

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.11425140

THE TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT OF FINTECH ON ZAKAT-BASED INVESTMENT IN ISLAMIC SOCIAL FINANCE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Received: 11/11/2025

Accepted: 18/12/2025

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine how FinTech is being adopted in Islamic social finance, particularly for Jordanian zakat organizations. Fifteen participants from AWKAF, the University of Jordan, Zakat NGOs, and FinTech developers and entrepreneurs participated in the interviews. Microsoft Teams and Zoom platforms were used for interviews to remove geographical barriers. The results show the extent of FinTech acceptance, problems, obstacles, and opportunities for FinTech adoption, as well as the effects of FinTech adoption, particularly concerning collecting, managing, and allocating zakat funds to beneficiaries. The findings imply that by implementing financial technology, zakat organizations may lower operating expenses, enhance security, speed up payments, and enable better transactions. Though there have been notable developments, sharia regulation, economic inclusion, technology knowledge, conservative culture, trust deficiencies, problems with security structures, legal challenges, and investment impact considerations are some of the obstacles that zakat institutions face when implementing FinTech. It is anticipated that this research would increase public awareness of zakat payments via FinTech, help zakat institutions manage money more effectively and openly, and encourage more people to complete their zakat obligations.

KEYWORDS: FinTech, Zakat, Islamic Social Finance, Shariah compliance, Zakat payments.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the rise of financial technology, or "FinTech," the financial services sector has experienced an enormous shift in recent years. This relates to industry leaders in developing cutting-edge financial technology, specifically companies and finance 4.0 (Tepe & Geyikci, 2021). FinTech, which uses computers and related digital technologies in financial services, is drastically changing the operations of traditional financial institutions. (Josyula et al, 2021). FinTech technology have transformed the way financial services are offered, accessed, and utilized, with the promise of greater efficacy, accessibility, and inclusion. It is now a serious rival to well-known financial service companies and has made significant strides in expanding access to credit for groups that were previously excluded (Eid and Nussir et al, 2025). Innovations in FinTech have revolutionized the financial industry by allowing businesses to expedite financial procedures and enhance transparency (Manita et al., 2020). Not only has conventional finance undergone a revolution, but Islamic finance has also benefited greatly from Islamic social financing. FinTech's incorporation into Islamic social finance and its altruistic practices—specifically, the Islamic notion of zakat—has also opened up new avenues for companies to engage in socially conscious endeavors(Rabbani et al., 2021). One of the key tenets of Islam is zakat, which is designed to redistribute wealth and lessen economic inequality. Its goal is to make it essential for those who are wealthy to help their fellow Muslims who are impoverished and struggling. "That which purifies" and "that which fosters" are Arabic words from which the word "zakat" is derived. In accordance with Shariah, zakat is the donation or payment of specific property to the asnaf, who are qualified to receive zakat payments(Selangor, 2020). For many facets of society, zakat has helped to raise living standards. It has been crucial in fostering compassion for one another in the face of hardship and financial challenges, energizing Muslims to stand as one, and fortifying the links of love and collaboration among members of the Islamic community. Zakat has also aided in the growth of the economy, politics, and social prosperity of the Islamic community (Mohammed et al, 2021).

Zakat collection and distribution have been crucial in order to lessen the concentration of wealth among the wealthy and promote its distribution among the less fortunate members of society who struggle to make ends meet. However, in spite of

