



Analysis of Determining Factors of the Effectiveness of Zakat-Based Economic Empowerment with the MICMAC Approach

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ABSTRACT

The literature on zakat-based economic empowerment is still dominated by evaluative approaches based on output and distribution ratios, with limited attention to the systemic structures that shape long-term effectiveness. This study fills this gap by applying a structural modeling approach using the MICMAC (*Matrix of Cross Impact Multiplication Applied to Classification*) method to map key determinants in the Lazismu Jepara economic empowerment system. Data were obtained through expert assessment and institutional document analysis, then analyzed based on the level of influence and dependency of variables within the system. The results indicate that fundraising growth, total ZIS collection, and total program disbursement serve as the main structural drivers, while economic independence, fund allocation effectiveness, and program continuity are systemic outcomes that are highly dependent on these configurations. These findings confirm that the sustainability of empowerment is not determined by the size of distribution alone, but by the institutional capacity to systematically manage resource dynamics. Theoretically, this study repositions zakat evaluation towards structural analysis; methodologically expands the use of MICMAC in Islamic philanthropy; and practically provides an evidence-based strategic framework for zakat institutional governance reform.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty and economic inequality remain persistent structural challenges in various developing countries, including Indonesia (Rinaldi et al., 2025). In the last decade, development literature has shown a shift from a state-centric approach to recognizing the role of non-state actors in expanding redistributive capacity and strengthening socio-economic resilience. Islamic philanthropy, in this context, is no longer understood solely as a charitable practice based on religious obligations, but rather as a socio-economic institution with transformational potential.

Zakat, infaq, and sedekah have evolved from instruments of consumptive redistribution to development tools based on distributive justice and productive empowerment. Productive zakat management has been proven to contribute to the sustainable improvement of the welfare of those entitled to receive zakat (Huda & Santoso, 2021). Thus, the effectiveness of zakat-based economic empowerment programs has become a strategic issue in the discourse on Islamic economics and global philanthropic governance.

The transformation of zakat towards a productive model demands professional, accountable, and evidence-based governance. Zakat institutions now operate within a complex social system, where program success is determined by the multidimensional interaction of institutional capacity, intervention design, mentoring mechanisms, and local socio-economic dynamics. The success of productive zakat programs is strongly influenced by managerial capacity and the sustainability of interventions (Mutmainah & Arifin, 2022). However, most studies on zakat effectiveness still focus on measuring administrative outputs or short-term outcomes. Studies that map the structural relationships between variables within a driver-effect framework using a structural modeling approach are still very limited. This gap creates a conceptual gap in the literature, as zakat program effectiveness is not solely a result of fund allocation, but rather a systemic configuration of interacting factors.

In this context, Lazismu, as the National Zakat Collection Institution affiliated with Muhammadiyah, holds a strategic position within the Indonesian Islamic philanthropic ecosystem. This institution develops a productive zakat paradigm through community-based economic, educational, and health empowerment programs. Lazismu goes beyond fund distribution but also develops an intervention model aimed at fostering systemic and sustainable independence for those entitled to receive zakat. As a relatively progressive institution in developing community empowerment models (Fauzia, 2023), Lazismu provides a relevant empirical context for examining the dynamics of productive zakat effectiveness in real-world institutional practice.

Lazismu Jepara Regency is a regional unit operating within a small and household-based economic structure. Based on its 2023 annual report and program report, the total disbursement of economic empowerment funds for the September–November period reached Rp1,334,757,116, with distributions reaching Rp597,812,747 in September, Rp325,072,317 in October, and Rp411,872,052 in November. This scale of distribution demonstrates significant institutional capacity at the district level. However, the magnitude of fund distribution does not automatically reflect the program's structural effectiveness. Evaluations based on nominal disbursements tend to be administrative in nature and fail to reveal the configuration of factors that shape the systemic success of interventions.

Lazismu Jepara's economic empowerment program includes business capital assistance, MSME mentoring, skills training, and strengthening family economic capacity. Although designed to encourage the independence of those eligible for zakat (mustahik), the program's effectiveness is largely determined by the interaction between human resource capacity, beneficiary selection mechanisms, mentoring design, and monitoring and evaluation systems. Weak mentoring has been identified as a factor reducing the impact of productive zakat (Rahman & Nugroho, 2021). These findings indicate that program effectiveness is the result of a systemic configuration, not a single, stand-alone variable.

Previous literature shows that studies of zakat effectiveness are still dominated by descriptive and partially evaluative approaches. Excessive focus on outcome indicators without analyzing the structural relationships between variables ignores the complexity of the empowerment system. In fact, zakat-based economic empowerment programs are complex adaptive systems involving interdependencies between institutional, social, financial, and environmental factors. A systems approach is needed to understand the dynamics of these interactions (Pratama et al., 2022). Thus, there is an urgent need to adopt methods capable of

identifying the main driving variables and structures of influence within a productive zakat system.

To address this gap, this study adopted a structural analysis approach using the MICMAC (Matrix of Cross Impact Multiplication Applied to Classification) method. This method allows for the classification of variables based on their level of influence and dependency within the system, thereby comprehensively identifying driving variables, linkage variables, and dependent variables. Unlike conventional evaluation approaches, MICMAC not only identifies critical factors but also maps the system architecture that shapes program effectiveness.

MICMAC has been widely used in policy studies and complex systems management to identify strategic determinants in interdependent environments. Sari and Wijaya (2023) demonstrated the effectiveness of MICMAC in community-based empowerment systems. An international study by Singh et al. (2021) also confirmed that MICMAC improves the quality of strategic decision-making by mapping the direct and indirect influences between variables. Thus, the application of MICMAC in the context of regional Islamic philanthropy is not only methodologically relevant but also broadens the analytical horizons in the Islamic philanthropy literature.

This study uses the 2023 annual report and program report of Lazismu Jepara Regency as the basis for empirical analysis. The report indicates an administrative effectiveness rate of 90.24% for zakat distribution. While this figure indicates excellent distribution performance, administrative effectiveness is not necessarily synonymous with structural effectiveness. Therefore, this study argues that systemic mapping is necessary to identify the key determinants that shape overall program performance.

