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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF *BELANJA DAPUR* MYDIN
PROGRAM: AN ANALYSIS OF UiTM ASNAF STUDENTS,
JOHOR BRANCH, SEGAMAT CAMPUS

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Abstract:

Belanja Dapur Mydin program is one-off initiatives organized by zakat unit of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Johor in collaboration with Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Johor (MAINJ). The program is implemented to help the non-resident of *asnaf* zakat of UiTM Johor in purchasing food stuff for their daily lives. This research is conducted to study the impact of financial aid from the implementation of the program to the *asnaf* students. This is to ensure that they can satisfy their daily necessities to survive in university life other than focus on their academic performance. This study uses qualitative method by using semi-structured interviews. The interview involves 10 non-residents of *asnaf* students of UiTM Johor. The interview is analyzed by using thematic approach. The result of the study shows that the informants give positive feedback after joining the program. It can be classified into freedom of finance and choice, economic benefit and daily support, appreciation and long-term hope, value of spirit and prayer and program improvement of time constraint. In conclusion, the program gives a big and positive impact towards *asnaf* students in terms of purchasing food for daily needs. It is also suggested that this sort of program needs to be implemented frequently with the involvement and collaboration of various organizations like educational institutions, non-governmental organization or private sectors. It is very important to ensure the program conducted remain competitive and give a long-term impact towards the *asnaf* students.

Keywords:

Asnaf Students, Financial Aid, *Belanja Dapur* Program.

Introduction

University student life requires academic commitment, financial and emotional stability. Students which come from low-income families or those classified as poor and needy frequently encounter numerous challenges at the campus in fulfilling daily necessities such as food supplies. Alias (2023) has stated that student from B40 family had to do food rationing other than depending on the National Higher Education Fund Corporation (PTPTN) to cover the tuition fees and other costs such as rental house.

In achieving the social responsibility of higher education university, zakat unit of Universiti Teknologi MARA Johor Branch in collaboration with Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Johor Segamat District has implemented program of *Belanja Dapur*. This is one of the proactive efforts to help *asnaf* students in making their life less burden and much easier. The aim of this program is to provide them with daily needs so they may live at the campus comfortably and concentrate with their academics without facing serious financial problem.

Therefore, this research is conducted to study the impact of financial aid from the implementation of *Belanja Dapur* program to the *asnaf* students. This is to ensure that the *asnaf* students meet daily needs in surviving in the university life other than concentrating on their studies and improving their academic performance.

Literature Review

Zakat and Asnaf in Higher Education Institution

Zakat is a compulsory act of worship in the third pillar of Islam. The aim of zakat is to meet the economic demands of Muslims in particular. The collection and distribution of zakat involving the *baitulmal* has been carried out since the reign of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. It will be distributed to chosen *asnaf* based on the availability of zakat resources. *Asnaf* is a group mentioned in the Quran as follows:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds), for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to Truth), for those in bondage and in debt, in the cause of Allah. and for the wayfarer, (thus is it) ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom. (At-Taubah: 60)

According to Imam Syafii, the poor (*faqir*) are people that do not have property and job that can meet their living needs. The poor are those who do not have family or relatives whether spouses, parents or descendants who can help or provide for their living needs. Meanwhile, the needy people (*masakin*) have jobs that meet some of their living needs but are still not enough (Hakim, 2023).

Referring to the al-Quran, Thaib (2022) in the writing of the study stated that there are several vocabulary words about poverty besides the words *miskin* and *faqir*. Among them are poverty (*al-maskanat*), poverty (*al-faqr*), suffering from deprivation (*al-'ailat*), hardship (*al-ba'sa*), lack of wealth (*al-imlaq*), beggar (*al-sa'il*), helpless (*al-mahrum*), needing help (*al-mu'tar*) and weak (*da'if*). These terms give meaning to a certain poverty that originally was the poor and its stages are different.

In the higher education institution, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) distribute zakat to five categories of *asnaf* namely *faqir*, *masakin*, *fi sabilillah*, *mualaf* and *ibn sabil* (Ismail & Ali, 2021). Meanwhile, the term *asnaf fakir* at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) refers to students who also struggle to meet their basic needs and their family income is less than fifty percent of *had al-kifayah* even though it does not reach one hundred percent. At Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), this category includes students whose monthly family income falls between RM 1500.00 and RM 1500.00 (Hashim et. al., 2024).

For *asnaf miskin*, UTM interprets it as students who are unable to meet the necessities of life like food, accommodation, medical, education and transportation at UTM. Family income is more than fifty percent of *had al-kifayah* but does not reach hundred percent of *had al-kifayah*. While UTeM students whose family income is between RM 1500.00 to RM4850.00 per month. Similarly, in other universities, there are specific categories for information so that distribution is fair (Hashim et. al., 2024).

