TAQWA (PIETY) APPROACH IN SUSTAINING ISLAMIC PHILANTHROPY FOR SOCIAL BUSINESSES

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ABSTRACT

Taqwa (piety) approach in sustaining Islamic philanthropy for social businesses is essential. Social businesses are getting important role in the development of a balanced, just and prosperous society. Social businesses are established to address social objectives using business model. The input for the social businesses is unlike the convention for profit businesses. The input comes from the society. The existing public and private sectors are not able to address social issues. The private sectors left pollution, social injustice and unemployment. This is the gap that the society must address. The contribution to the social businesses is from the society. Each individual is needed to be part of the social businesses. The individuals with *Taqwa* (piety) are having distinctive competencies to mobilize Islamic philanthropy in terms of charity giving (*sadaqah*), permanent charity (*infaq*) and endowment (*waqf*). This study postulates that *Taqwa* (piety) can influence individuals to sustain Islamic philanthropy for social business. This study conducts personal interviews with community leaders to explore their views on the influence of *Taqwa* (piety) on individuals to sustain Islamic philanthropy for social business. The use of qualitative personal interview is not to generalize the results of the study but to provide deep understanding about the context. The grounded results of the context provide a contingency view on organizational behavioral studies, practices and public policy for social development. The respondents argued that the effect of *taqwa* (piety) can be explained by social status, industrial exposure, and economics. The respondents suggested for *tarbiyyah* (education) and *biah solehah* (good environment) to nurture *taqwa* (piety).

Keywords: *Taqwa* (piety), Islamic philanthropy, social development

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INTRODUCTION

Taqwa (piety) approach in sustaining Islamic philanthropy for social businesses is essential. Business sectors are part of social development that contributes to human civilization. Business sectors have individuals who need freedom, justice and empowerment (Burchell, 1995; Skinner, 2003; Sani & Shah, 2020). It is time for everyone to be part of the project in sustaining social businesses alongside with social development (Cuthill, 2002; Marzuki, Hay & James, 2012; Kotsonis, 2020; Nash, Polson & Glover, 2020). Everyone has a role in contributing to sustainable social development vis-à-vis social businesses.

A society is composed with people and values. There is a process to develop people with values and dignity. Social development is about building and sustaining everyone in the society with good character, moral values, integrity and discipline (Appe & Oreg, 2020; Sani & Shah, 2020 Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020). It begins from home, then to the community, society and nation (Litz & Stewart, 2000; Saiia, Carroll & Buchholtz, 2003; Cinderby et al., 2016; Adekola & Clelland, 2020).

Education plays a role in social development. It needs huge investment in education (Lewis, 2006; Altbach, 2007; Zajda, 2020). The purpose of education is to nurture the mind, soul and behavior with good character, moral values, integrity and discipline (Conrad & Dunek, 2020; Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al, 2020). Nevertheless, education has been narrowed to enable quick industrialization (Altbach, 2007; Lewis, 2006; Ginsberg, 2011; Kotsonis, 2020). It became human without soul and character for integrity (Lewis, 2006; Kotsonis, 2020).

The private sectors came in to invest in education with the commercial terms. The main purpose is to intensify education as an enabler in social development (Altbach, 2007; Zajda, 2020). This is essential to support the value chain of the private sectors and the economy.

Both public and private sectors seem to complement social development through education. However, the commercialization agenda has narrowed the role of education from building humanity civilization into sustaining competitive advantage of commercial entities and industrialization (Altbach, 2007; Lewis, 2006; Ginsberg, 2011; Kotsonis, 2020). The statistics are no longer about happiness, well-being, wellness, and welfare of the humans, but economic well-being in terms of national income comparison, competitive ranking among companies and countries, and industrialization intensification (Aksoy & Bayram, 2020; Benito, Gil & Romera, 2020; Jennings, Seo & Soliman, 2020).

The immediate consequences of economic well-being are trade off to inequality, widening the gap between the rich and the poor, the haves and the have-nots, pollution, and social illness (Craven, 2011; Ragnedda & Muschert, 2013; Robinson et al., 2020). The reality of social distancing is happening in terms of divide among people measured by possession of wealth and material (Willis & Tranter, 2006; Craven, 2011; Jennings et al., 2020).