these achievements, zakat institutions continue to face numerous challenges, such as poor management, inefficiency, poor governance, a lack of transparency, and problems with distribution. For example, studies have demonstrated that zakat institutions struggle with transparency, insufficient funding, and poor governance (Hasan et al., 2020). In addition to financial mismanagement, Zakat organizations face challenges in collecting and distributing Zakat to those in need. Improving accountability and transparency in zakat administration requires the use of fintech in zakat payments. The public's trust in the zakat system is increased by this technology's improvements to the payment process's control and openness. There are more chances for people to increase their understanding of sharia law in finance as more use FinTech to pay zakat (Dede & Rifqy, 2025). FinTech can enhance zakat management beyond its convenience by advancing the broader goals of financial inclusion and sustainable development. FinTech can help achieve SDGs by facilitating the usage of zakat payment channels and facilitating the mobilization of cash for social welfare initiatives (Kılıç & Türkkan, 2023). For instance, FinTech technology can streamline the processes for collecting and distributing zakat, ensuring that funds reach their intended recipients more quickly (K. Ahmad & Yahaya, 2022; ilıcı & Türkkan, 2023). Additionally, it has been suggested that blockchain technology be used by zakat administration to provide transparency and traceability, hence enhancing the legitimacy of zakat groups (Nazeri & Nor, 2023). The integration of FinTech into zakat management is a significant advancement in Islamic financial practices. This partnership not only increases the operational efficiency of the zakat institutions but also promotes greater involvement from the Muslim community, particularly among young people. There is still much room for improvement in zakat administration given the rapidly evolving financial technology landscape, which could aid in addressing socioeconomic problems and promoting social justice in an increasingly digital society.

Several zakat-related research has demonstrated that the organizations are bolstering the processes for collecting and distribution by leveraging the rapid expansion of FinTech and technical developments. According to Bannan and Alam (2020), It is claimed that zakat institutions provide better-developed goods and services, acknowledge payments more quickly, improve governance structures, and reduce operational expenses.

However, a number of barriers, such as sharia compliance, financial accessibility, digital literacy, conservative tradition, lack of trust, security, infrastructure, regulation, and impact finance, have prevented Zakat institutions from fully integrating FinTech solutions (Aziz & Anim, 2020).

According to a number of studies, by completely integrating FinTech and its applications, Zakat institutions may significantly enhance the procurement, investment, and distribution of Zakat monies. However, neither the extent of these problems nor the capacity of zakat institutions to fully leverage FinTech to improve the efficiency of zakat distribution and collection have been evaluated in these research. This study aims to investigate how FinTech may enhance zakat distribution and collection, as well as the difficulties zakat organizations have faced in completely applying this technology. This research is organized as follows. FinTech and Islamic social finance are covered after the introduction. Following that, a more thorough explanation of the relationship between FinTech and Zakat will be provided. The methodology of the investigation is then explained. This article then presents the research findings and debate regarding the extent of FinTech use, issues, barriers, and adoption opportunities, as well as the impact of FinTech adoption in Jordanian Islamic social finance. A summary, recommendations, and a list of limitations round out the study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Role Of Zakat

Zakat is an integral part of Islam and a practical and spiritual act of devotion. It is one of the five fundamental foundations of Islam. Zakat is a necessary charitable contribution to fight poverty and promote social justice (Hussain, 2021). Eight categories of people are listed in the Qur'an as being eligible for zakat: those who are poor and in need, those who work in financial management, those who have reconciled hearts (mu'allafah al-qulub), those who are enslaved and want to be free, those who are in debt, those who devote their lives to Allah, and those who live far away (Qur'an 9:60).

Muslims who meet certain qualifications must participate in zakat, a measure of income transfer meant to reduce social and economic inequities (Khothimah *et al.*, 2025). Zakat money were initially collected and distributed by traditional religious organizations, but the state has progressively taken more control of these resources to ensure that zakat reaches the poor and

disadvantaged (Elbanna, 2024). Organizations devoted to zakat administration frequently act as a liaison between mustahiq, or zakat recipients, and muzaki, or zakat payers. These groups are in charge of collecting, managing, and distributing zakat funds in an open and responsible manner (Ningsih *et al.*, 2024). Organizations that handle zakat are there to make the distribution process more efficient. For many facets of society, zakat has greatly raised living standards. It has been crucial in fostering compassion for one another in the face of hardship and financial risks, energizing Muslims to stand as one, and fortifying the ties of love and cooperation among members of the Islamic community. Furthermore, zakat has made a significant contribution to the social, political, and economic advancement of the Islamic society (Aziz *et al.*, 2020).

