

Zakat Institution: A Study on its Contribution to Community Development in Talipao, Sulu

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Abstract: The institutionalization of zakat in Talipao is not accurately and highly specialized, but it is only suitable to the ability and power that could be done by the people of Talipao as a zakat institution, though not highly institutionalized. It is only appropriate to the level standard of the *adat* (tradition) of the community. Fortunately, it could give realization to the mind of the individual Muslims in Talipao. Furthermore, zakat institution had already been materialized some developments in Talipao, Sulu that the people of said community can at least be having a suitable comfort in terms of worship in the masjid and knowing Islam in the madrasah. In addition, there is also a dividend from zakat institution given to the needy and poor individuals as their suitable livelihood assistance. The Da'wah Al-Islamiyyah is also conducted in the Talipao community; the people have learned more Islamic knowledge and understanding that can lead them to worship Allah (SWT) alone properly in a manner of the Prophetic Sunnah. They have seen the reality of Islam that is being glittered under the teaching process of Da'wah Al-Islamiyyah. Under the development in Talipao, individual students have learned Islamic science under the principle of Islamic education which is conducted in a madrasah created in Talipao. However, they use Islam in a way that can lead them to comfortable living and support their Islamic morality. This principle has served them as their wisdom and philosophy in their life. Even the zakat institution has faced challenges such as management, organization, process and mostly war between the MNLF and GRP during the Marcos regime in the early 1970s. However, with all the challenges that zakat institutions have faced, the institution has a prospect beyond Talipao, Sulu. It dreams to remain in touch with its goals and objectives of the future of the Talipao through one generation after another. It has been aiming to remain steadfast and determined to continue the mission of past forefathers and to the future progress in Talipao Sulu. The researcher is recommending that the zakat institution in Talipao must maintain the good outlook of the organization, management and process of the zakat institution so that it can provide strong resistance of the organization including its program objectives that are being carried out in the process of the implementation of its plan and development in the Talipao community as a whole. It should be doing its obligation and duties on every activity being done. Its tendency is that it can maintain its determination to survive along the process in all its objective with all constituents including all inhabitants of Talipao and their necessities throughout life. This must be done correctly in light of Islamic principles and teachings as well as its wisdoms.

Keywords: Da'wah, Institution, Islam, Talipao, Zakat.

1. Introduction

Zakat is the third pillar of Islam. It is obligatory for all

Muslims to observe this principle as given by Allah (swt) to all His slaves as a sign of faith among them. In addition, it is summed up towards Muslim economic provision in all walks of life. It also contributes to development in terms of progress on demand and need of the Muslim society. This can help the poor to be emancipated from economic poverty.

The Qur'an declared clearly that the Muslim is obliged to give zakat and Allah (swt) said in the Holy Qur'an:

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

"Take (O Muhammad), from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase, and invoke (Allah's blessings) upon them. Indeed your invocations are reassurance for them. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing. (Noble Qur'an 9:103).

The Zakat can cause to purify a Muslim's heart including their wealth. This is divinely stated that Allah has caused to purify Muslim hearts in this world until the Hereafter. Muslims are obliged to observe the divine injunction and discipline which are given for them. If this could be done sincerely, the tendency of the Muslim Ummah is that they can attain total peace and tranquillity in their heart and soul from the blessing of Allah. Allah (swt) said also in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

"Zakah expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect (zakah) and for bringing hearts together (for Islam) and for freeing captives (or slaves) and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the (stranded) traveller- an obligation (imposed) by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise. (Noble Qur'an 9:60)

Zakat is intended for the poor and the needy in order that they might live under the spirit of joyfulness and happiness.

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This is the reason that the people of Talipao organized the zakat institution in order to follow the injunction of Allah and His Prophet (saw) and to neutralize on the problem of the poor in the said community. The Muslim elders of Talipao had successfully been obtaining the zakat institution in as much as it could attain Islamic development in Talipao.