The essence of the role and duty of individual members in the society is not heard. Both public and private sectors are occupied with the commercialization agenda (Altbach, 2007; Lewis, 2006; Ginsberg, 2011; Kotsonis, 2020). Allocation of resources and efforts are meant to strengthen the commercialization agenda (Aksoy & Bayram, 2020; Benito, Gil & Romera, 2020; Jennings, Seo & Soliman, 2020). This situation has motivated some responsible citizens to establish social entities to rectify the social injustice, social illness, pollution and unemployment (Craven, 2011; Ragnedda & Muschert, 2013; Jennings et al, 2020). Such efforts are limited with scarce manpower, financial resources, and support from the community (Ginsberg, 2011; Kotsonis, 2020). Nevertheless, these challenges and limitations are not the barrier for these social entities to serve the society (Lewis, 2006; Ginsberg, 2011;

Aksoy & Bayram, 2020; Benito, Gil & Romera, 2020). The social consciousness drives them with energy, direction and persistence to keep serving the society.

Social philanthropy keeps the civil society entities surviving. The community keeps donating money and contributing efforts in making the society entities survive (Cinderby et al., 2016; Adekola & Clelland, 2020; Aksoy & Bayram, 2020; Benito, Gil & Romera, 2020). The activists and philanthropists are persistent in supporting the civil society entities making a significant contribution.

What makes the activists and philanthropists persistent? Essentially, these people have a good mind and heart to make goodness for themselves, their community, their society and nation (Appe & Oreg, 2020; Sani & Shah, 2020; Conrad & Dunek, 2020; Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020). They translated their good mind and heart into activities for the social goodness (Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020). They are not alone in the social activities. They invited their family members, relatives, friends and members of the community to be with them.

Excellence with *taqwa* allows for balanced and equity. *Taqwa* (piety) integrates soul, heart and mind to make a person with good morality and personality (Bhatti et al., 2015; Sarif, 2016; Duasa, Sarif & Sabian, 2020). It has the power to make a person persistent and resilient (Sarif, 2017; Tuerwahong & Sulaiman, 2018; Duasa et al., 2020).

This study argues that the role of *taqwa* (piety) is essential in making the activists and philanthropists persistent in sustaining social development. Thus, there is a need to develop more individuals who are ready and willing to be activists and philanthropists in making, maintaining and sustaining social development for sustainable human civilization. The main objective of this study is to explore the effect of *taqwa* (piety) on Islamic philanthropy for social development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Development
Social development is a study of integrating soul, mind, and character to produce ability and willingness of individual citizens in sustaining humanity civilization. A functional human civilization empowered individual citizens with freedom, justice and ambition to individuals to contribute goodness (Burchell, 1995; Skinner, 2003; Sani & Shah, 2020). Indeed, social development allows for building and sustaining good character, moral values, integrity and discipline (Appe & Oreg, 2020; Sani & Shah, 2020 Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020).

Education is essential in social development. Education allows for people to experience the mind, soul and behavior with good character, moral values, integrity and discipline (Conrad & Dunek, 2020; Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020). Essentially, these people have a good mind and heart to make goodness for themselves, their community, their society and nation (Appe & Oreg, 2020; Sani & Shah, 2020; Conrad & Dunek, 2020; Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020). They translated their good mind and heart into activities for the social goodness (Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020).

Excellence with soul enables individuals to be responsible to the society and nation. This situation has motivated some responsible citizens to work against social injustice, social illness, pollution and unemployment (Craven, 2011; Ragnedda & Muschert, 2013; Jennings et al., 2020). Despite the constraints in manpower, financial resources, and social support (Ginsberg, 2011; Kotsonis, 2020), these citizens continued to serve the society (Lewis, 2006;

Ginsberg, 2011; Aksoy & Bayram, 2020; Benito, Gil & Romera, 2020). The social consciousness drives them with energy, direction and persistence to keep serving the society.