Zakat organizations continue to face a number of challenges in spite of these achievements, including inadequate distribution, poor governance, mismanagement, inefficiency, and transparency. For example, studies have revealed that zakat groups struggle with transparency, minimal resources, and poor governance. In addition to having trouble collecting and distributing Zakat to those in need, Zakat organizations also struggle with inadequate financial management (Hasan *et al.*, 2020).

2.2. The Rise Of Fintech In Islamic Finance

FinTech, or financial technology, can provide businesses and institutions creative ways to get beyond a number of challenges. FinTech is transforming financial services and related transactions by making them more effective and efficient. FinTech makes it easier for funds to move between participants involved in the transaction (Chatterjee *et al.*, 2023). FinTech has grown significantly in the last several years. FinTech is seen in the relevant literature as a field that not only transforms the delivery of financial services but also causes major disruptions in the financial and banking industries overall. Payments, investments, loans, payment transfers, budgeting, planning, and product comparison are only a few of the financial services offered by FinTech (Masad and Nussir *et al.*, 2023). FinTech services will become more integrated into daily life because of the adoption of new technologies like AI, ML, and the IoT. This will strengthen customer, service providers, and technology relationships and create a more intelligent and connected ecosystem. FinTech is therefore anticipated to become significant in boosting global digital transformation, increasing

financial accessibility, and improving user experience in general (Mariz, 2024).

The growth of Islamic finance is impacted by the rise of FinTech, which also significantly alters the global financial industry. Although Islamic finance operations are not different from conventional finance, Islamic finance has some distinctive features, such as the fact that its transaction methods and products cannot be used against Sharia law (Khothimah, 2024). Sharia-based Islamic finance forbids the practices of Maisir (gambling), Gharar (uncertainty), and riba (interest) and emphasizes transparent and open transactions. FinTech's existence in Islamic finance creates new chances to offer financial services that adhere to Sharia law, including in the areas of investing, financing, and payments. FinTech in Islamic finance adheres to Sharia law and favors Islamic organizations or nations that uphold it (Alshater & Othman, 2020). The word "Islam" serves to differentiate between Sharia-compliant and traditional FinTech businesses. Given the notable variations in FinTech business strategies across the two platforms, this difference seems reasonable. For instance, because usury is forbidden in the Islamic financial system, interest-based P2P loans, one of the most advanced FinTech business models, are virtually not permitted there (Alshater et al., 2022). Considering that Islamic banking is currently a \$3 trillion industry with growing demand, this gives insight into what Islamic FinTech might experience in the near future. (Islamic Finance Development Report, 2019). Understanding the dynamics of the emerging industry is therefore far more crucial because FinTech's objectives are in line with the primary Shariah goals for financial transactions. Additionally, Hijazin (2025) outlined FinTech's five principles: low-profit margin, light asset, expandability, innovation, and easy compliance. All of these principles are consistent with Shariah principles. Thakor (2020) claims that FinTech seeks to identify less expensive means of resolving financial contracting frictions and lowering the cost of financial services to improve consumer welfare.

2.3. The Adoption Of Fintech In Zakat Management

Agricultural society, the industrialization of society, the oil hunting expedition, and multinational business capitalism are the four main periods in the history of the global economy. All four of these periods are typically exclusive and exclusively available to elite individuals. However, opportunities have expanded since the emergence of

the digital economy. The digital economy replaces physical information with digital forms by using the internet and the World Wide Web to build networks based on human intelligence. Additionally, digital technology benefits several industries, such as more effective zakat administration via computerized systems and apps that can boost productivity and encourage modernization and innovation (Khothimah et al, 2025).