Year	Zakat Collection	Zakat Distribution
2022	RM12,026,045.86	RM6,455,544.94
2021	RM12,145,000.21	RM6,136,062.11
2020	RM10,701,509.80	RM5,952,651.91

Table 1: Analysis of UiTM Zakat Distribution

Table 1 is a data from Bahagian Zakat Sedekah dan Wakaf, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam. In 2022, zakat distribution increased by RM319,482.83 compared to 2021. This shows that zakat applications have increased from year to year (Bahagian Zakat Sedekah dan Wakaf, n.d.). As an initiative to help poor students at university, the role of zakat organization is very necessary to ensure the students are not left behind. Therefore, universities have to take a role in helping this group so that their future is guaranteed.

Aid for Asnaf Students in Higher Education Institution

The implementation of zakat *amil* in higher education institution started with Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) as the first university from Majlis Agama Islam Selangor (MAIS) since 1998. Then, Lembaga Zakat Selangor (LZS) has appointed nine other universities as zakat *amil* including Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN), Universiti Multimedia (MMU), Tun Razak University (UniTAR), Selangor University Islamic College (KUIS), and Selangor University (Unisel) (Al-Bohari et. al., 2025). Meanwhile, in the writings of Jalil et. al., (2024), stated that there are 21 institutions that have become zakat *amil*.

Relating to the aid for the *asnaf* students, it depends on the management of the universities. The management of each branch of UiTM also are different from each other. Among the aid given to the *asnaf* students is in the form of living expenses and tuition fees. In UiTM Kedah, there is aid for the internet, stationery, smartphones, books, food and drinks (Ayub et. al., 2022). A study by Mohd Aris et. al., (2021) stated that giving zakat to those who need food aid is better. This is because most of the students eat unhealthy food due to financial problems. Meanwhile, according to Zakaria, et. al. (2024), *ibnu sabil* category is given flight ticket aid to students who are unable to go back to their hometown.

In UiTM Johor, Zakat Unit has received aid from Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) such as Kembara Kitchen. This NGO provides ready-to-eat food like boiled corn where the food can be stored for about two years. Other than that, UiTM Johor also helps *asnaf* students through Ramadan kitchen activities, distribution of bubur lambuk, hari raya clothes, *duit raya*, shopping program and so on. There are other aids for flood victims, alumni adoption program and distribution of wheelchair for disabled student in collaboration with Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Johor (MAINJ) (Mearaj et. al., 2023).

In UKM and UPM, zakat aid is distributed in various forms such as financial aid, equipment or study material aid and *asnaf* development programs. This study proves that the aid given is very helpful for students to study and be active in the university (Ismail & Ali, 2022). In addition, the aid also is given in the form of tuition fees and accommodation by referring to the official websites of UKM and UPM. Meanwhile, Al-Bohari et. al., (2025) in their study stated that Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) also provides aid such as emergency retail, medical, educational needs, pocket money aid, *muallaf* hari raya consolation and many more.

Based on the aids given by the higher education institution, they meet the characteristics presented by al-Ghazali, one of the leading figures in Islamic thought who categorizes the *maqasid syariah* into three levels which are *maslahah dharuriyyah* (essential), *hajiyyah* (complementary) and *tahsiniyyah* (enhancement). *Dharuriyyah* refers to the fundamental needs. Without these necessities, life will become disorganized. *Hajiyyah* is related with convenience in day to day living while *tahsiniyyah* related to moral and ethical aspect that contribute to the perfection of life (Al-Bohari et. al., 2025).

In conclusion, most of the higher education institutions carry out activities to provide the best aid facilities to *asnaf* students. Great initiatives are taken so that aid can be channeled to meet the needs of students. In this study, the program carried out requires further research to see its effectiveness. By providing immediate aid to those in need, it will benefit students well.

Methodology

This study is conducted using qualitative method by using semi-structured interviews to the 10 *asnaf* students of *Belanja Dapur* program of UiTM Johor. They are from the non-resident students who rent houses outside of the campus. This program is in collaboration with Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Johor (MAINJ) and the program is conducted at Mydin Supermarket located in Jasin, Melaka. The study then is analyzed by using thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that thematic analysis is a method to identify, analyze and report patterns within data. It merely arranges and provides a detailed description of the data set.