Islamic Philanthropy
Philanthropy is about giving without expecting material gain. The power of giving is a manifestation of good mind and heart into activities for the social goodness (Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020). At any situation, the power of giving has no ending (Astrachan et al., 2020; Salleh et al., 2020). The power of giving as hidden gifts of helping comes with compassion and hope (Post, 2011). It is virtuous for oneself and others for betterment (Martin, 1994). It is also social empowerment for the benefit of the society (Saripudin, Djamil & Rodoni, 2020).

The inclusion of Islamic philanthropy into the national socio-economic agenda enhances social development on a sustainable basis (Hashim, 2020). The ultimate aim is for the well-being of the society (Rasool et al., 2020).

Malaysia's Experience Islamic Philanthropy
The impact of the coronavirus pandemic is huge on social and economic aspects. The number of deaths due to coronavirus infection is unbearable. A lockdown action has been taken to break the spread of the coronavirus. The lockdown has caused social and economic negative consequences. A stoppage to the economy means many industries are stopped. Thus, companies are laying off employees. Credibility and trusts are very important factors to gain public trust in supporting institutions of Islamic philanthropy (Abdullahi, 2020).

Education for philanthropy is necessary to make it a way of life (Arbain, 2020). It is derived fom volunteerism (Cebecioglu, 2020). Islamic philanthropy has tangible and intangible aspects (Azid, Al-Rawashdeh & Chaudhry, 2019).

The power of giving or philanthropy has been practiced in the family and society (Jomaa, 2016). It has an impact on social and economic development (Stolz & Lai, 2019). The inner strength to give and share has been strengthened with the intensity of giving perpetually (Kamil, et al., 2010). It is also a social obligation for every stakeholder (Dusuki, 2008).

Islamic education institutions have been mobilized with various Islamic social finance such as *waqf, infaq, sedekah,* and *zakat* (Harun, Possumah & Shafiai, 2016). The digital era enables wider participation into Islamic philanthrophy (Mahmud et al., 2019). The commercial sectors are not spared from making socio-economic contributions through Islamic social enterprises (Muhamed et al., 2016). The power of giving has been part of social norms and values in Malaysia (Astrachan et al., 2020; Salleh et al., 2020). The inclusion of Islamic philanthrophy into the national socio-economic agenda enhances social development on a sustainable basis (Hashim, 2020). The ultimate aim is for the well-being of the society (Rasool et al., 2020).

Taqwa
Taqwa (piety) integrates soul, heart and mind to make a person with good morality and personality (Bhatti et al., 2015; Sarif, 2016; Duasa, Sarif & Sabian, 2020). It has the power to make a person persistent and resilient (Sarif, 2017; Tuerwahong & Sulaiman, 2018; Duasa et al., 2020).

Taqwa is a manifestation of continuous efforts in making goodness and charity. According to Sidek et al. (2017), one should make serious and consistent efforts, namely firmly believe in

the oneness of Allah, do good to others, performing obligatory prayers (*solat*), paying zakat (including charity), honouring rights, always in repentance (*tawbah*), always do righteous deeds, *ma'aruf* (righteous) in communication (and conversations), always being grateful, always being sincere, and always in recognition of Allah as the most merciful.

The epistemological discussion on social development, Islamic philanthropy, and *taqwa* suggests that *taqwa* (piety) is essential in sustaining philanthropy for social development. *Taqwa* allows for individuals to be activists and philanthropists in social development agenda on a sustainable term. Thus, the study postulates that the sustainable effect of *taqwa* (piety) on Islamic philanthropy for social development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this study is to explore the effect of *taqwa* (piety) on Islamic philanthropy for social development. Since the nature of the study is to understand the context (Mays & Pope, 2020), the study uses qualitative research. This study used qualitative personal interviews to obtain the feedback from the informants. The feedback is not to generalize the results of the study but to provide deep understanding about the context (Lemon & Hayes, 2020; Natow, 2020; Tavory, 2020). The context is the effect of *taqwa* (piety) on Islamic philanthropy for social development within the community (Sidek et al., 2017; Duasa et al., 2020). The grounded results from the context provide a contingency view on organizational behavioral studies, practices and public policy for social development (Mays & Pope, 2020; Natow, 2020).