Focusing on the context of Jepara Regency has both practical and academic significance. This region is dominated by small businesses and family economies, which are highly dependent on business sustainability and quality mentoring. The success of empowerment programs is heavily influenced by the local context and regional institutional capacity (Rofiq & Lestari, 2024). Thus, this area-based study provides a more contextual and relevant empirical contribution to the literature on productive zakat.

Conceptually, this research offers three main contributions. First, a theoretical contribution through a shift in zakat evaluation from an output-oriented approach to a structural system analysis based on variable configurations. Second, a methodological contribution through the application of MICMAC in Islamic philanthropy studies, which is still rare. Third, an empirical contribution through analysis based on actual district-level data, which enriches the global literature on productive zakat governance. Methodological innovation in zakat research is needed to strengthen the quality of evidence-based policy recommendations (Yusuf & Anwar, 2023).

Identifying key drivers has strategic implications for Lazismu's institutional sustainability. Factors such as human resource capacity, internal governance, and partner collaboration need to be prioritized based on their structural position within the system. Strengthening internal factors has been shown to significantly impact empowerment (Hasanah, 2021). Without systemic mapping, policy interventions risk being inefficient and suboptimal.

Practically, the MICMAC analysis results can serve as a decision-support framework for Lazismu managers in determining strategic priorities. Variable mapping allows for more targeted resource allocation under limited conditions. Furthermore, the findings of this study have the potential to be replicated in other regional zakat institutions. Transferring practices based on system structures can strengthen Islamic philanthropic governance nationally and contribute to the global discourse on the governance of faith-based social finance (Hidayat & Maulana, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study uses MICMAC to map the structure of influence and interdependence between variables in a zakat-based economic empowerment program. However, it is important to emphasize that MICMAC is a structural analysis tool (methodological tool) for classifying the position of variables in a system, not an explanatory theory. Without a theoretical foundation, MICMAC mapping risks being reduced to descriptive "software-driven reporting" and is difficult to claim as a conceptual contribution. Therefore, this study positions MICMAC as a method that is "anchored" by four theoretical foundations: (1) zakat-based empowerment theory, (2) institutional capacity theory, (3) Resource-Based View, and (4) Systems Theory.

Zakat-Based Empowerment Theory

Productive zakat is increasingly understood as an empowerment instrument that transforms beneficiaries from aid recipients into more independent economic actors through a combination of capital, mentoring, and capability building. From this perspective, "success" does not stop at the distribution of funds, but rather at the process of capacity building and business sustainability of beneficiaries. Empirical evidence shows that zakat support and business assistance are positively associated with beneficiary business growth and improved welfare, indicating that empowerment is multidimensional and cannot be explained by the amount of funding alone (Mawardi, 2023).

Findings related to empowerment programs run by zakat institutions in Indonesia also confirm that program effectiveness is supported by program priorities and the alignment of interventions with the potential of mustahik, not just output indicators (Herianingrum et al., 2024). Thus, the zakat-based empowerment framework in this study views outcomes as the result of the interaction between financial inputs and empowerment mechanisms (mentoring, selection, monitoring) that shape the program's leverage.

Institutional Capacity Theory

The effectiveness of zakat empowerment programs is determined by the institutional capacity of zakat management organizations to design, implement, monitor, and adapt interventions adaptively. Institutional capacity encompasses dimensions of governance, *amil* competence, management systems, accountability, and regulatory support, which shape the institution's credibility and quality of implementation. A recent study on zakat governance innovation highlighted that institutional issues (e.g., institutional capacity and regulatory imbalances) constitute structural barriers to improving zakat institution performance and their socio-economic impact (Widiastuti et al., 2025). In the broader nonprofit literature, organizational capacity mapping correlates with social performance and the organization's ability to sustain impact, thus understanding "capacity" as a systemic determinant rather than an additional variable (Nordin, 2022). In other words, when MICMAC identifies the variables "amil human resource capacity," "governance," or "monitoring-evaluation" as drivers, these can be theoretically explained as manifestations of institutional capacity, which is a prerequisite for achieving empowerment outcomes.

Resource-Based View (RBV) in the Context of Zakat Institutions

The RBV explains that organizational performance is shaped by the configuration of resources and capabilities, especially intangible ones (human capital, knowledge, routines, and relational capital), which enable the organization to execute strategies consistently and superiorly. Although the RBV emerged from the study of business organizations, this approach is increasingly relevant for social organizations because impact achievement also depends on the ability to manage resources and capabilities strategically. Empirical studies on the influence of organizational resources and learning capabilities on performance indicate that resource

utilization (tangible and intangible) and organizational capabilities are associated with improved performance (Yeboah & Zogli, 2025). In the context of zakat institutions, the logic of the RBV can be used to interpret variables such as the quality of human resources, information systems, the quality of partner networks, and managerial practices as "capabilities" that determine program effectiveness. This aligns with findings linking intellectual capital (as an intangible resource) to the performance of zakat institutions, emphasizing the importance of knowledge assets and organizational competencies in creating social value (Zakiy & Falikhatun, 2024). Thus, RBV provides a conceptual basis to explain why institutional internal variables can emerge as driving variables in the MICMAC map.

