if value is clear, ownership legitimate, and trade is halal.	Zakat model varies based on the type of token (e.g., stablecoin or security token).
Maqashid Shariah Consideration	Can be subjected to zakat if they fulfill the criteria of protecting wealth and contributing to social welfare.	Zakat model applicable if they contribute to economic welfare.	Subject to zakat if they help protect wealth and contribute to social welfare.
Challenges in Zakat Application	Lack of intrinsic value, high volatility, and *gharar* potential.	Unique nature and specific asset representation pose classification challenges.	Variability in stability and regulatory clarity pose challenges in classification.
Proposed Zakat Model	A flexible model that accommodates digital assets while aligning with *maqashid shariah*, ensuring equity and social welfare.	A model that ensures transparent, efficient zakat collection and distribution.	A zakat model that adapts to the specific characteristics of each digital token.

Source: Processed by researchers 2025

Zakat Model for Digital Assets in Maqashid Shariah Framework

Zakat is one of the pillars of the Islamic economy that functions as an instrument of wealth distribution to create social welfare. Within the framework of *maqashid syariah*, zakat not only functions as an obligation of worship but also as a mechanism for the protection of wealth (*hifz al-mal*) and poverty alleviation (*hifz al-nafs*). The main principles of zakat include the growth and development of wealth, social justice, and economic balance (Tumewang et al., 2023).

The application of *maqashid shariah* ensures that zakat on digital assets serves the purpose of *hifz al-mal* (protection of wealth). Hatib Rachmawan (Informant 2) noted from a Prophetic tradition perspective that the essence of zakat is social justice, and digital assets, despite their virtual nature, have the capacity to fulfill this role. Furthermore, Amrullah (Informant 3) added that from an Islamic banking perspective, integrating these assets into the zakat system prevents the concentration of wealth among a tech-savvy elite only.

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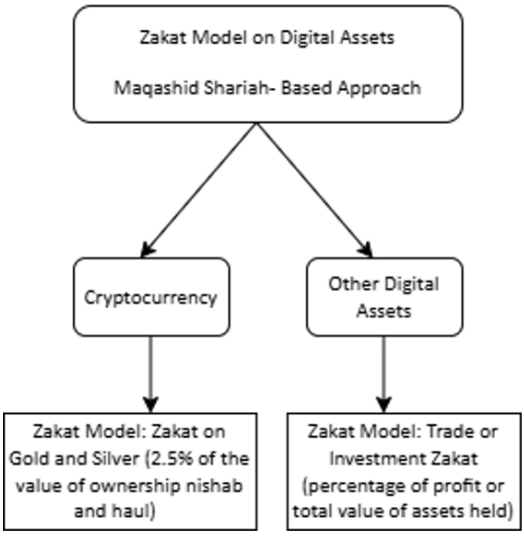
With the development of the digital economy and the emergence of various types of digital assets, the principles of zakat need to be adjusted to remain relevant in regulating the ownership and distribution of digital-based wealth.

For an asset to be subject to zakat, it must fulfill the conditions of full ownership (*al-milk al-tam*), have the potential to grow (*nama'*), reach the minimum limit of assets subject to zakat (*nishab*), and be owned for a certain period (*haul*). In the context of digital assets, cryptocurrencies, NFTs, and other digital tokens can be categorized as assets that have economic value and can grow, thus potentially meeting the criteria of a zakat object. However, the different characteristics of digital assets from conventional assets pose challenges in determining these requirements more concretely (Hudaefi, 2024).

One of the aspects that must be analyzed in the Zakat model for digital assets is the determination of *nishab* and *haul*. *Nishab* is the minimum limit of asset ownership that is subject to zakat, while haul is the period of asset ownership before zakat is required (Shahid et al., 2024). In gold and silver zakat, the *nishab* is determined based on a certain weight that has a stable market value. However, digital assets such as cryptocurrencies have high price volatility, so determining the *nishab* in the form of fiat currency can be a more flexible solution. *Haul* in digital assets also needs to be studied further, considering that some digital assets can be actively traded while others are kept as long-term investments (Kamal et al., 2024).

Diagram 1. Zakat Model on Digital Assets Maqashid Shariah-Based Approach



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The zakat model proposed in this study considers a *maqashid shariah*-based approach in determining the mechanism of calculation and distribution of zakat on digital assets (Farooq et al., 2020). If cryptocurrency is considered a digital currency, then its zakat can follow the gold and silver zakat model, which is 2.5% of the value of ownership that has reached *nishab* and *haul*. However, if digital assets are categorized as commodities or investments, then the zakat can follow the trade or investment zakat model with a certain percentage of the profit or total value of the assets held. This approach ensures that the zakat obligation remains fair and appropriate to the nature of the digital assets (Farooq et al., 2020).