This study obtained feedback from five (5) community leaders through personal interviews. The study used semi-structured interview questions on the effect of *taqwa* (piety) on Islamic philanthropy for social development. Each interview consumed 40 minutes to 60 minutes. The respondents gave informed consent to participate in the personal interview with note-taking approach. Prior to analysis of the interview notes, the respondents verified the interview notes. The study also approached two independent researchers who are familiar with qualitative research. The main purpose of approaching other experts is to provide validation on the interview notes (Natow, 2020; Tavery, 2020). Prior to the fieldwork, the study consulted two subject matter experts in qualitative research to validate the research instruments. The study approached different experts for validation of the study in the forms of triangulation (Natow, 2020; Tavory, 2020).

The study analyzed the interview notes with content analysis manually. The analysis involved open coding, axial coding and selective coding of the interview notes. Figure 1 illustrates the analysis of interview results using a coding method.

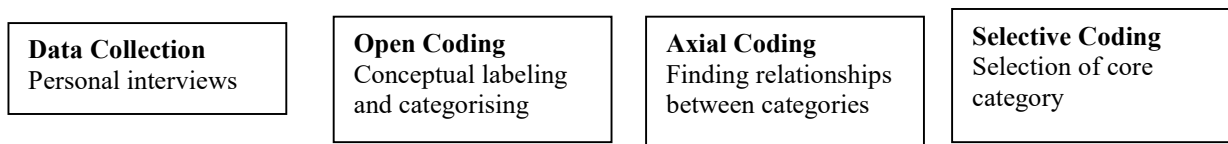| **Data Collection** Personal interviews	**Open Coding** Conceptual labeling and categorising	**Axial Coding** Finding relationships between categories	**Selective Coding** Selection of core category

Figure 1: Coding Method

Open coding is a method of analysing interview results (Burnard, 1991; Holton, 2007; Birks & Mills, 2015). One may use software such as ATLAS.ti (Friese, 2019). However, this study

used a manual coding process. As for axial coding, it enhanced categorization of interview results in the open coding (Scott & Medaugh, 2017; Richards & Hemphill, 2018).

In open coding, the study conducted two activities, namely familiarizing units of the lines, and conceptualizing the events or incidents, to produce categories of the incidents (Burnard, 1991; Richards & Hemphill, 2018). At axis coding, the study connects the categories with some concepts or models before conducting process analysis (Scott & Medaugh, 2017). Table 1 depicts the open coding and axial coding process.

Table 1: Open and Axial Coding Process

Question	Open Coding			Axial Coding	
	Quotes	Code	Category	Paradigm	Category
What made you and your members in this NGO sustain for many years in charity work?	"Our main goal is to serve our community." (CL 1)	Community	Dedication to make a difference	Driver of change	*Taqwa* in terms motivation to volunteer
	"Do whatever we can to solve the situation." (CL 2)	Solution			
	"…as a platform of us to get to know each." (CL 3)	Platform			

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The section presents the findings of the interview results with five community leaders the effect of *taqwa* (piety) on Islamic philanthropy for social development.

The community interest drives members of the community to make an effort on a voluntary basis to ensure the society is progressive with values. Community Leader (CL) 1 said:

"Non Government Organization is a non profit entity. All of us here are volunteers. No monetary gain after spending time, effort and our own money. Our main goal is to serve our community. It is not easy to maintain our volunteers. We cannot force them too. However, our commitment is to serve our community by making them better citizens. That is what made us still serving until today after more than 10 years. We have to work for a living too. Some of us are employees in the public and private sectors. Only a few owned small businesses. We are here with a common goal."

It is a social norms and values for people who vested interest in making the society progressive with values (Astrachan et al., 2020; Salleh et al., 2020). Members of the society who have the conscious about the benefit for the society (Saripudin, Djamil & Rodoni, 2020)

will attempt to build and sustain good character, moral values, integrity and discipline (Appe & Oreg, 2020; Sani & Shah, 2020 Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020).

Apart from community interest, the community needs sustainable solutions for all issues and problems. Community Leader (CL) 2 mentioned:

"No need to blame others when we see something wrong in our community. Do whatever we can to solve the situation. Our area is called the 'black' area due to a lot of criminals committed by the youth. The poverty situation made them drop out of schools. They joined other youth in criminal activities. We tried to educate them and bring them back to the mainstream. We were attacked by their criminal groups. Because of that, we slowed down. We are now providing programmes for the teenagers so that they will not be easily influenced to join the criminal world. Not all members of the society supported us."