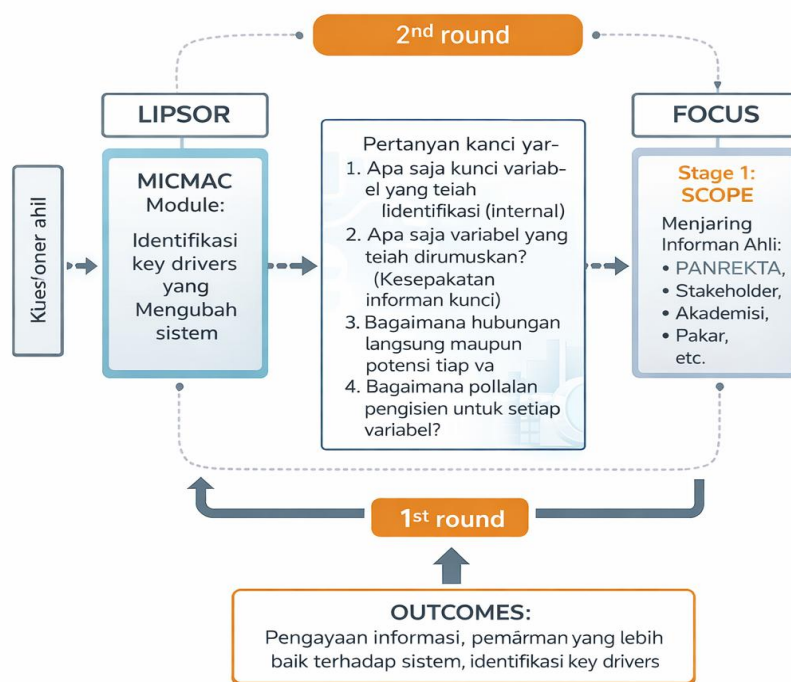
Systems Theory and Complex Adaptive Systems

The zakat empowerment program is a social system with many actors, rules, feedback loops, and interdependencies between components. Systems theory views changes in one element as triggering consequences for other elements, so program effectiveness is the result of the structure of relationships, not simply the sum of the components. The complex adaptive systems perspective emphasizes that socio-economic systems exhibit nonlinear dynamics, emergent outcomes, and actor adaptation to interventions. The complexity literature confirms that the complex adaptive systems framework helps explain the behavior of high-dimensional socio-ecological systems and supports the evaluation of alternative pathways in policy and sustainability (An et al., 2025). Other studies in complexity theory also emphasize that dynamic interactions between socio-economic dimensions produce emergent behavior, so analytical approaches need to capture interdependencies rather than just separate indicators (Ochoa et al., 2024). This framework is directly compatible with MICMAC: mapping driving linkage dependent variables is a way to operationalize a systemic view of interdependence, feedback loops, and influence structures in empowerment programs.

METHODS

Approach and Method of Analysis (MICMAC)

This study uses a structural analysis approach with the Matrix of Cross Impact Multiplication Applied to Classification (MICMAC) method to identify and analyze key factors influencing the effectiveness of the Lazismu Economic Empowerment Program in Jepara Regency. MICMAC was chosen because it is able to map the structure of influence and interdependence between variables in a complex social system, thus not only identifying important factors but also classifying the strategic position of variables within the system. In the context of this study, MICMAC is used to operationalize the systems approach to the zakat empowerment program, by placing variables into the categories of driving variables, linkage variables, dependent variables, and autonomous variables. Thus, this method allows for structural analysis that goes beyond output-based administrative evaluation. MICMAC in this study is positioned as an analytical tool, not as a theoretical framework, so that the interpretation of the results remains linked to the previously developed theoretical framework. This approach is relevant for an Islamic philanthropy-based empowerment system due to the multidimensional and interconnected nature of the program between aspects of collection, distribution, institutional capacity, and the economic impact of mustahik. Therefore, the use of MICMAC allows for the formulation of strategies based on the system structure, rather than simply based on a single indicator. The structural modeling tool in this study can be seen in the image below.

Figure 1. Framework of MICMAC

Source: Rosalinda et al., (2023).

Figure 1 illustrates the MICMAC analysis framework used in this study. The process begins with the scope definition stage, followed by the identification of key variables through the first round. In the second round, clarification and consensus were established to ensure the validity of the relationships between variables before constructing a direct influence matrix. This framework emphasizes the iterative nature of the MICMAC analysis in this study and the consensus-based nature of expert data.

Research Location and Object

This research was conducted in Jepara Regency, Central Java Province, with the Economic Empowerment Program managed by Lazismu Jepara Regency as the research object. The location was selected purposively, considering that Lazismu Jepara is a regional zakat institution that actively manages and distributes ZIS funds on a significant scale and has systematic program documentation. The research focuses on fundraising mechanisms, distribution patterns for productive economic programs, and the effectiveness of program implementation, as reflected in program reports and financial statements. Thus, Lazismu Jepara is positioned as a unified economic empowerment system, analyzed structurally.

Data Types and Sources

a. Primary Data

Primary data was obtained through expert judgment in the form of a Matrix of Direct Influence (MDI). Experts were asked to assess the direct relationship between variables using the MICMAC scale.

0 = no influence (non-existent)

1 = weak influence (low direct influence)

2 = medium influence (medium direct influence)

3 = strong influence (high direct influence)

P = potential (potential influence)

b. Secondary Data

Meanwhile, secondary data was sourced from official documents of Lazismu Jepara Regency, specifically program report recaps and quarterly financial reports, which include data on ZIS fund collection, fund distribution per program, and economic empowerment fund allocation. In addition, secondary data was also obtained from scientific journals, books, research reports, and policy documents relevant to zakat management and community economic empowerment. Measurement of the relationship between variables in the MICMAC matrix was carried out with the following provisions:

This scale is used to describe the level of direct influence between variables in the Lazismu Jepara economic empowerment system.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure data validity and reliability:

- a. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing the results of expert judgment with secondary data from program reports and theoretical literature.
- b. Expert Consensus was implemented through a limited discussion process after the initial matrix was filled in to clarify extreme differences in assessments.
- c. Reliability Judgment is carried out by calculating inter-rater agreement using a proportional agreement approach to the dominant scores for each pair of variables.
- d. The iterative process in MICMAC helps validate the stability of variable classification after repeated matrix multiplication.

This approach ensures that the mapping results do not depend solely on one subjective perspective.

Informant Selection Techniques

The informant selection technique used expert-based purposive sampling. The number of informants in this study involved 7 experts, consisting of:

- a. 2 core managers of Lazismu Jepara Regency
- b. 2 assistants for productive economic programs
- c. 2 academics in the field of Islamic economics/zakat
- d. 1 regional level Islamic philanthropy practitioner.