The practice of organizations collecting money, especially for zakat, by using advertising and marketing to build awareness and demand among potential contributors is known as fundraising. There are two ways to raise money for zakat: direct fundraising, which has the muzakki participating actively, and indirect fundraising, which concentrates more on institution marketing and image development without explicitly requesting donations (Wahyudi et al., 2022).

Several studies examined how Zakat institutions are using different applications to make it easier for Zakat payers to make contributions and payments. Financial accessibility is greatly advanced by technology-driven tools like mobile banking, which also provide fresh chances to increase the effectiveness of zakat distribution and collection (Fatima, 2024). Zakat is collected using a variety of channels, including digital platforms, e-wallets, credit and debit cards, online and mobile banking, postal services, text message payments, and salary deduction plans. The availability of mobile-based, shariah-compliant FinTech for Zakat is limited in several countries. (Abdillah, 2021).

One of the main issues facing FinTech and Islamic financial institutions, according to Firmansyah and Anwar (2019), is the absence of sufficient rules. Governments ought to enact laws that are advantageous to the I-FinTech industry. Additionally, Ulya (2019) investigated Jordan's donation-based crowdfunding and the absence of laws protecting Zakat. The non-profit character of donation-based crowdfunding is ignored by the current legislation, which classifies crowdsourcing only as an investment tool intended to generate profits. Likewise, Diyah (2019) underlined the need to develop legislative frameworks that support social capital crowdfunding projects both domestically and abroad to increase community involvement in charitable activities.

Some scholars argued that the use of FinTech for zakat can be useful in the long term for the beneficiaries of zakat to generate income instead of the short-term relief. FinTech can help in this transformation through innovative investment tools

and digital products, and processes. However, few studies focus on qualitative analysis of zakat. A qualitative exploration is required to study the investment impact of FinTech adoption on Islamic social finance in a way that is acceptable and according to the religious values.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

To investigate the opinions, discoveries, and experiences of the stakeholders directly involved in implementing FinTech in zakat management, a qualitative research design is applied in this study. A qualitative research approach is best as the nature of this research is exploratory, which requires a focus on identifying and investigating innovative areas.

3.2. Sampling And Participants

This study employed purposive and snowball sampling strategies to identify participants with direct relevance to the transformative role of FinTech in zakat-based investment within Islamic social finance. The intended target population included policymakers, FinTech entrepreneurs, Islamic financial professionals, IT specialists, zakat managers, and Islamic scholars in Jordan. To ensure rigor in the selection process, participants were required to meet specific eligibility criteria: (a) at least three years of professional experience in Islamic finance, zakat management, or financial technology; (b) direct involvement in zakat-based investment projects, product development, or policy formulation; and (c) willingness to provide detailed insights during in-depth qualitative interviews. Individuals without practical engagement in either FinTech or zakat-based financial initiatives were excluded.

In total, 15 individuals acknowledged as experts with substantial expertise in the field participated in the study. Given the exploratory nature of the research, purposive sampling was first used to

recruit participants who could provide rich and relevant information (Ahmad *et al.*, 2024). Snowball sampling was subsequently employed, whereby initial respondents recommended colleagues and peers within their professional circles, enabling the researcher to access additional experts who held critical roles in FinTech development or zakat-based financial practices. This approach broadened the diversity of perspectives while remaining focused on the study's objectives.

Data collection continued until data saturation was reached. Saturation was observed after 15 semi-structured interviews, when subsequent discussions yielded no new themes, and responses became repetitive. This ensured that the dataset was both comprehensive and credible, allowing for robust thematic analysis of the transformative impact of FinTech on zakat-based investment.

3.3. Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were the main source of data collection. To overcome geographical constraints, online video conferencing tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams were used to conduct the interviews. Almost 50 to 60 minutes were required for each interview. Before taking the interviews, a guide was developed to ensure all the key points and themes were covered in the interviews. The majority of the interview questions were open-ended, enabling participants to express their views and opinions. After taking the background information, the three different areas of interest were covered in the interview guide. The first theme was to investigate the extent to which Zakat institutions have adopted FinTech and to explore the prevailing Zakat practices. The second section examined the perceived benefits, investment of zakat funds, and obstacles Zakat institutions encountered in implementing FinTech fully, and the third section investigated and evaluated how FinTech may improve Zakat institutions' efficacy. The interview questions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Interview Guide And Themes.