Although the zakat model for digital assets offers great potential in expanding zakat revenue, its implementation still faces various challenges. One of the main challenges is the lack of Shariah regulations and standards governing digital assets (Farooq et al., 2020). Different countries have different approaches to recognizing and regulating cryptocurrencies and other digital assets. For example, Indonesia classifies eligible cryptocurrencies as digital commodities under the supervision of Bappebti, while countries such as El Salvador have recognised Bitcoin as a legal tender. On the other hand, China has imposed a total ban on cryptocurrency transactions (Dniprov et al., 2019). so the implementation of zakat at the global level requires broader agreement from Islamic financial authorities. In addition, there are still differences of opinion among scholars regarding the status of digital assets in Islamic law, which affects the interpretation and application of zakat to such assets.

Another challenge is the technical aspect of calculating and distributing digital zakat. Due to the decentralized and anonymous nature of digital assets, zakat institutions face obstacles in identifying asset ownership and determining whether a person has met the criteria for zakat obligations. Technologies such as blockchain and smart contracts can be a solution to ensuring transparency and accountability in digital zakat management. By adopting a blockchain-based system, zakat calculation can be done automatically based on the value of assets stored in the digital wallet, while smart contracts can ensure that zakat is distributed to eligible recipients directly.

This research confirms that the zakat model for digital assets should integrate the principles of zakat in Islamic economics with technological innovations that can improve the efficiency and transparency of zakat distribution. By considering various aspects of fiqh, regulation, and technology, the *maqashid sharia*-based zakat model can be a more inclusive solution in accommodating the development of the digital economy. In addition, cooperation between Islamic financial authorities, zakat

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institutions, and technology experts is needed to ensure that the implementation of digital zakat can run effectively and in accordance with Sharia principles.

Integration of Digital Technology in Zakat Management

The advancement of digital technology has provided great opportunities for the optimization of zakat management, especially in the aspects of transparency, efficiency, and accountability (Widiastuti et al., 2021). One of the innovations that can be utilized in the Zakat system is blockchain, which allows recording transactions in a decentralized, permanent, and immutable manner. This technology can be used to increase public trust in zakat institutions by providing a transparent system, where all transactions can be monitored in real-time by donors, zakat institutions, and beneficiaries. Thus, blockchain has the potential to reduce the risk of misappropriation of funds and increase the effectiveness of zakat distribution more accurately and fairly (Juniati & Widiastuti, 2024).

One important aspect of blockchain in zakat management is its ability to ensure that zakat funds are distributed in accordance with Sharia provisions. Through the mechanism of smart contracts, the collected zakat can be automatically distributed to eligible beneficiaries based on certain criteria, such as economic status or social needs (Kasmon et al., 2024). Smart contracts are blockchain-based programs that automatically execute commands if predefined conditions are met. In the context of zakat, smart contracts can be used to distribute funds to mustahik (zakat recipients) without the involvement of intermediaries, thus minimizing administrative costs and the potential for human error in the distribution process (Ahmed, 2024).

The implementation of smart contracts in zakat not only facilitates distribution but can also improve the accountability of zakat institutions (Asni et al., 2024). Every transaction recorded in the blockchain is transparent and can be audited at any time, thus allowing authorities and donors to ensure that zakat funds have been used in accordance with applicable regulations. In addition, this system can reduce delays in the process of distributing zakat funds, as smart contracts can directly distribute funds to mustahiks as soon as funds are available and verification is done. With higher efficiency, the utilization of smart contracts can help accelerate the delivery of assistance to groups in need (Binti Tamby Omar et al., 2024).

Several case studies have shown how digital technology can be used to improve the effectiveness of Islamic philanthropy (Testa et al., 2022). One example of the application of blockchain in Islamic philanthropy is the 'Muslim Charity

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Blockchain' project, which utilizes Ethereum's blockchain and smart contracts to track, verify, and automate the distribution of zakat or sadaqah. This mechanism ensures that donations are delivered directly to beneficiaries without intermediaries, thereby enhancing transparency and efficiency in fund management (Al-Daihani et al., 2023). The project allows donors to track how their donated funds are used, thereby increasing trust in zakat institutions. In addition, several Islamic finance platforms have adopted blockchain-based systems to manage shariah-based transactions, including zakat and waqf (Nur & Mutiara, 2022). This case study shows that the integration of digital technology in Zakat has great potential to improve the efficiency and transparency of Islamic social fund management.

Despite its various benefits, the implementation of digital technology in zakat also faces challenges, especially in the aspects of regulation and shariah compliance (Kamaruddin et al., 2024). The lack of clear regulatory standards related to blockchain and smart contracts in Islamic finance can be an obstacle in the adoption of these technologies by zakat institutions (Busari & Aminu, 2021). Some Muslim countries still do not have specific regulations governing the utilization of digital technology in shariah-based financial transactions, including zakat. Therefore, fatwas and guidelines from Islamic finance authorities are needed to ensure that blockchain-based systems used in zakat remain compliant with Islamic principles (Muryanto, 2023).