A minimum of seven experts was considered sufficient in the MICMAC study because structural analysis does not require a large sample size, but rather a depth of systemic knowledge. In expert judgment-based analysis, the quality and competence of informants are more important than quantity. A minimum of five to ten experts is generally considered sufficient to achieve a stable influence matrix in complex systems studies. Selection criteria include:

- a. Minimum 3 years experience in zakat management or studies
- b. Direct involvement in program planning or evaluation
- c. Understanding the institutional dynamics of Lazismu

This approach ensures that the assessment of the relationship between variables is informed judgment and contextual.

Identification of Variables/Attributes

Variable identification was conducted through 1) a study of Lazismu Jepara's quarterly report documents; 2) initial discussions with managers; and 3) a literature review related to the effectiveness of productive zakat. The results of this identification can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Identification of Variables/Attributes

MICMAC VARIABLE LIST				
Based on the Data Recapitulation of the Lazismu Jepara Regency Quarterly Program Report				
No	Long Label	Short Label	Theme	Description
1	Total ZIS Fund Collection	TPD	Collection	Total zakat, infak and alms funds collected per quarter
2	Zakat Fund Collection	ZKT	Collection	Amount of zakat funds collected per period
3	Alms Fund Collection	IFK	Collection	The amount of alms funds received by Lazismu
4	Charity Fundraising	SDK	Collection	Amount of alms collected
5	Fundraising Growth	PPD	Collection	Changes in the amount of funds between quarters
6	Total Program Fund Disbursement	TSD	Distribution	Total funds distributed to all programs
7	Distribution of Productive Economic Programs	PEP	Distribution	Funds allocated specifically for economic empowerment
8	Distribution of Social Programs	PSO	Distribution	Funds for non-economic social programs
9	Consistency of Program Distribution	Tax Office	Distribution	Stability of fund distribution between quarters
10	Proportion of Economic Program Funds	PPE	Program	Percentage of economic funds to total distribution
11	Economic Program Variations	VPE	Program	Number and type of economic programs implemented
12	Program Financing Intensity	IPP	Program	Amount of funds per economic program
13	Continuity of Economic Programs	KPE	Impact	Sustainability of economic programs between quarters
14	Effectiveness of Fund Allocation	EAD	Impact	Conformity between collection and distribution
15	Driving Force of Economic Independence	DKE	Impact	The potential of economic programs to encourage the independence of mustahik based on the size and consistency of funds

A total of 15 variables were identified and classified into the themes of collection, distribution, programs, and impact. These variables are presented in Table 1, as previously formulated. Variable selection is carried out by considering empirical relevance, consistency of data reports, and their relationship to the dimensions of program effectiveness.

Data Analysis Techniques (MICMAC)

The data analysis process in this study was conducted through systematic stages using the Matrix of Cross Impact Multiplication Applied to Classification (MICMAC) method. Each stage was designed to ensure that the variable mapping results comprehensively reflect the structure of the economic empowerment system and are methodologically sound. These stages are described as follows:

a. Variable Identification

The initial stage in the MICMAC analysis is the identification of variables that represent the main elements of the Lazismu Jepara Regency economic empowerment system. This process is carried out through a review of program report documents and financial reports, initial discussions with managers, and alignment with the research's theoretical framework. The identified variables are then selected to avoid conceptual redundancy and ensure that each variable has empirical relevance and a structural contribution to the system. The result of this stage is a final list of variables that are treated as interacting system components and serve as the basis for forming an influence matrix.

b. Expert Assessment

Once the variables are defined, the next stage is the assessment of direct relationships between them by experts (expert judgment). Each expert is asked to rate the level of influence of one variable on another using an ordinal scale of 0 to 3, with the symbol P for potential influence. Assessments are conducted independently to minimize collective bias and ensure the objectivity of the analysis. This process aims to capture the experts' systemic understanding of the dynamics of interactions between variables in economic empowerment programs. The results of individual assessments are then compiled to form the quantitative basis for the structural analysis.

c. Matrix Compilation

At this stage, the expert assessment results are compiled into a Matrix of Direct Influence (MDI) that represents the direct influence relationship between variables in the system. The matrix is square with dimensions of $n \times n$, where each row shows the influence of one variable on another variable, while each column represents the degree of dependence of the variable on other variables. The diagonal value is set to zero because the variable does not influence itself. The general structure of the direct influence matrix in this study is shown in Table 2. This matrix is the basis for calculating the influence (number of rows) and dependence (number of columns) values, which are then used in the iteration process and quadrant mapping.

Table 2. Relationship between variables in MICMAC

	V1	V2	V3....	Vn	Influence (Y-Axis)
V1	0	(V1,V2)	(V1,V3)	(V1,Vn)	$\sum (\text{Var1-j})$
V2	(V2,V1)	0	(V2,V3)	(V2,Vn)	
V3.....	(V3,V1)	(V3,V2)	0	(V3,Vn)	
Vn	(Vn,V1)	(Vn,V2)	(Vn,V3)	0	
Dependence (X-Axis)	$\sum (\text{Varj-1})$				

Source: Gunawan et al., (2022).