Zakat institution has played its role to develop a social atmosphere to the people of Talipao in terms of educational, social and spiritual life. It could help Islamic propagation through Islamic educational propaganda movement from Madrasah institution and da'wah program especially during the Friday khutbah of every Khutabah in the Friday congregational prayer. By this program, the people could attain Islamic social consciousness in their mind and then they could understand good and evil acts and they could lead an Islamic morality in their life. In addition, they know how to live Islamically under the teaching of Allah (swt) and following the footsteps of the Prophet (saw). Because of Islamic teachings, the people were being disciplined to maintain cleanliness and sanitation of the said community. Their surrounding is very much good to see. The Talipao community has an ideal arrangement in terms of sanitation. The people there are having self-determination to apply the Islamic principle and they live in mutual cooperation and unity so that they can maintain betterment in their Islamic way of life. They use *Zakat* institution as a vehicle to bring harmonious relationship of every individual Muslim in the said community and they are guided by the teachings of Islam as a whole.

2. Methodology

A. Research Design

The researcher employed essentially qualitative, not quantitative, emphasis of explanation made on anthropological and sociological approaches to study and examined the implementation of Zakat Institution in Talipao. Further, data also obtained from observation and interviews both formally and informally.

B. Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher consulted directly the officials and leaders of the Talipao Zakat institution in order to get accurate data information about the implementation of Zakat institution. The interview conducted among them, likewise, the consultation to the *ulama* in the community were done also by the researcher.

C. Participant Respondents

The researcher did participant observation on the operation of the institutionalized Zakat in the said community and traditional zakat given by the Muslims in the said area. Having grown up in the area, the researcher observed the developmental implementation and movement of the Zakat institution, both present and past application of the said Zakat institution.

D. Library works

The researcher conducted library research and used data from Islamic books, magazines, journals, theses and internet

materials and other related literature of Zakat issues as secondary sources.

E. Data Gathering

The researcher conducted the research in three barangays of Talipao district such as Barangay Talipao proper, Upper Talipao and Lower Talipao. The researcher being Tausug, is well-versed in Tausug vernacular language, which helped him in the data gathering activities.

F. Setting: Talipao, Sulu

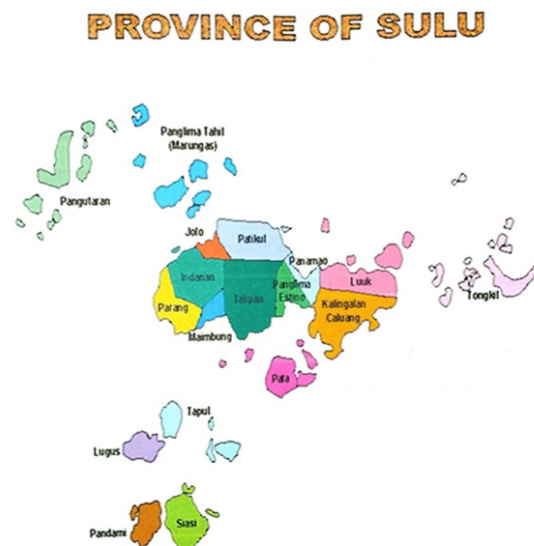


Fig. 1. Municipality of Talipao is the setting of the study

1) Locale and Population

The area of the study of Talipao has 53 Barangays but only 3 Barangays were the center concentration of this study such as Talipao proper, Lower Talipao and Upper Talipao. The total land area of Talipao is 37,771.38 hectares. The total land area of Talipao proper is 1,160.739 hectares, Lower Talipao is 308.22 hectares and Upper Talipao is 1,864.793 hectares. In the 2010 census which was conducted by the Talipao municipal government, the entire population of Talipao was 75,175 people. Within the 3 barangays there are more or less 450 houses. One barangay from 3 barangays have 150 houses more or less. The entire population of Talipao is Muslim Tausog. They are living under one ethnic Tausog group in a solid doctrinal principle which has been bringing them into an Islamic civilized society. Talipao community is purely Islamic in atmosphere. They are one hundred percent embracing the pure doctrinal principle of Islam. The climate of Talipao is moderate there are only two seasons in Talipao which are sunny and rainy season. Talipao is an agricultural community and also has marine resources from its coastal area and sea. Talipao is abundant in banana, cassava and Copra and vegetables. Talipao is rich in agricultural resources.

2) Brief History of Talipao

Talipao is a Muslim community which has no Christian but only Muslim Tausog inhabitants. The term Talipao was derived from two combining term Tali and Pao. Once upon a time, there

were two Chinese couple who conducted their marriage in Mount Talipao and they had resided in Talipao. Before the 15th century there are many Chinese merchants who lived in the Buainangkah Talipao. This place was the business center during the time of the Sulu Sultanate. In the early 19th century, there were two great panglimas (Tausug leader) such as Panglima Arasad and Panglima Timbul these two panglima were the leaders of the Talipao community and also members of the Ruma Bichara (House of the representatives or Majlisussurah (Parliament) of the Sulu sultanate.