From a shariah compliance perspective, one of the key issues to consider is the validity of transactions conducted through smart contracts. In Islamic law, financial transactions must fulfill the principles of transparency (minimal gharar), fairness, and agreement between the parties involved. Smart contracts must be designed in such a way that they do not contain elements of *gharar*, *riba*, or *maisir* (Sudarwanto et al., 2024). In addition, there needs to be a Shariah supervision mechanism that ensures that all transactions carried out in the technology-based zakat system remain in accordance with Islamic law. The implementation of Sharia-based audit in blockchain system can be one of the solutions to ensure that this technology can be used without violating the principles of zakat (Kismawadi, 2024).

The adoption of digital technology in zakat management has the potential to provide great benefits for optimizing the distribution of Islamic social funds. However, the successful implementation of this technology is highly dependent on regulatory readiness, sharia compliance, as well as the readiness of zakat institutions to adopt new technology (Abdullah et al., 2023).

The technical feasibility of collecting zakat through digital platforms is already being tested. Fahrudin Ahmad from BAZNAS (Informant 6) highlighted that digital

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fundraising has significantly increased zakat collection efficiency, although specific regulations for crypto-assets are still pending. From the perspective of local zakat institutions, Adi Irfan Marjuqi (Informant 4) and Andy Putra Wijaya (Informant 8) emphasized that while the technology is ready, educating muzakki about the zakatability of their digital portfolios remains a major challenge. Additionally, Musliman (Informant 5) suggested that transparency through blockchain would solve the trust issue often faced.

For example, Malaysia has issued Shariah Advisory Council resolutions and regulatory guidelines for digital assets (Arief Jailani & Muneeza, 2023), while Bahrain and the UAE have developed specific frameworks for crypto-assets (Billah et al., 2019). Cooperation between Islamic finance authorities, technology developers, and academics is urgently needed to design a blockchain-based zakat system that is compliant with Islamic law and can be widely implemented. With the right approach, digital technology can be an effective tool in improving the effectiveness of Zakat as a more equitable, transparent, and efficient wealth distribution instrument.

Table 3. Integration of digital technology in zakat management:

Aspect	Description	Benefits	Challenges	Examples
Blockchain	Decentralized technology for recording transactions.	Increased transparency, reduced misappropriation.	Regulatory and Shariah compliance issues.	'Muslim Charity Blockchain' project for transparent zakat tracking.
Smart Contracts	Automates zakat distribution based on predefined conditions.	Faster, more efficient fund distribution.	Must comply with Shariah principles.	Direct distribution to mustahik, minimizing delays.
Transparency	Real-time transaction monitoring by all parties involved.	Builds public trust.	Technology adoption resistance.	Donors can track how funds are used, ensuring transparency.
Efficiency	Automates distribution, reducing delays and human error.	Faster distribution, lower administrative costs.	Infrastructure readiness.	Blockchain reduces delays in zakat distribution.
Accountability	Immutable transaction records for auditability.	Enhanced accountability for zakat institutions.	Continuous monitoring needed.	Blockchain allows real-time verification of fund use.

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Aspect	Description	Benefits	Challenges	Examples
Shariah Compliance	Ensures transactions follow Islamic law principles.	Validates zakat legitimacy.	Lack of clear Shariah compliance guidelines.	Need for Shariah audits in blockchain systems.
Regulatory Issues	Absence of regulations for blockchain use in Islamic finance.	Potential for standardized systems.	Need for fatwas and regulatory frameworks.	Collaboration with authorities to set clear regulations.
Shariah Audit	Shariah supervision to ensure compliance with Islamic law.	Ensures Shariah adherence in transactions.	Lack of established audit standards.	Regular audits to monitor blockchain zakat systems.
Collaboration	Cooperation between Islamic finance bodies, tech developers, and academics.	Successful implementation of Shariah-compliant systems.	Coordination challenges across sectors.	Cross-sector collaboration for compliant systems.

Source: Processed by researchers 2025

Development of Maqashid Sharia-Based Zakat Model for Digital Assets

The development of the *maqashid sharia*-based zakat model for digital assets aims to create a system that is able to accommodate the development of a digital economy without ignoring the basic principles of zakat in Islam. This model is designed based on a holistic approach that includes legal, economic, and technological aspects in order to be effectively applied in the Islamic financial system (Hunt et al., 2022). In this paper, the holistic approach integrating legal, economic, and technological dimensions serves as a core strength, ensuring that the proposed model is not only theoretically sound but also practically applicable in the context of the modern Islamic financial system. Within the framework of *maqashid shariah*, the digital asset zakat model must fulfill the principles of protection of wealth (*hifz al-mal*), fair distribution of wealth, and sustainability of the people's economy. Taking into account the unique characteristics of digital assets, a new approach is needed that can address the regulatory and operational challenges in implementing zakat on these assets (Halim, 2024).