Issued-based motivation may not last long due to limitation of manpower, financial resources, and support from the community (Ginsberg, 2011; Kotsonis, 2020). However, there may be the drive for persistence to rectify the social injustice, social illness, pollution and unemployment (Craven, 2011; Ragnedda & Muschert, 2013; Jennings et al., 2020).

A common interest for the community should have a platform for activities. Community Leader (CL) 3 argued:

"A neighbourhood watch body is not funded by the government although it is part of the government's initiative to promote unity and harmony in the society. We established this entity in our neighbourhood as a platform for us to get to know each other through community activities like sport activities, cooking classes, and gardening. We have been in the group for almost a decade. Our children also have grown up. They have benefited a lot from this body. In this group, all members must contribute in cash, in kind and more importantly in participation. That requires a lot of sacrifices. As leader, I also have to juggle between work, family, and this entity. The main driver for us to remain in this entity is the feeling of responsibility and accountability towards our society's betterment."

Involvement of all stakeholders is essential. Community Leader (CL) 4 stated that:

"Education starts from home. That's the reason for the saying charity begins at home. Everyone comes from home. Parents must educate their children with good morality. Neighborhoods should fill in the gap or anything that is missing from home education. The environment at home must be good to nurture children and family members. Similarly the environment of the neighbourhood. Then the society."

There is a need for collective duties and responsibilities. Community Leader (CL) 5 pointed out:

"Everyone has a stake in social development. It is good if everyone can work in an organized entity. Every individual's effort can be combined to give more impact to the target. Of course, it is not easy to work in a group with individuals from different backgrounds. That is the chance for us to get to know each other and to focus on a common goal. At our entity, we are just like a big family from different backgrounds, income status, social status, but with one mission. That is to make our society better. We have a succession plan too. We do not want only us. We young people are groomed too to replace us."

The feedback from the community leaders suggested that the effect of taqwa can be explained by social status in terms of social norms and values in Malaysia (Astrachan et al., 2020; Salleh et al., 2020) and the drive to make the right things for oneself and others (Saripudin, et al., 2020). However, there may be challenges by the limitations of manpower, financial resources, and support from the community (Ginsberg, 2011; Kotsonis, 2020). In doing so, the community leaders made consistent efforts in educating the community with the environment that encouraged good character, moral values, integrity and discipline (Appe & Oreg, 2020; Sani & Shah, 2020 Kotsonis, 2020; Nash et al., 2020). In the meantime, the community will continue to address social injustice, social illness, pollution and unemployment (Craven, 2011; Ragnedda & Muschert, 2013; Jennings et al., 2020).

In summary, the respondents argued that the effect of *taqwa* (piety) can be explained by social status, industrial exposure, and economics. The respondents suggested for *tarbiyyah* (education) and *biah solehah* (good environment) to nurture *taqwa* (piety).

Implications to practice

Taqwa (piety) approach in sustaining Islamic philanthropy for social businesses is essential. *Taqwa* has been related to ethics, integrity and shared values. The implications to practice will be immediately on the reinforcement and enforcement of code of ethics and code of professional conducts in the workplace.

Implications to theory

When *Taqwa* is related to ethics, integrity and shared values. This will have implications to some organizational behavior theories particularly reinforcement theory, path goal theory, enforcement theory, social exchange theory, and Tawhidic paradigm on workplace.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need for a powerful motivation driver to sustain social development. The physical and physiological power is inadequate to sustain a society with a balanced, just and prosperous society with the will power. The feedback from community leaders emphasized that the effect of *taqwa* (piety) on Islamic philanthropy for social development can be obtained from the will power of members in the society with vigilant education processes. In the meantime, there is a need of material support to sustain the operations, manpower, and maintenance of the social institutions and infrastructure. In other words, *taqwa* is not just spiritual or meta-physical, but also material and physical. The support from all stakeholders is essential to contribute with the spirit of Islamic social philanthropy to sustainable social development.

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