

## Research Article

# The Impact of Poverty, Human Development, and Zakat Contributions on Economic Growth in Indonesia and Malaysia

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**Abstract.**

The paradigm of the conventional economic theory states that economic growth affects poverty levels and human development, but this study proves the opposite. The economic growth influences the poverty level and human development. This study investigates the impact of poverty, human development, and the zakat fund on economic growth in Indonesia and Malaysia between 2011 and 2020. Indonesia and Malaysia are two countries that have close characteristics, namely countries with a Muslim majority in Southeast Asia that develop zakat. The quantitative method will be used in this study using secondary data. The analytical technique used in this research is panel data regression analysis. This study demonstrates that poverty, human development, and zakat funds affected the economic growth in Indonesia and Malaysia from 2011 to 2020.

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Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the 3rd JESICA Conference Committee.

**Keywords:** economic growth, poverty, zakat, religious charity, index of human development

## 1. Introduction

Economic growth is a key metric for evaluating a country's development progress. It reflects a long-term increase in per capita output, translating into the country's improved welfare. This improvement means citizens have greater access to goods and services, and their purchasing power increases. It is imperative to maintain high and sustainable economic growth to ensure sustainable development and welfare of society [1].

The world's economic growth has fluctuated over two decades, but the most extensive fluctuations occurred in 2009 and 2020. The decline in economic growth was quite drastic globally in 2009 when it contracted by 3.3 percent, which was motivated by the global financial crisis that occurred in 2008 due to the worsening economic conditions in the United States [2].

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In 2011, Indonesia and Malaysia's economies were recovering from the 2009 global crisis. Malaysia was hit hard by the crisis in 2009, where the Malaysian economy fell into recession with a contraction of 1.7 percent in 2009. The financial and trade sectors were the two most affected sectors in Malaysia. Exports fell about RM26 billion from July 2008 to January 2009 or decreasing about 45 percent and also suffered from a capital flight where many foreign investors repatriated their funds due to the global crisis [3]. In 2020, Indonesia and Malaysia's economic growth experienced a deep contraction due to Covid-19, which curbed economic activity globally. The recession hit both countries, where Indonesia experienced a contraction of 3.49% and Malaysia of 5.6% (year on year) [4,5].

Many factors can influence economic growth. Among these, poverty remains a key factor influencing economic growth, presenting a significant challenge in many countries, especially in developing nations. A high poverty rate can make the costs incurred for development much greater. In addition, the high poverty rate also reflects that purchasing power is still relatively low and results in the multiplier effect being smaller and the rate of economic growth being hampered [6].

World Bank records indicate that about 10 percent of the world's population, or more than 700 million people, still live in extreme poverty, facing difficulties in fulfilling fundamental needs like healthcare, education, and access to clean water and sanitation. The pandemic further caused 97 million more people to be in poverty in 2020 [7].

Furthermore, humans are also a vital factor in pushing rapid economic growth. The Human Development Index (HDI) measures the human quality on an economic scale, evaluating both physical and non-physical aspects, namely health, education, and standard of living. The growth of economic is often reflected in higher level of human development. This implies that for an economy to thrive, its population must efficiently absorb and manage its resources [6].

Indonesia and Malaysia have a predominantly Muslim populations. It is about 87% of Indonesia's and 63.5% of Malaysia for their Muslim population [8]. Indonesia has a zakat potential of IDR 327.6 trillion, while Malaysia leads in the World Islamic Economy sector [9]. Given its status as the country with the largest Muslim population, Indonesia recognizes zakat, a crucial element of Islamic social finance, as a catalyst for economic growth. As the third pillar zakat becomes mandatory for Muslim whose wealth reaches a specified threshold (*al-nisab*). This distribution of wealth to designated recipients (*mustahik*) can increase purchasing power among the poor. Through its role in wealth distribution, zakat affects the component of demand aggregate, subsequently impacts Gross Domestic Product [10,11].