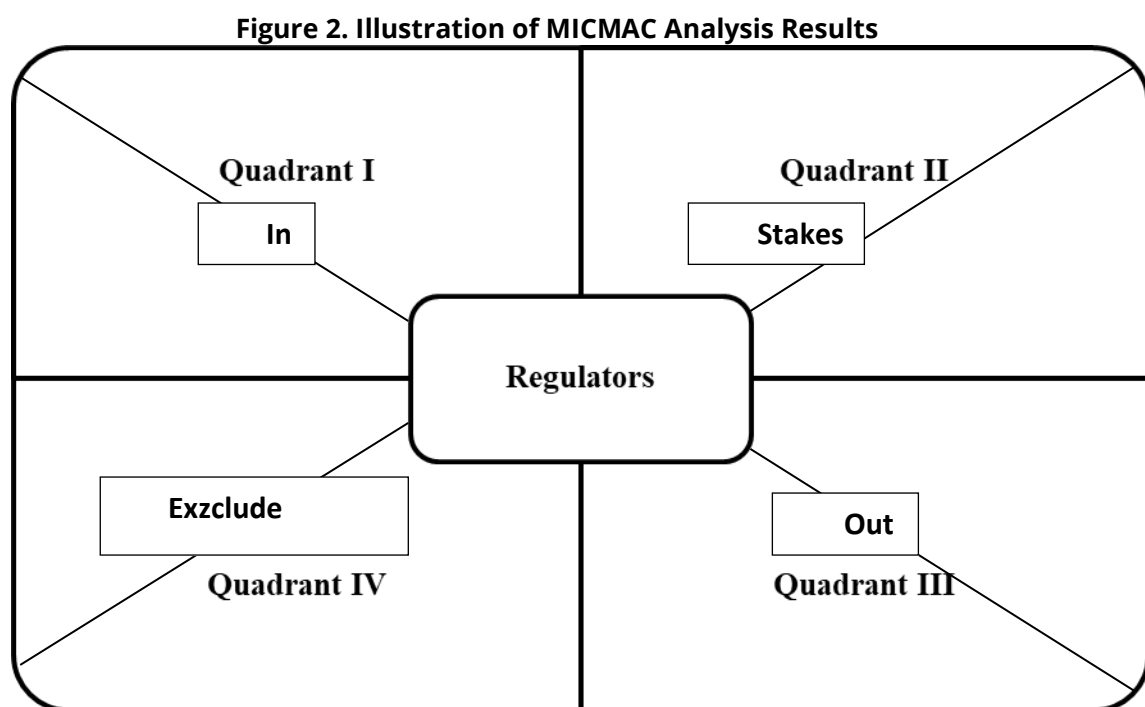
This matrix serves as a formal representation of the structure of direct influences in the system, which is then used to calculate total influence and dependence and to perform indirect influence analysis through an iterative process.

d. Literacy

To identify not only direct but also indirect influences between variables, an iterative process using matrix multiplication is performed. This iteration aims to capture the effects of chain interactions that may occur in complex systems. The process is stopped when the variable classification shows stability, that is, when changes in influence and dependence values between iterations no longer result in significant shifts in the variable's position in the quadrant map. This stage is crucial because the economic empowerment system is dynamic and interdependent, so analysis cannot be limited to direct relationships alone.

e. Mapping

After the total *influence* and *dependence* values are calculated based on the structural matrix that has reached a stable state, each variable is then projected into a two-dimensional influence–dependence space to reveal the systemic configuration of the analyzed model. This mapping stage is the main analytical output in the MICMAC procedure, as it allows the identification of structural driving variables, sensitive connecting variables, outcome variables (outputs), and relatively autonomous elements within the system. The resulting structural map is presented in Figure 2.



Source: Godet, (2021)

Based on the influence and dependence values obtained from the final matrix, each variable is plotted into a two-dimensional diagram as shown in Figure 2. This diagram classifies variables into four quadrants: driving variables (Quadrant I), linkage variables (Quadrant II), dependent variables (Quadrant III), and autonomous variables (Quadrant IV). This mapping allows the identification of system elements that act as key drivers, sensitive variables, outcome variables, and variables that are relatively independent of the core dynamics of the system.

f. Interpretation

The final stage is the interpretation of the mapping results by linking the structural positions of the variables to the research's theoretical framework. Variables in the *driving category* are analyzed as strategic determinants that have high leverage on program effectiveness, while variables in the *dependent category* are understood as structural outcomes of the system configuration. Interpretation is carried out analytically by considering zakat-based

empowerment theory, institutional capacity, *resource-based view* , and *systems theory* . Thus, the MICMAC analysis does not stop at quadrant classification, but produces a conceptual understanding of how variable interactions shape the effectiveness of the Lazismu Jepara Regency Economic Empowerment Program.

RESULTS

Based on the results of questionnaire distribution and FGDs, the relationships between variables in the Lazismu economic empowerment system in Jepara Regency were successfully quantified and compiled into a Direct Influence Matrix (Table 3). This matrix not only represents the numerical interactions between variables but also illustrates the causal structure of the system that shapes program effectiveness. Through MICMAC analysis, the matrix was projected onto an influence-dependence map (Figure 3) to identify the system's overall structural configuration.

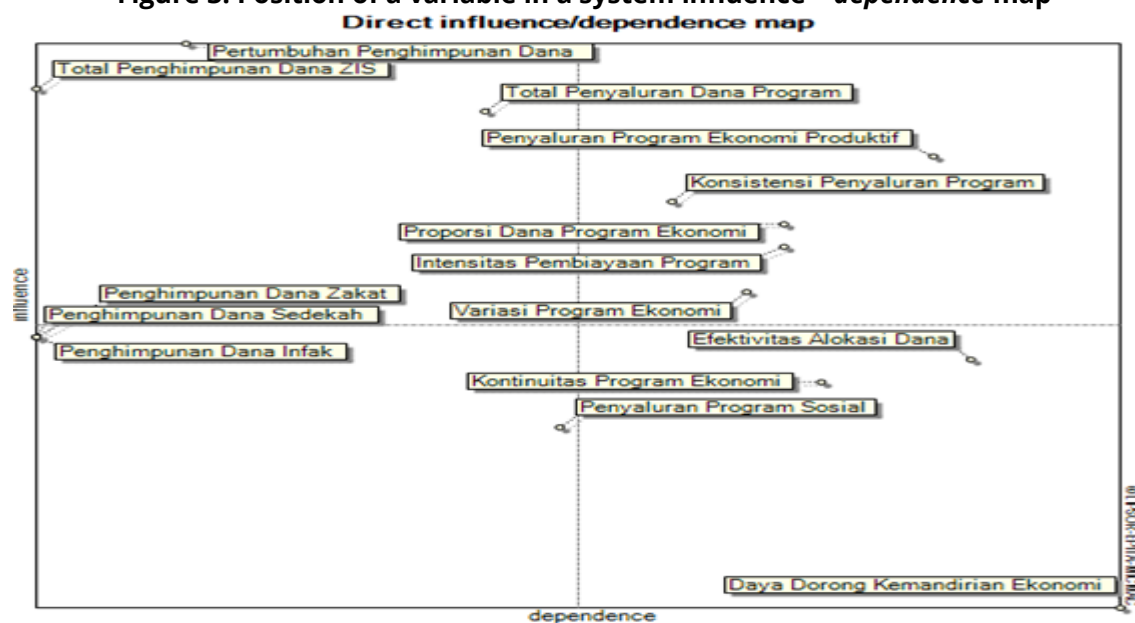
Table 3. Matrix of Direct Influence (*Matrix of Direct Influence*) from MICMAC 2026 data