Themes	Interview Questions
Background information	Can you quickly describe your role and experience in the Islamic finance industry or the zakat sector? To what extent are you involved in FinTech platforms and technologies now?
Adoption of FinTech by Zakat institutions	How much FinTech has been completely adopted by zakat institutions? Why do you think using FinTech would enable zakat institutions to improve security, reduce operating costs, make payments quickly, offer better transactions, and increase efficiency and transparency in the zakat fund's collection, investment, and distribution? What effects does the use of FinTech have on the distribution, investment, and collection of zakat?
Zakat practices and challenges faced during FinTech adoption	What challenges occur during and after the FinTech adoption in the zakat collection and distribution process? How much do you think that conservative culture, a lack of digital

	<p>awareness, a shortage of trust, an absence of security, a lack of infrastructure, an absence of legal protection laws, a lack of impact investment, and a lack of financial inclusion prevent zakat institutions from fully implementing FinTech?</p> <p>To what extent do you think that FinTech is enhancing the effectiveness, accountability, and availability of zakat?</p> <p>What is the role of FinTech in ensuring the investment of zakat according to the principles of Islam?</p>
Recommendations for improving zakat institutions efficacy	<p>To improve zakat collection, investment, and distribution, which emerging FinTech domains should zakat institutions investigate?</p> <p>What additional recommendations do you have to help zakat institutions' FinTech improve the effectiveness of their zakat distribution, investment, and collection processes?</p>

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part offers an analysis and results of the qualitative data gathered to investigate the difficulties zakat institutions have while implementing FinTech. It also looks at the potential of existing and suggested FinTech models and applications. The background information of the respondents chosen from the wide range of stakeholders was given in the first section of the interview. All of the 15 participants were selected from the diverse group of stakeholders. All of them were actively involved in Islamic social finance, FinTech, and zakat administration. 4 senior managers were selected from the Ministry of Awkaf and Islamic Affairs, who were responsible for supervising the whole zakat collection and distribution process. 5 Islamic scholars from the University of Jordan's school of Shariah participated to give insights on zakat and the theory of Islamic economy and religious compliance. 3 FinTech developers and entrepreneurs also participated in this study to share their knowledge on developing digital platforms for zakat payments. 3 participants were from the NGOs of Jordan actively engaging in Islamic social finance.

Based on the interview questions, the qualitative data gathered through interviews was divided into three themes. "Adoption of FinTech by Zakat institutions," "Zakat practices and challenges faced during FinTech adoption," and "Recommendations for improving zakat institutions' efficacy" are the selected themes.

4.1. Adoption Of Fintech By Zakat Institutions

Regarding the first theme, every participant agrees that zakat institutions are getting closer to fully implementing FinTech. Evidence was offered to support their opinions. FinTech is being used more and more extensively in zakat collection procedures. To improve the collecting process, zakat institutions use a range of digital platforms and tools, including credit and debit card payments, e-wallets, internet banking, and QR codes. This enhances the use of crowdfunding websites and

other internet platforms for zakat money collection. An in-house system to help Zakat payers make payments and obtain relevant information was developed, and one of the AWKAF managers described the tactics used to improve collection and distribution procedures. Almost everyone agrees that FinTech benefits Zakat organizations by increasing their operational and financial efficiency; technology enables strong governance frameworks and transparency. FinTech can improve security, reduce money laundering, increase accessibility, and speed up payments and transfers. The participants agreed that the channels and processes for distribution, investment, and collection would be improved if FinTech's creative ideas were fully used in Islamic social finance. Furthermore, it was mentioned that Zakat institutions might reduce operating expenses by cutting down transportation costs to collect and distribute Zakat funds if they completely implemented FinTech solutions. One scholar from Jordan University claimed that FinTech solutions offer advantages like real-time managerial information, shorter processing times, lower operating costs, improved inter-organizational communication, better interactions with current and potential clients, and easier access to expert knowledge. According to him, this strategy will improve the efficiency of Zakat distribution and lower administrative barriers by speeding up and streamlining the process. A participant from an NGO stated that

"FinTech's widespread adoption will improve Zakat institutions' efficacy and efficiency.