Despite extensive research, the precise factors influencing economic growth remain a subject of ongoing scholarly debate. As noted by asnidar [12] and Damanik et al. [13], the contribution of human development to economic growth is not statistically significant. Ridlo & Setyani [14] find no significant impact of zakat on economic growth. Utami argues that poverty influence the economic growth rate, as poverty remains a challenge in the process of economic growth [6]. Conversely, Omoniyi [15] and Quy [16] stated in their research that poverty does not significantly affect the economic growth. Omoniyi further emphasises that poverty does not have great potential in influencing economic growth. Factors such as inflation, mortality rates and life expectancy play a major role in shaping economic outcomes [15].

Previous research has not fully explored the combined impact of poverty, human development, and zakat on economic growth. This research seeks to fill this gap by examining their effect on economic growth within Indonesia and Malaysia from 2011 to 2020.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Economic Growth

Economic growth reflects an increase in the overall production of goods and services within an economy. This growth can occur when people obtain new resources or develops innovative ways to generate more output using its existing resources and capabilities [17]. Thus, economic grows when there is an increase in goods and service caused by development occurs in economic activities [18]. Economic growth also denotes a sustainable and positive transformation in a nation's economy within a certain period [19].

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a measurement to assess a country's economic growth that stated in percent in each year. GDP represents the total market value of all final goods and services produced within a country in a given period [20]. GDP are divided into two types, namely, Nominal GDP and Real GDP [17]. Nominal GDP is calculated by valuing economic production in an economy that includes current prices in its calculations. Meanwhile, Real GDP measures the value of all goods and services produced by a country, adjusted for inflation or deflation, using constant prices or basic prices.

## 2.2. Poverty

Poverty is a situation where a household's income is too low to afford the amount of food, shelter, and clothing considered necessary. This concept of poverty is relative: People are poor compared to what is considered normal or average, and so poor that the situation is considered a matter of concern. A different concept of poverty is absolute poverty-poverty that is so extreme that it challenges survival [21]. Absolute poverty refers to a condition where individuals struggle or fail to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, and basic health care [22]. There are several indicators of poverty, including the following:

- a. Unable to fulfill basic consumption which includes clothing, food, and shelter.
- b. Lack of access to other fundamental needs such as sanitation, education, health, transportation, and clean water.
- c. Having no guarantee of the future
- d. Limited natural resources and low community quality
- e. Low community quality and limited natural resources.
- f. Lack of appreciation in community social activities
- g. Lack of access to employment and sustainable jobs.

The poverty line represents a fixed income threshold below which individuals cannot afford basic necessities like food and other essentials. It serves as a benchmark for tracking absolute poverty over time [23]. Meanwhile, the Headcount Index is utilized to determine the proportion of a country's population living below this poverty threshold.

## 2.3. Human Development

The aspects of socioeconomic development such as education, health and adjusted per capita real income can be measured by Human Development Index (HDI) [22]. First introduced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990, the HDI is now published within the annual Human Development Report (HDR) [23]. The HDI evaluates the extent of human development across nations on a scale from 0, indicating the minimum, to 1, reflecting the utmost level of human development [22].

Meanwhile, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) identifies three components of the HDI: health, education, and living standards. The health dimension is calculated based on the Life Expectancy Rate of a country. The second component is

education. The education component is calculated based on Expected Years of Schooling (HLS) and Average Years of Schooling (RLS). Finally, the expenditure component is calculated based on Gross National Product (GNP) per capita.

## 2.4. Zakat

Zakat, a fundamental pillar of Islam, mandates Muslims to contribute financially, serving not only as a means to cleanse wealth from covetousness but also as a spiritual purification [24,25]. By distributing zakat, one aims to foster societal equity, ensuring a harmonious distribution of wealth that benefits both the giver and receiver [26]. Zakat also could help its recipients to improve their standard of living which zakat and move them to a better class in the society [27]. Islamic law identifies eight categories of individuals entitled to receive zakat: the poor, the needy, those employed to collect zakat (*amil*), new converts to Islam (*mualaf*), slaves seeking freedom (*riqab*), those burdened by debt (*gharim*), those fighting in the cause of Allah (*fisabilillah*), and travelers in need (*ibnu sabil*).