	1: TPD	2: ZKT	3: IFK	4: SDK	5: PPD	6: TSD	7: PEP	8: PSO	9: KPP	10: PPE	11: VPE	12: IPP	13: KPE	14: EAD	15: DKE
1 : TPD	0	0	0	0	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
2 : ZKT	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
3 : IFK	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
4 : SDK	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
5 : PPD	1	1	1	1	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
6 : TSD	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3
7 : PEP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	2	3	3	3	3
8 : PSO	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
9 : KPP	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	2	2	2	3	3	2
10 : PPE	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	2	2	3	3	2
11 : VPE	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	2	3	2	2
12 : IPP	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	2	2	0	3	2	3
13 : KPE	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	3
14 : EAD	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	3
15 : DKE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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processing

Figure 3. Position of a variable in a system influence - dependence map



System Structure Based on Direct Influence (MDI)

The mapping results show that the Lazismu Jepara Regency economic empowerment system has a clear hierarchical structure, with the dominant variable of fundraising as the main driver of the system.

Table 4. Matrix of sum direct influence results of MICMAC Data Processing (2026)

N°	VARIABLE	TOTAL NUMBER OF ROWS	TOTAL NUMBER OF COLUMNS
1	Total ZIS Fund Collection	23	1
2	Zakat Fund Collection	12	1
3	Alms Fund Collection	12	1
4	Charity Fundraising	12	1
5	Growth Fundraising	25	5
6	Total Program Fund Disbursement	22	13
7	Distribution of Productive Economic Programs	20	25
8	Distribution of Social Programs	8	15
9	Consistency Program Distribution	18	18
10	Proportion of Economic Program Funds	17	21
11	Economic Program Variations	14	20
12	Intensity Program Financing	16	21
13	Continuity of Economic Programs	10	22
14	Effectiveness Allocation of Funds	11	26
15	Driving Force of Economic Independence	0	30
	Totals	220	220

Based on the total influence (Table 4), the three variables with the highest driving power are:

- 1) Fundraising Growth (PPD)
- 2) Total ZIS Fund Collection (TPD)
- 3) Total Program Fund Disbursement (TSD)

These findings demonstrate that the dynamics of growth and fundraising capacity are not merely financial indicators, but rather structural determinants that shape the overall system configuration. The dominance of PPD and TPD indicates that the system's sustainability is highly dependent on the institution's ability to secure and increase resources. In other words, the effectiveness of an empowerment program does not begin with outcomes, but rather with the strength of the fundraising base and the consistency of fund allocation.

Distribution of Productive Economic Programs (PEP), Consistency of Program Distribution (KPP), Proportion of Economic Program Funds (PPE), Program Financing Intensity (IPP), and Variation of Economic Programs (VPE) are in the high influence–high dependency quadrant. This position indicates that these variables function as strategic mediators linking collection capacity with the final program outcomes. This linkage characteristic indicates that small changes in the collection variables will immediately trigger a chain effect on the design and quality of implementation of productive economic programs.

Based on the highest level of dependency, the three variables that represent the system outcome are:

- 1) Driving Force of Economic Independence (DKE)
- 2) Effectiveness of Fund Allocation (EAD)

3) Continuity of Economic Program (KPE)

DKE emerged as the variable with the highest dependency, indicating that the economic independence of mustahik is the end result of the structural configuration of the system. This position emphasizes that independence cannot stand alone but is the accumulation of stable collection, consistent distribution, and effective program management. Variables such as ZKT, IFK, SDK, and PSO are in the autonomous quadrant. This position indicates that these variables are relatively insignificant determinants of the core dynamics of economic empowerment, although they still contribute administratively.

Structural Characteristics of Matrix

Table 5. Matrix of characteristics (*Matrix of characteristics*) of MICMAC Data Processing Results (2026)

INDICATOR	VALUE
Matrix size	15
Number of iterations	3
Number of zeros	97
Number of ones	59
Number of twos	46
Number of threes	23
Number of P	0
Total	128
Fill rate	56.88889%

Table 5 shows that a 15×15 matrix with a fill rate of 56.89% reflects a system with a moderate level of interconnection. The dominance of influence values 1 and 2 indicates that the system was built through a gradual influence mechanism, rather than by the extreme dominance of a single variable. The stability achieved in the second and third iterations indicates that the system configuration has reached a state of structural equilibrium, so the classification results can be considered robust and consistent.