Historically, Talipao masses were the supporters of Sulu sultanate under the command and generalship of Orangkaya Sabtal and Maas Palahuddin. Orangkaya Sabtal and Maas Palah were the leaders who defended the Sultan of Sulu from the invasion of the American soldiers. 1902 and 1904 were the times of war between Moro and Americans that erupted in Mount Talipao and 1906 in Tubig Lumbu. War in Tubig Lumbu was headed by Maas Darus. In the aforetime, Talipao masses until today were the defenders of Sulu against foreign imperialism and colonialism towards the Bangsamoro people. The Talipao masses were the helpers of the Sulu Sultanate against foreign invaders. They were determined to sacrifice themselves along the cause of struggle against colonizers and imperializes.

In ancient times, Talipao was a virgin forest but some people migrated to this place because they were enemies to Spanish and American invaders to Sulu. The foreign invaders had attempted to colonize and oppress the people of Sulu so some Tausugs were wanted by the Spanish and American people. The invaders were in hard position to catch the Tausug fighters because Talipao was very strong in conducting guerilla warfare tactics. It was very hard to conduct operation against the enemy because Talipao was very jungle in area. People of Talipao were the protectors of the Sulu Sultanate under the leadership of many panglimas (Tausug Leader) and many Imams of Tausug (Islamic religious Leader) Talipao was the stronghold of the Sulu Sultanate in terms of army focus who fought against the Spanish and American colonizers who oppressed the sultanate of Jihad fee Sabilillah. They defended Islam from the center of their life both with blood and efforts as well as their material wealth. In the early 1950's, Imam Asgari Untih had tried his best idealism to reform Talipao in the Islamic strategic approach and ideological principle. He promoted the Islamic educational way of reformation through obtaining institutional madrasah and da'wah program where he used to mobilize the Talipao community; Imam Asgari Untih was very successful in reforming Talipao into an Islamic atmosphere society and community. The people of Talipao were being civilized by Islamic ideological principles and guidance that they had indoctrinated in their heart and soul. Talipao had been headed toward Islamic ideal life internally, being Islamized by the efforts of the Muslim elders in conducting Islamic reformation within the territorial integrity of the Talipao community as a whole.

3. Results and Discussion

The institutionalization of zakat institution (*Jamiyyatul*

Awqaf Talipao) has played a great role for Islamic change in Talipao society and its community. It has been actually organized in accordance with Islamic principles by Muslim elders and masses of Talipao. They are engaging themselves for Islamic causes and objectives of the Jamiyyatul Awqaf Talipao that will support their needs. They are being given great challenge and inspiration towards Islamic change. They have become advocates of Islam as much as they can to adopt Islam as their way of life.

The Talipao masses are supportive of the plan and goal as well as objectives of Jamiyyatul Awqaf Talipao. They have remained steadfast and determined to defend the movement and motive including the strong foundational support of the Zakat institution. They are really and actually binding towards the program of the Zakat organization within the framework of Islamic law, wisdom and principle. The Muslim elders have been exerting their effort to consolidate the idea within themselves in order to effectively materialize the Zakat institution in Talipao. With unity and cooperation among them, the Zakat institution was materialized and appeared within the hearts of Talipao society. It was very deeply supported by the Talipao inhabitants in as much as it could reach the highest level of its good objective in changing Talipao society into an Islamic nature and atmosphere. The Talipao masses have been deeply embracing the Islamic principle and doctrine with open arms and with hearts full of sincerity and they have strongly been believing in Islam from the inner core of their heart due to the impact of Islamic guidance given by the Muslim elders through the support program of the *Jamiyyatul Awqaf Talipao*.

The *Jamiyyatul Awqaf Talipao* has attained and sustained Islamic development through Talipao economic support, spiritual and educational progress. It has been effecting the Islamic social change among the masses of the Talipao community. It has also contributed to the development of the Islamic necessity in the said area. In addition, the Islamic spiritual development and Islamic education were also being developed since the early creation of the Zakat institution until the present time. Islamic worship is continuously practised until the present time. They are observing their ibadat prescribed by Islamic law and doctrine. They are determined to practice many kinds of ibadat especially (Salah) prayer in the masjid for five-time daily prayers. They have promoted these always in the congregational prayer in the masjid.