Building upon the established research model, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Poverty influences economic growth in a singular aspect

H2: Human Development partially influences economic growth

H3: Zakat exhibits a partial impact on economic growth

H4: Poverty, human development, and zakat funds collectively influence economic growth.

## 3. Research Method

This study investigates the relationship between three independent variables (X) and a single dependent variable (Y), aligning with the chosen research topic. Employing panel data regression as its analytical strategy, this investigation incorporates both cross-sectional and time-series data to create a composite dataset for analysis. The research model, aiming to assess the impacts of poverty, human development, and zakat contributions on economic growth, is formulated as follows:

$$y = \alpha + \beta x_{1it} + \beta x_{2it} + \beta x_{3it} + e \quad (1)$$

Description:

Y = Economic Growth

$\alpha$  = Constant

X1 = Poverty

X2 = Human Development

X2 = Zakat

$\beta$  (1...2) = Independent variables coefficient of regression

e = Error term

t = time

i = country

This study explores three panel data regression models: common effect model, fixed effect model and random effect model. Additionally, it employs specific tests such as the Chow, Hausman, and Lagrange multiplier tests to determine the most suitable model. Additionally, classical assumption tests are performed to ensure data quality, including assessments for normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation. Hypotheses are evaluated by t-Test (partial impact) and F-Test (simultaneous impact).

The research utilizes secondary data from various official sources. Economic growth is represented by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data both from Indonesia and Malaysia published by World Bank. Poverty is measured by Headcount Poverty Index issued by World Bank. Last, zakat fund is measured by collection fund of both Indonesia and Malaysia published by Badan Amil Zakat (BAZNAS) for Indonesia and Pusat Pungutan Zakat for Malaysia.

#### 4. Result and Discussion

The results of descriptive statistical analysis obtained from data processing using the Stata 12. Table 1 summarizes the descriptive analysis of this research:

TABLE 1: Descriptive Statistic Analysis

Descriptive Statistics					
Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Poverty	20	7.795	3.92542	0.6	12.5
Human Development	20	0.746785	0.0526593	0.67	0.81
Zakat	20	2.7312	3.6812	1.6409	1.1513
Economic Growth	20	4.6115	4.8115	9.5711	1.0916

Source: Output Stata 12

##### a. Economic Growth

The assessment of economic growth relies on the GDP values for the year 2011-2020 in Indonesia and Malaysia. Based on table 9, the average economic growth rate is reported at 4.6115, with a standard deviation of 4.8115. The data reveals a highest recorded growth rate of 9.5711 and a lowest of 1.0916.

b. Poverty

The poverty variable based on the proportion of the population living below national poverty threshold or headcount poverty ratio in Indonesia and Malaysia, as reported by the World Bank and Malaysia’s Department of Statistic. The mean value for the poverty rate stands at 7.795 with a standard deviation of 3.92542, reaching a peak value of 12.5 and a minimum of 0.6.

c. Human Development

The metric for human development is derived from the Human Development Index scores for Indonesia and Malaysia, published by the United Nations Development Programme. The average value for the human development indicator is 0.746785, with a standard deviation of 0.0526593, showcasing a range between a maximum of 0.81 and a minimum of 0.67.

d. Zakat

The zakat metric reflects the collected amounts of zakat funds in Indonesia and Malaysia, as reported by BAZNAS and Malaysia Zakat Collection Center. This metric exhibits an average value of 2.7312 with a variability (standard deviation) of 3.681. The dataset shows the zakat funds reaching a peak at 1.6409 and a baseline at 1.1513.

The Chow test was applied to determine the optimal model between the common effect and fixed effect models. Based on Table 2, the probability value of F in this study is 0.0000 <0.05. The fixed effect model is deemed more suitable due to the significant F-test result.