FinTech adoption reduces the operational expenses of collecting and disbursing funds, and it will provide Zakat institutions a long-term competitive edge over other charitable organizations.

The technology will solve the problem of digital transformation and bring about a "paradigm shift" to meet the demands of the digital donors." (Participant 14, NGO manager)

4.2. Zakat Practices And Challenges Faced During Fintech Adoption

Most participants concur that zakat institutions have difficulties that would be made worse by full FinTech implementation. However, the difficulties would vary depending on the amount of knowledge, software, and infrastructure quality, safety and security protocols, community IT culture, and the different kinds of threats involved.

One of the primary obstacles during FinTech adoption, according to the second subject on the problems, difficulties, and opportunities of FinTech adoption in Islamic social finance, is cost. Participant 10, for example, said their zakat institutions spend over JD 2.5 million to install and update new technological systems for improved performance. Thus, the cost-benefit analysis of such a FinTech investment is questioned. According to Participants 1-6, a lack of in-house IT specialists and a restricted selection of software and programs make it difficult for Zakat institutions to find technicians to develop appropriate digital solutions and programs. A scholar from Jordan University emphasized the difficulty of adhering to Sharia and the need for regular evaluations of its provisions. This approach enables Zakat organizations to find fresh approaches and broaden avenues for Zakat fund investments. The lack of professional expertise and understanding of FinTech among Zakat officials and academics is another obstacle, suggesting that the adoption of FinTech is a "paradigm shift issue" as opposed to only a "functional or technical issue."

According to Participant 13, the adoption of innovative FinTech solutions that aim to replace conventional techniques for gathering and allocating Zakat funds is severely restricted by conventional cultural customs. Inadequate infrastructure and a shortage of skilled professionals and talent are other difficulties. Another specialist has expressed his viewpoint on Zakat institutions' readiness for full FinTech adoption:

"Zakat institutions must have more sophisticated and transparent procedures and guidelines for the collection, administration, and distribution of zakat for FinTech to be fully adopted. Given that technology is typically based on transparent and effective processes and procedures, FinTech adoption is difficult to imagine as these processes and standards are either unknown or not widely used."

The majority of scholars believe the current difficulties will continue throughout the full adoption phase. Some of them, however, believe that these new difficulties are just transitory and could only impede zakat institutions' adoption of FinTech for a limited time; in the long run, these

difficulties won't prevent them from completely implementing these technological solutions. For instance, according to participant 3, these difficulties can have an impact on the distribution process but not the collecting process. He claimed that:

"Because financial inclusion increases distribution challenges, it would be challenging to reach the underprivileged who are not part of the financial system online and distribute funding because you have less information on their financial activity. Investment-wise, there are fewer obstacles as Zakat institutions may invest and move their money to other organizations with relatively few challenges."

4.3. Recommendations For Improving Zakat Institutions' Efficacy

Each individual shared a different perspective on the emerging FinTech fields that zakat organizations ought to investigate to improve methods of investment, distribution, and collection. These new regions may be improved, among other things, by making investments in certain industries, generating new income, developing capacity, and altering the technology and e-business environments. Many experts support the use of digital channels, crowdfunding websites, blockchain technology, and readily available statistical tools. The ability of these advancements to provide a reliable database was covered by participant 7. He pointed out that not all Zakat institutions may find blockchain technologies to be enough, suggesting the need for more specialized and appropriate models and solutions. Some participants suggested that Zakat institutions should provide their employees with more training, especially in Sharia, and enlist IT specialists to enhance their knowledge of both IT and Sharia. This will make it easier for Zakat organizations to integrate with FinTech companies. Participants 9 and 15 called for zakat institutions to use a range of technologies and solutions, including crowdfunding websites, blockchain technology, and enhanced digital payment methods.