Boyatzis (1998) also added that thematic analysis is a process of encoding qualitative data. The encoding process necessitates a clear code or theme that can be found in the data. A theme is a pattern in information that describes and organizes possible observations while also interpreting parts of the phenomenon. Thematic analysis is more than just summarizing data where it also involves recognizing relevant patterns that help researchers comprehend the underlying concepts and structures in qualitative data. These themes assist in the systematic organization and interpretation of complex material. The flow chart of the methodology can be summarized as below:

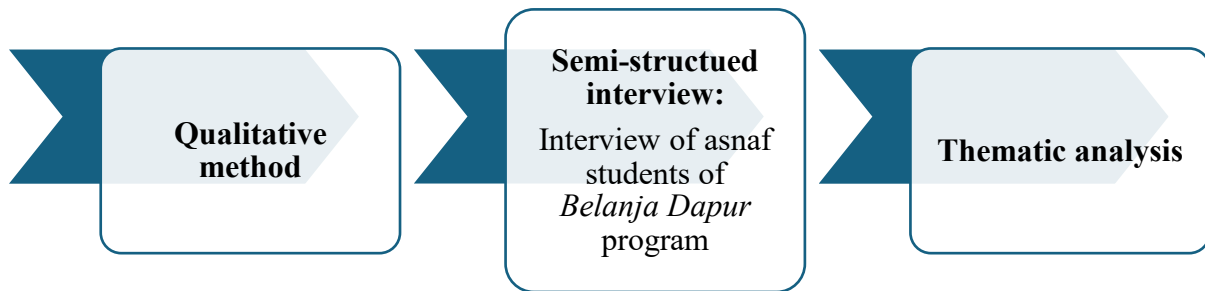


Figure 1: Methodology of the Study

Findings

The findings show that all the 10 *asnaf* students are happy to get the expenses during the program. The amount received of each *asnaf* are RM 200.00 per person. It is very sufficient for them to buy food stuff for their daily needs. 9 of the *asnaf* students also get to buy their favourite food. They also can save money during lunch of the program conducted.

Besides, most of the informants give good feedback regarding on the program conducted. The first and second informants state that the program really benefits the students. It was a great moment for them as they can buy wet and dry food. It gives them good experience and they have fun very much. The third informant insists that this program must be repeated next year because it is very good for non-resident students to reduce some burdens. This feedback also is supported by the fifth and sixth informants where they state that this kind of program should be conducted every semester as they appreciate all the aids and helps given to them.

Next, the fourth informant expressed her gratitude to the zakat unit of UiTM Johor. It gives her happiness for the help given. The informant also feels so grateful because she is one of the selected *asnaf* student that receive this aid through this program. She hopes UiTM and MAINJ continue helping other needy people and be the successful institutions. This feedback also is supported by the ninth and tenth informants where they put high hope that these institutions will continue serve the students in need and make things easier to lift the burden.

In addition, the seventh informant shares that this program must be implemented again next semester so that it can benefit the other *asnaf* students and organizer in terms of reward, economy and well-being of all those involved. The eighth informant also show her gratitude to UiTM Johor and MAINJ for distributing cash to the *asnaf* students to buy food stuff. She also prays everyone involved in succeeding this program will get reward the good deeds from Allah SWT.

However, two informants add that there is a shortage of time to buy the food stuff. They hope that time given is much longer so that they can do the check and comparison of the items carefully. Nevertheless, they really appreciate with the aid given and they feel satisfied with the expenses given to them.

Discussion

Based on the interview conducted, the implementation of *Belanja Dapur* program gives a positive impact to the non-resident of *asnaf* students of UiTM Johor. Through the interview conducted to the 10 informants, several main themes are identified as follows:

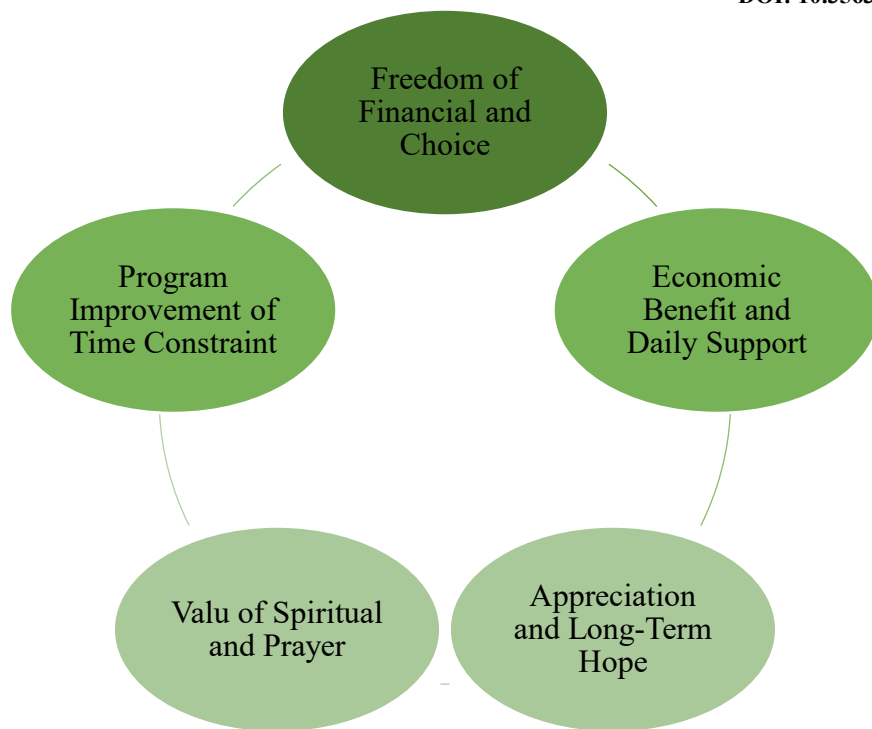


Figure 2: Impact of Financial Aid to the *Asnaf* Students

According to figure 4, there are five impacts of financial aid to the *asnaf* students.

Freedom of Finance and Choice

Based on the interview conducted above, it can be said that all the informants showed a positive reaction after receiving financial aid distributed throughout the program. The informants get to enjoy variety of food of their choices. As previously mentioned above, a total of 9 out of 10 students had the opportunity to purchase their preferred food where it gives them a wide range of food options.

In addition, the informants reported that the financial aid helps them to save money during lunch time throughout the program. This shows that providing cash in the form of direct way can help them to increase their daily economic resilience and reduce financial stress temporarily.

Economic Benefit and Daily Support

Most of the informants stated that the program provides direct financial benefits. The informants view this program as a wonderful opportunity since they can purchase food stuff based on their needs. The allowance of RM 200.00 per person enables them to choose and acquire basic daily necessities that they could not previously afford due to financial constraints. This shows that cash provides students with the flexibility to make their own choices compared to the aid in the form of goods that may not be suitable for each individual needs.

In addition, the informant suggested that this program should be repeated because it provides significant benefits particularly to non-resident students. This indicates that this program helps in terms of financial perspective and contributes to the survival of the students who live off campus and need to manage their own living cost. The students also appreciate the aid received and consider it as a continuous aid in sustaining their daily lives while studying.

Appreciation and Long-Term Hope

Another important theme identified is the appreciation from the *asnaf* students to the institutions that channel the aids. It can be said that the informant specifically expressed the appreciation to the zakat unit of UiTM Johor for the aid provided as it really makes them happier. Additionally, the appreciation is expressed to these two institutions to keep remain dedicated in helping those in need. This is because they play a big role in easing the burden of the *asnaf* students.

The appreciation expressed by the informants also shows a symbolic and positive psychosocial impact based on the aid provided. The financial aid improves, motivates and inspires *asnaf* students to study smartly and diligently. In addition, it shows that they are still receiving attention by the society or educational institutions. This positive psychological effect is very important for the *asnaf* students to overcome emotional and financial problems.

Value of Spiritual and Prayer

Interestingly, the findings also show that the aid provided affects the Islamic and spiritual values. For example, one of the informants shows the gratefulness by praying that all the parties involved in organizing the program will receive rewards from Allah SWT. This shows that the *asnaf* students view the aid given as a material support and manifestation of value of empathy and charity in Islam. This is in line with the principle of *maqasid syariah* in securing the welfare of the needy (*dharuriyyah*) especially in the aspect of securing the property.

Program Improvement of Time Constraint

Even though the overall response is positive, there are also suggestions that need to be improved that mentioned by two informants. They stated that the time allocated to purchase the food items is quite short and insufficient. This is because some of them want to do a comparison of the prices carefully before pick the best items.

Although they remained grateful and satisfied, the feedback is very important as an indicator to improve the program in the future. In the context of aiding program, logistical aspect such as time, place and layout of purchase needs to be considered to ensure the *asnaf* students enjoy the moments and give a great impact in their life.

Conclusion

To sum up, the implementation of *Belanja Dapur* program gives a huge and significant impact in helping *asnaf* students. This study has successfully achieved its objective and confirms that cash financial aid is one of the effective approaches as it provides freedom to the *asnaf* students to buy things according to their individual needs.

This program also has a positive implication from the psychological, social and spiritual aspects. The effectiveness of such program provides justification to the higher education institution to continue and expand the implementation periodically. Besides, by providing cash aid is seen as a suitable method than distributing goods in bulk. This is because the students can manage their own needs realistically. It also in line with the *maqasid syariah* of *dharuriyah* (securing property and survival life).

Besides, it is suggested that this kind of program should be widespread periodically each semester with a better improvement. Few aspects like time allocation and logistic control need to be highlighted so that the *asnaf* students can manage the purchase wisely. Collaboration

among educational institutions, non-governmental organizations or private sectors are highly recommended and encouraged to ensure the program conducted remain competitive and give a long-term impact towards the *asnaf* students.

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