TABLE 2: Chow Test.

Effect Test	Probability Value
F Probability	0.0000

Source: Output Stata 12

Similarly, the Hausman test was utilized to choose between the random effect and fixed effect models, with the fixed effect model proving to be the most appropriate according to the significant chi-square result (Table 3).

TABLE 3: Hausman Test.

Effect Test	Probability Value
F Probability	0.0000

Source: Output Stata 12

The Lagrange multiplier test was used to identify the most suitable model between the random effect and common effect models. Based on Table 4, the probability value obtained is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , indicating the random effect model as the best choice based on the significant result.

TABLE 4: Lagrange Multiplier Test.

Effect Test	Probability Value
F Probability	0.0000

Source: Output Stata 12

Based on Table 5, the probability value resulting from the normality test is 0.53425, which is greater than alpha of 0.05. This indicates the absence of normality issues within the study.

TABLE 5: Normality Test.

Probability Value	0.53425
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Source: Output Stata 12

Based on Table 6, the VIF value on the poverty variable (2.62), human development (2.30) and zakat funds (1.56) have a value smaller than 10. This suggests an absence of problematic multicollinearity among variables.

TABLE 6: Multicollinearity Test.

Variable	VIF Value
Poverty	2.62
Human Development	2.30
Zakat	1.56

Source: Output Stata 12

The probability generated by the poverty variable is 0.870, human development is 0.374 and zakat funds is 0.526, where all values are greater than alpha of 0.05 (Table 7). This points towards the data being unaffected by heteroscedasticity.

Table 8 presents a probability outcome from the autocorrelation test (run test) at 0.7, which is above the alpha value of 0.05, indicating the data's freedom from autocorrelation issues. The subsequent analysis through the Chow Test, Hausman Test, and



TABLE 7: Heteroskedasticity Test.

Variable	Probabilities
C	1.02
Poverty	0.870
Human Development	0.374
Zakat	0.526

Source: Output Stata 12

Lagrange Multiplier Test determine the best model for this study is The Fixed Effect Model.

TABLE 8: Autocorrelation Test.

Probability	0.7
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Source: Output Stata 12

Table 9 provides the following regression equation:

TABLE 9: Fixed Effect Model.

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error
C	-1.6416	0.994045
Poverty	-9.0713	0.024631
Human Development	2.8316	1.56153
Zakat	190.9626	0.065615

Source: Output Stata 12

$$\text{Economic Growth} = -1.64 - 9.07(\text{Poverty})_{it} + 2.83 (\text{Human Development})_{it} + 190.96 (\text{Zakat})_{it} + \epsilon_{it}$$

- a. The constant obtained from the panel data regression test results is -1.64, indicating that, in the absence of the variables for poverty, human development, and zakat contributions, economic growth would stand at -1.64.
- b. The coefficient for the poverty variable is -9.07, suggesting a decrease in economic growth by 9.07 units for every one-unit increase in poverty. Conversely, a one-unit decrease in poverty is associated with a 9.07 unit increase in economic growth.
- c. The human development variable's coefficient is 2.83, implying that for every one-unit increase in human development, there is an expected 2.83 unit increase in economic growth. Similarly, a one-unit decline in human development would result in a 2.83 unit decrease in economic growth.

d. The substantial positive coefficient (190.96) for the zakat fund suggests a strong association with economic growth. A one-unit increase in zakat funds is projected to augment economic growth by 190.96 units, while a decrease in zakat funds could potentially reduce economic growth.

Table 10 indicates that the poverty variable has a significant negative effect on economic growth. The t-statistic of 2.78 exceeds the t-table value of 2.110, and the p-value of 0.014 is below the significance level of 0.05. These results suggest that poverty significantly impacts economic growth in an inverse relationship. If there is a decrease in poverty, there will be an increase in economic growth and vice versa. To sum up, the first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is accepted because the poverty has a significant effect on economic growth.

TABLE 10: t-Test Results.