The Islamic social development was also accorded among the Talipao constituents. They have met all these during two Islamic festivals such as *Hariraya Eidl Fit'r* and *Eidel Ad'ha* including *Mi'raj* and *Maulidun Nabi*. They are hand in hand joining in a certain time of their reunion every time these Islamic eventual ceremonies are observed.

Islamic education in madrasah was also created and supported by the zakat institution. This has been educating the children of every family in Talipao. The children of these families have been brought to the madrasah and the asatidz religious (teachers) will inculcate Islamic values, principle and doctrine in the form of Arabic language and Tausug dialect. Islam was successfully inculcated in Talipao through the two media of instructions the language of Arabic and Tausug

dialect.

The war between MNLF and GRP in 1972 during the martial law in the Philippines, was a challenge to the Talipao Zakat institution (Jamiyyatul awqaf Talipao). Even during the war the Zakat collection was still collected by order of the leadership of the revolutionary government. This was diverted to the cause of Islamic revolution against the Philippines colonial aggression against the Bangsamoro people and their homeland. The Muslim elders have maintained the sympathy and sentiment of masses to support the Zakat institutions. The program of Jamiyyatul Awqaf Talipao did not change its directional goal and objective called as perpetualization of Islamic religion in Talipao community and its maintenance among foundational support, so the Talipao masses remained steadfast and determined to defend Islam as their ideology. The organizational process and management was also maintained by the members of the *Jamiyyatul Awqaf Talipao* even if there was an obstacle along the way to serve as a challenge to them in maintaining the strength of the Zakat institution. Therefore, the zakat institution had successfully overcome the obstacle from the early beginning of its creation until the present situation. The Talipao masses have survived under the given doctrinal principle of Islam as their way of life. They are still steadfast and so determined to dedicate themselves along the ideological cause of Islam until the end of their life.

4. Conclusion

The zakat institution (Jamiyyatul Awqaf Talipao) had changed the condition and situation of Talipao into an Islamic outlook and appearance and so with its environment. The Talipao community had proved and tasted the Islamic development which has been given by the Zakat institution. They have realized the directional way of their living under shade of Islamic ideology and dynamic doctrine which were being given to them with the assistance and supervision of the zakat organization. The zakat institution had given total changes in the Talipao society towards Islamic way of living. The culture of Talipao community was given directional way which is attached to the pedagogical teaching of Islam. They have completely embraced the totality and comprehensive understanding of Islam as a way of life that must to be parallel to their life style and human behavior and conduct.

The Talipao conditions have been challenged by the program and objectives which were materialized clearly and vividly in the heart and soul of every community individual. They had gained the Islamic inspirational message which they must embrace along the course of life. They also have been civilized and Islamized in their life. They have achieved Islamic modality and environment which are parallel to their daily human dealing in their daily life and cultural style of living.

Their life conditions were reorganized through Islamic concrete values with strong firmness and final determination being deeply rooted in their hearts, minds and souls.

The common human behavior of the Taliapo community has been realigned into an Islamic outlook due to the impact of the Da'wah program of the Jamiyatul Awqaf Talipao which was inculcated in their minds and hearts. They could distinguish

between good and evil deeds. In addition, they have adopted to the Islamic reality and its dimensional principles and doctrines. Their Tausug culture was Islamized and merged to the pedagogical teaching objective of Islam. This was being reconciled with correct approaches towards Islamic human daily life having total freedom to execute all kinds of vital matters in Islam which are actually connected to Islamic public interest. They live in a smooth manner under the teaching shade light of Islamic ethical methodology and basic vital approaches that are being exercised along the way of their daily living.

Therefore, as long as the Talipao masses will support the Talipao Zakat institutions, there will remain a lasting resistance for Islamic doctrine that will be deeply rooted within the heartland of Talipao society and community. Islam will survive forever and resist to a certain great degree whenever there are well organized to support the plans and goals of the Jamiyyatul Awqaf Talipao towards realizing the objective of Islam as a whole. Thus, the perpetual lasting existence of peace and harmony of living of Talipao society lies under the spirit of unity of the peoples under the shade of Islam under the pedagogical teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

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