Indirect Influence Structure (IIM)

Table 6 Matrix of sum indirect influence from MICMAC Data Processing (2026)

	1: TPD	2: ZKT	3: IFK	4: SDK	5: PPD	6: TSD	7: FEP	8: PSO	9: KPP	10: PPE	11: VPE	12: IPP	13: KPE	14: EAD	15: DKE
1: TPD	10	10	10	10	0	353	4472	2721	3722	5129	4790	5129	7573	6877	9403
2: ZKT	5	5	5	5	0	190	2439	1486	2036	2804	2615	2804	4137	3756	5142
3: IFK	5	5	5	5	0	190	2439	1486	2036	2804	2615	2804	4137	3756	5142
4: SDK	5	5	5	5	0	190	2439	1486	2036	2804	2615	2804	4137	3756	5142
5: PPD	0	0	0	0	25	387	4700	2845	3886	5366	5019	5366	7920	7203	9846
6: TSD	0	0	0	0	0	239	3237	1965	2693	3750	3493	3750	5550	5022	6917
7: FEP	0	0	0	0	0	203	2718	1630	2204	3070	2903	3070	4607	4157	5721
8: PSO	0	0	0	0	0	91	1224	742	1014	1414	1319	1414	2097	1897	2609
9: KPP	0	0	0	0	0	183	2617	1584	2181	3004	2807	3004	4453	4037	5580
10: PPE	0	0	0	0	0	154	2163	1318	1817	2522	2332	2506	3709	3351	4643
11: VPE	0	0	0	0	0	137	1895	1132	1551	2144	2029	2144	3197	2907	4004
12: IPP	0	0	0	0	0	148	2062	1251	1732	2393	2225	2409	3531	3219	4421
13: KPE	0	0	0	0	0	92	1231	752	1019	1423	1327	1423	2120	1902	2626
14: EAD	0	0	0	0	0	97	1326	797	1100	1528	1427	1528	2256	2056	2824
15: DKE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

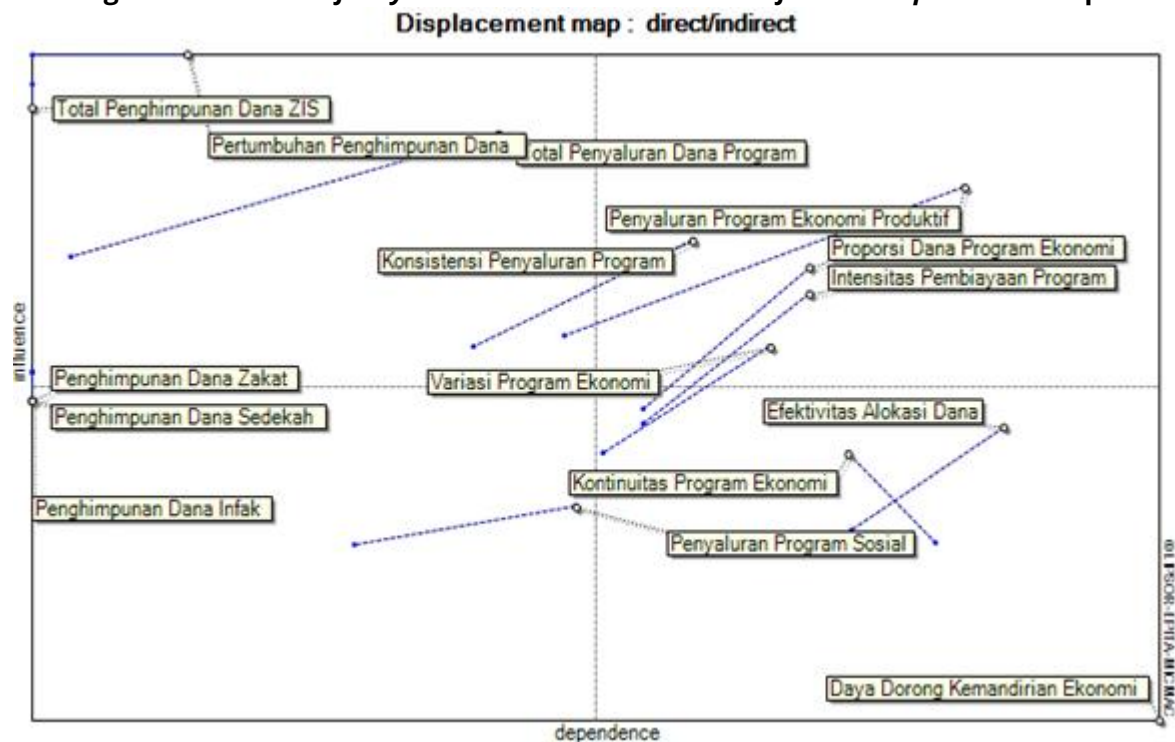
The indirect effect analysis (Table 6) shows that Fund Collection Growth (PPD) and Total ZIS Fund Collection (TPD) remain the dominant drivers in the long term. This indicates that strengthening fund collection capacity has a domino effect that spreads throughout the system. Conversely, Economic Independence Drive (DKE) remains the most dependent variable,

confirming that program outcomes are the cumulative result of multiple interactions between variables. The consistency between the MDI and MII results indicates that the system structure is relatively stable and has not undergone drastic changes due to indirect influences.

System Configuration and Multi-Level Mechanism

The displacement map (Figure 4) shows that most variables did not experience significant quadrant shifts between the direct and indirect analyses. This confirms that the Jepara Regency Lazizmu economic empowerment system has a robust structural configuration.

Figure 4. Position Of A System Variable In The Direct Influence/Dependence Map



The system structure can be summarized in a hierarchical mechanism as follows:

Fundraising → Distribution Pattern → Program Design → Independence Outcome.

This research produces three main structural findings: 1) The system is dominated by fundraising capacity as the primary structural driver; 2) Distribution variables and program design function as sensitive strategic mediators; and 3) The economic independence of mustahik is a systemic outcome that is highly dependent on the stability and consistency of the fundraising and management structure. Thus, the effectiveness of the program is not a simple linear one, but rather is formed by a multi-level causal relationship, where strengthening the collection side and consistency of distribution are the main prerequisites for achieving sustainable economic independence for mustahik.

DISCUSSION

Theoretical Integration

The findings of this study provide empirical confirmation of the zakat-based empowerment framework, institutional capacity theory, resource-based view, and systems theory simultaneously.

First, the emergence of PPD and TPD as driving variables strengthens the argument of zakat empowerment theory that sustainable resource mobilization is a precondition for empowerment transformation. Mawardi (2023) in the Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research showed that the impact of productive zakat is significantly influenced by the sustainability of financial support and the quality of intervention governance. This study expands on these findings by demonstrating that the collection variable is not merely a supporting factor but also a structural determinant. Second, the dominance of collection and distribution variables as system drivers confirms the relevance of Institutional Capacity Theory. Widiastuti et al. (2026) in the Journal of Open Innovation demonstrated that governance capacity is key to strengthening zakat performance systematically. In the context of Lazismu Jepara, PPD and TPD can be interpreted as indicators of institutional capacity in managing public legitimacy and trust.