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Probability
C	-1.6416	0.994045	-2.89	0.011
Poverty	-9.0713	0.024631	-2.78	0.014
Human Development	2.8316	1.56153	3.55	0.003
Zakat Fund	190.9626	0.065615	3.82	0.002

Source: Output Stata 12

Statistical analysis demonstrates significant positive impact on economic growth from human development. The calculated t-statistic value stands at 3.55, surpassing the critical value of 2.110. Furthermore, the p-value associated with the human development indicator is 0.003, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05, underscoring its statistical significance. The significant positive result indicates that if human development increases, it can encourage an increase in economic growth. Consequently, the second hypothesis ( $H_2$ ) is accepted, confirming the significant impact of human development on economic growth.

Based on the results in Table 10, the zakat variable has a significant positive impact on economic growth. The calculated t-statistic stands at 3.82, which exceeds the critical value (t-table) of 2.110, indicating that the result is statistically significant. Moreover, the p-value associated with the zakat variable is 0.002, falling below the significance threshold of 0.05. The significant positive result shows that if there is an increase in zakat funds, it can encourage economic growth. Consequently, this finding supports the third hypothesis ( $H_3$ ), verifying the notable positive effect of the zakat contribution on the enhancement of economic growth.

Analysis of Table 11 shows the F-statistic value is 88.15 and the F-table value is 3.06, so the F-statistic > F-table. Also, the F-probability  $0.0000 < 0.05$  (alpha). These results strongly suggest that the combined influence of poverty, human development, and zakat funds has a statistically significant impact on economic growth. Consequently, our data strongly supports the acceptance of the fourth hypothesis, asserting a meaningful correlation between economic growth and the combined variables of poverty, human development, and zakat contributions..

TABLE 11: F-Test Result.

	Value
F-Statistic	88.15
F Probability	0.0000

Source: Output Stata 12

## 5. Discussion

Our findings demonstrate a significant effect of poverty on economic growth. This result supports research conducted by Breunig & Majid [28] in their research called Inequality, Poverty and Economic Growth, which states the key role of poverty reduction in driving economic expansion. A high poverty rate can negatively affect economic growth through greater inequality [28]. The high poverty rate can slow down economic growth due to low purchasing power, resulting in a small multiplier effect and economic growth being unable to move quickly [6].

Novriansyah [1] revealed in his research that the causes of poverty are caused by limited supporting infrastructure, such as roads, schools, and other economic infrastructure, especially in underdeveloped areas in eastern Indonesia. Limited access makes it difficult for the poor to improve their lives [1]. The current situation shows Malaysia still struggle with absolute poverty, relative poverty, traditional rural, urban and growing inequality [29].

Our results support researches written by Mustafa et al. [30] and Zhang & Danish [31], which states that human development significantly affects economic growth. These studies highlight the integral role of human development, particularly in Asian nations, where it encompasses both social and economic dimensions [30]. The Human Development Index can be defined as combination of health, education, and a standard of living. Education plays an essential role in improving human capabilities, developing superior individuals for a more decent life, and as the main capital for economic growth and

development. Well educated and healthy society is fundamental in shaping individual capabilities, where people are the major factor of economic growth activities [31-33].

Large investments and equal income distribution are needed to increase human development, especially in education and health [34]. The government's spending can be a reference in assessing how much the government pays attention to improving its human quality [32].

Different findings were stated by Uddin et al. [35] in their research titles "Institutions, Human Capital and Economic Growth in Developing Countries," suggesting that economic development can adversely affect growth in developing nations. Investments made in the human development sector can have a negative impact if the institutions by the government are weak and dysfunctional because the distribution of funds tends to be used in unproductive social activities.

Currently, Indonesia ranks 107th globally in the Human Development Index (HDI), classified as a country with medium HDI and a score of 0.718. On the other hand, Malaysia is ranked 62nd and falls within the high HDI category with the latest value of 0.810. [36].