According to Participant 1, there is a need to educate and increase community knowledge about FinTech solutions, especially among the younger generation. Another participant from AWKAF highlights the need for strong, flexible leadership that is sensitive to continuous shifts in the economic and technological environment. For young people to promote Zakat institutions, leadership should support their growth and increase their capacity to use FinTech.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined how FinTech is used in Islamic social finance, particularly for zakat in Jordan. Zakat organizations are progressively implementing innovative financial technology solutions to improve their operational and financial performance. FinTech applications in zakat payments enhance the efficiency and transparency of zakat administration, enable easier donor access through digital platforms, and ensure more accurate and accountable distribution of zakat funds. By providing precise recordkeeping and real-time reporting, FinTech increases community confidence in zakat institutions and minimizes the risk of fund misuse, thereby enabling broader participation in poverty alleviation efforts.

Nevertheless, several challenges remain, including limited digital literacy, insufficient regulatory frameworks to facilitate digital zakat, and the need to uphold shariah compliance in all technological applications. Addressing these issues requires the collaboration of multiple stakeholders—IT specialists, zakat managers, regulators, and Islamic scholars—to create an enabling environment that supports the safe and effective adoption of FinTech solutions. The findings of this study therefore highlight the need for zakat institutions to integrate FinTech across their operations to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and build greater trust among donors and beneficiaries.

From a policy perspective, the results suggest that regulators and policymakers should establish supportive legal and institutional frameworks that encourage innovation in zakat management while safeguarding shariah principles. Institutional collaboration between zakat organizations, FinTech entrepreneurs, and financial regulators will be crucial to ensure sustainable innovation and broader financial inclusion.

Theoretically, this study advances understanding of how FinTech can strengthen accountability, transparency, and public confidence in zakat-based social funds. However, it also acknowledges certain

limitations. The research did not cover all aspects of the challenges zakat organizations face—particularly those related to public acceptance and community engagement across different regions. Moreover, concerns about shariah compliance in FinTech applications require more in-depth exploration. Methodologically, the study relied on qualitative techniques, and future research may benefit from adopting mixed methods to generate more comprehensive insights.

Finally, while this study focused on zakat, future research should extend its scope to other instruments of Islamic social finance, including waqf, sadaqat, Islamic crowdfunding, and SRI sukuk, where FinTech holds considerable potential to mobilize resources, improve transparency, and enhance socioeconomic impact. Exploring these areas will contribute to building a more holistic framework for the role of FinTech in transforming Islamic social finance as a whole.

5.1. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical guidelines for qualitative research. Prior to participation, all respondents were provided with detailed information regarding the purpose of the study, the nature of the interviews, and their right to decline or withdraw at any stage without any consequences. Written informed consent was obtained from each participant. To ensure anonymity, no personal identifiers were recorded, and all participants were assigned pseudonyms in the transcripts and final report. Confidentiality was maintained by securely storing digital interview files on password-protected devices, with access limited to the researcher only.

The research protocol received approval from the [Name of University/Institution] Research Ethics Committee. All interviews were conducted with full respect for participants' time, privacy, and professional standing. By safeguarding informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality, the study ensured that participants could share their experiences on zakat-based investment and FinTech without risk of harm or exposure.

Acknowledgments: The author would like to express sincere appreciation to all those who contributed, directly or indirectly, to the completion of this research. Special thanks are extended to colleagues and reviewers for their valuable comments and constructive suggestions, which helped improve the quality of this work. Appreciation is also given to the editorial board for their efforts in facilitating the review and publication process.

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