Third, from a Resource-Based View (RBV) perspective, these results indicate that empowerment program performance is determined by an organization's ability to manage strategic resources. Yeboah & Zogli (2025) in Scientific African assert that organizational capabilities and resource management influence long-term performance. In this study, resource mobilization capacity emerged as a core capability that determines system architecture. Fourth, the configuration of linkage variables confirms the validity of Systems Theory. The zakat empowerment system is shown to operate as a complex adaptive system where small changes in drivers trigger cascading effects on program structure and outcomes. This aligns with An et al.'s (2025) findings on the dynamics of complex adaptive systems in a socio-economic context.

Thus, this study not only maps variables, but verifies cross-framework theoretical interactions in the context of regional Islamic philanthropy.

Comparison with Previous Studies

In contrast to the study by Huda & Santoso (2021), which emphasized fund stability as an important factor in productive zakat, this study shows that fund growth (growth dynamics) is more determining than nominal stability alone. Herianingrum et al.'s (2024) study emphasized zakat as an instrument for national poverty alleviation, but failed to systematically map the structure of inter-variable influences. This research fills this gap by demonstrating that empowerment outcomes are the result of a multi-layered structural configuration. In the context of philanthropic governance, Zakiy & Falikhatun (2024) highlighted the role of intellectual capital in zakat performance. This study expands this perspective by demonstrating that intellectual and financial resources operate within a systemic structure, rather than as independent factors. Thus, the study's primary contribution lies in shifting from a partial evaluative approach to structural modeling of zakat empowerment.

Policy Implication

These findings have significant policy implications. First, strategies to increase the independence of mustahik should not start from program redesign alone, but from strengthening the collection capacity and institutional trust building; Second, linkage variables such as PEP, PPE, and IPP must be managed with an adaptive management approach, because they are sensitive to system changes; Third, regional zakat institutions need to adopt a systems approach in strategic planning. Without structural mapping, policies risk being reactive and unfocused; and Fourth, the MICMAC model can be integrated into the monitoring-evaluation system as an early warning system to identify sensitive variables.

Conceptually, this study proposes that the effectiveness of productive zakat should be understood as a structurally configured outcome that emerges from the dynamics of institutional resources and systemic interdependencies. This means that effectiveness is not just a distribution ratio or number of beneficiaries, but the result of the configuration of relationships between elements in the empowerment system. This study also shows that in the context of

Islamic philanthropy, resource mobilization capacity functions as a meta-driver, namely a variable that shapes the overall system architecture.

If zakat institutions want to sustainably increase the independence of those who mustahik (recipients of Islamic charity), the policy focus must not stop at fund distribution or program innovation alone. These findings demonstrate that sustainable structural empowerment is based on institutional resource growth and consistent allocation. In other words, successful empowerment is not the result of a single intervention, but rather the result of a stable, adaptive, and institutionally capacity-based system structure. This research provides a strategic message that zakat governance reform must begin with strengthening collection capacity, resource management, and systemic integration across programs.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the effectiveness of the Lazismu Economic Empowerment Program in Jepara Regency is not determined by a single variable, but rather by a hierarchical and interdependent structural configuration. MICMAC analysis identifies Fund Collection Growth (PPD), Total ZIS Fund Collection (TPD), and Total Program Fund Distribution (TSD) as the three main system drivers (top structural drivers), while Economic Independence Drive (DKE), Fund Allocation Effectiveness (EAD), and Economic Program Continuity (KPE) emerge as the most dependent systemic outcomes (top systemic outcomes). This structure confirms that the economic independence of mustahik is the result of a hierarchical mechanism: collection capacity → distribution consistency → program design → empowerment outcomes. Theoretically, this study shifts the paradigm of zakat evaluation from an output-based approach to a structural analysis based on system configuration, by integrating zakat empowerment theory, institutional capacity, resource-based view , and systems theory . Methodologically, the application of MICMAC in the context of Islamic philanthropy broadens the analytical approach in the study of productive zakat and demonstrates that structural modeling can be used to identify strategic determinants in complex systems.

Practically, these findings provide policy implications that strengthening the independence of mustahik must begin with strengthening the capacity to collect and consistently allocate funds as the structural foundation of the system, not solely on program innovation. The resulting model can serve as a decision-support tool for Lazismu in formulating strategic priorities based on the structure of variable influences. However, this study is limited by its single-case scope and reliance on expert judgment , so generalizing the findings requires caution. Future research is recommended to test this model in different institutional contexts and integrate advanced quantitative methods to strengthen structural validation. Overall, this study confirms that the sustainability of productive zakat empowerment is the result of a systemic configuration rooted in institutional capacity and resource management dynamics. Therefore, zakat governance reform needs to be directed at strengthening the structure, not just distribution indicators.

SUGGESTION

This research has several limitations. First, the study focused on the Lazismu Economic Empowerment Program in Jepara Regency, so the findings are contextual and not intended for broad generalization. Second, the data used is limited to the 2023 program and financial reports and expert judgment, thus not capturing long-term dynamics. Third, the analysis used the MICMAC method, which emphasizes structural relationships between variables, rather than directly measuring welfare impacts. Furthermore, the variables analyzed are limited to indicators available in institutional reports, so external factors outside the system are not analyzed in depth.

RESEARCH TRANSPARENCY AND ETHICS STATEMENTS

1. **DTH:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Collection, Data Analysis,
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6. **Research Ethics:**
The study did not involve any intervention, biological specimens, vulnerable groups, or sensitive personal data. Participation was voluntary, and the confidentiality of the respondents was maintained.
7. **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):**
No use of ai. The authors declare that generative ai was not used in the preparation of this article.

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