Zakat plays a multifaceted role in the economy, impacting various levels. On a macroeconomic scale, zakat effects several aspects namely poverty alleviation, social security, economic growth and wealth distribution [37,38]. As for the microeconomic scale, zakat significantly aids in the redistribution of income among its beneficiaries [37]. Ben Jedidia & Guerbouj [10] stated there's a significant effect from zakat to economic growth in Islamic countries, where zakat was given to encourage government spending, investment and consumption, which those components are stimulating the economic growth. Zakat could function as a tool to increase aggregate demand; its distribution can enhance the purchasing power of the poor, invigorating consumption, production, and ultimately, economic growth [10,39].

The results of research conducted by Suprayitno [39] with case studies in 5 cities in Indonesia state that the distribution of zakat to its recipients (*mustahik*) can increase recipients' income to encourage purchasing power for a product. With an increase in purchasing power, the demand for a product can improve and elevate production activities in a company. The positive impact is that the absorption of labor by the company increases and will reduce the unemployment rate [39,40]. In addition, production growth will encourage the rise of taxes paid such as corporate tax, value-added tax and income tax [39]. Also, the results of research conducted by Mahat & Warokka [41] with 19 Muslim countries as case studies state that zakat can be a strong source of economic growth

where zakat can be a domestic investment that can be turned into funds to support the development of the state.

The potential economic impact of zakat hinges upon its effective and efficient management by relevant institutions. Efforts to optimize zakat management to do the collection and distribution must be expanded to bolster community productivity, purchasing power, and overall economic growth [40,42]. In their research, Ahmad & Ma'in [43] stated that the efficiency of zakat distribution in Selangor does not match the efficiency of its collection by the Zakat Institution. Furthermore, a significant disparity between the potential and actual collection of zakat funds was observed in Indonesia in 2020, with a vast gap between the potential zakat of IDR 327 trillion and a realization of IDR 26 trillion [44].

This study also reveals a negative correlation between poverty levels and economic growth. Elevated poverty rates decelerate economic progress due to diminished purchasing power [6]. The root of poverty often lies in the challenge of accessing fundamental needs like education and healthcare, compounded by inadequate infrastructure [1]. Human Development describes the quality of human beings owned by a country. Therefore, an improvement in the population's overall quality is likely to stimulate economic expansion. There is a direct influence to improve human quality by government spending in two sectors namely education and health so that it can encourage sustainable economic growth [32].

As a mechanism for wealth redistribution, zakat holds the potential to become a powerful investment driver. The investment can be channeled through the education and health sectors, which potentially yield significant improvements in human development of the country. However, if the institutions are weak and dysfunctional, this will hinder the investment, given that the management of funds is not used properly [35].

## 6. Conclusion

The high poverty rate can negatively affect economic growth because it illustrates the low purchasing power of the people. In addition, human development variables also partially affect economic growth in Indonesia and Malaysia. Government institutions are expected to run functionally and effectively so that investment in human development can run well. Finally, the variable of zakat funds partially affects economic growth in Indonesia and Malaysia. Zakat funds as one of the Islamic social and financial tools have great potential for the welfare of society, especially in Islamic countries or Muslim majority populations. It is expected that Zakat Management Organizations (OPZ) both

in Indonesia and Malaysia can increase the effectiveness and efficiency in managing zakat funds collected from the community so that they can be channelled properly and on target so that there is welfare in the community which can facilitate the course of economic development. Poverty has a significant negative effect on economic growth, hence alleviating poverty within a nation is essential for boosting its economic growth rate.. Likewise, higher scores on the Human Development Index (HDI) are associated with increased economic growth. This suggests that prioritizing human development can lead to economic benefits. In addition, zakat also has a significant positive effect on economic growth, so it is necessary to make efforts to optimize zakat collection so that it can be used to move the economy of the lower-level community so that it will help increase community productivity which will ultimately increase the rate of economic growth. The results of this study may be relevant to developing Muslim countries but not necessarily applicable to developed countries. Therefore, further research can use broader panel data to get more comprehensive results.

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