The conceptual framework of the zakat model for digital assets integrates the principles of fiqh zakat with technological innovation, especially in the aspects of ownership, calculation, and distribution. The model adjusts the zakat calculation mechanism based on the classification of digital assets, where cryptocurrencies can be subject to zakat with an approach similar to gold and silver zakat, while NFTs and other digital tokens can be categorized based on their ownership and function

(Muneeza et al., 2023). The *nishab* and *haul* are also adjusted according to the volatility and type of asset, thus allowing flexibility in the application of digital asset zakat. In addition, this model proposes the use of blockchain technology to record zakat ownership and transactions transparently in order to increase public trust in zakat institutions (Maulina et al., 2023).

The operational scheme of digital zakat management in this model includes technology-based zakat collection, management, and distribution mechanisms. Zakat institutions can use blockchain-based digital platforms to record the ownership of zakat assets, automate the calculation of nishab and haul, and distribute funds to *mustahiq* directly through smart contracts (Saad et al., 2023). The use of digital wallets for zakat payment can also be an alternative to simplify transactions and reduce dependence on conventional financial systems (Shaikh & Amin, 2024). With the application of this technology, zakat management can become more efficient, transparent, and accountable, in line with the principles of Sharia and the needs of the modern digital economy.

The model implementation strategy in zakat and Islamic finance institutions requires a phased approach to be optimally implemented. The first step is the development of clear shariah regulations and standards regarding digital asset zakat, including fatwas from Islamic finance authorities that define the classification and calculation mechanism of digital zakat. The next step is to increase the capacity of zakat institutions in utilising digital technology, such as the integration of blockchain in the zakat management system and the development of smart contracts-based zakat payment applications. In addition, education to the public and digital asset owners is an important aspect so that they understand the obligation of zakat and the mechanism used in the technology-based zakat system.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the digital zakat model can be done by measuring the level of public participation in digital zakat payment and its impact on wealth distribution. One of the indicators of the success of this model is the increased transparency and accountability in zakat management, which can increase public trust in zakat institutions. In addition, the effectiveness of zakat distribution must also be analyzed to ensure that the collected zakat actually reaches the rightful mustahik. The use of blockchain-based data analytics can help zakat institutions identify zakat payment patterns and monitor distribution more efficiently.

Policy recommendations that can be proposed for the optimization of digital zakat cover three main aspects, namely regulation, technological infrastructure, and digital zakat literacy. The regulation should ensure that the digital asset zakat model is in line with *maqashid shariah* principles and can be applied in various Islamic

financial jurisdictions. Technological infrastructure, including the integration of blockchain-based zakat systems with Islamic financial institutions, needs to be developed in order to support the widespread implementation of this model. In addition, digital zakat literacy should be improved through education to digital asset owners, zakat institutions, and regulators so that all parties understand the concepts and mechanisms used in the digital zakat system.

By applying the *maqashid sharia*-based zakat model supported by digital technology, the zakat system can be more responsive to modern economic developments and the needs of Muslims. The implementation of this model not only improves efficiency and transparency in zakat management but also expands the scope of zakat revenue by accommodating digital assets as a legitimate source of zakat. With collaboration between regulators, zakat institutions, and technology experts, digital zakat can become a more effective instrument in improving the welfare of the ummah and realizing a fairer distribution of wealth in the Islamic economy.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the integration of digital assets into the zakat framework is not only religiously permissible but also necessary for the modernization of Islamic philanthropy. The findings are structured to answer the research questions as follows:

First, regarding the conceptualization of digital assets, this research confirms that cryptocurrencies, NFTs, and digital tokens fulfill the criteria of *mal mutaqawwim* (valuable property) under the Maqashid Shariah framework, specifically supporting the principle of *hifz al-mal* (protection of wealth). The expert informants emphasized that as long as these assets possess clear utility (*manfa'ah*) and legal recognition, they are subject to zakat once they meet the *nishab* and *haul* requirements.

Second, regarding the implementation model, the study finds that the integration of blockchain technology and smart contracts is the most viable solution to enhance zakat management. This technological approach ensures transparency, minimizes human error in distribution, and builds trust among *muzakki*, particularly within the digital economy ecosystem. The validation from practitioners at BAZNAS and LAZISMU suggests that while the technical infrastructure is ready, a robust regulatory framework and intensive public education are essential for successful adoption.

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In summary, this research bridges the gap between traditional Islamic jurisprudence and the digital economy by providing a *maqashid*-based model that promotes financial inclusion and social justice in the contemporary era.

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