

# Investigating the Method of Da'wah and the Role of Political-Economy of Jemaah Tarbiyah in Urban Malang Society

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**Abstract:** Since the emergence of the overwhelming electoral vote for *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Prosperous Justice Party) in the 2019 legislative election in Malang City, we discovered the impact of political-economy of Jemaah Tarbiyah on the urban society is a significant boost in electability for PKS. The subject selected is an Islamic philanthropic organisation, Ash-Shahwah Foundation (YASA) in Malang City as the sympathisers of Jemaah Tarbiyah. The supportive factors for regulating the political economy of Jemaah Tarbiyah include the method, role, and participation of YASA in Malang City. Through the method of *da'wah*, the figure of Jemaah Tarbiyah, Abu Haidar, stated that *shalat* is the key to success in life, and this has been successfully gaining hundreds of members. The role of YASA is to educate the urban society that obligatory alms become a lifestyle for their charitable politics. YASA becomes an intermediary to the connection of elite-mass or *mustahiq*-cadres' relationships for gaining trust and getting massive electoral votes. The urban society participation, particularly the benefactors, can be seen from their enthusiasm in donating their wealth and demonstrating solidarity among individuals to strengthen informal religious learning courses in mosques. Findings show that the political economy of Jemaah Tarbiyah initiated the great success of gaining substantial electoral votes through philanthropic practices used as indirect support and funding for election campaigns. Notably, there is a political tendency for YASA to change its paradigm of philanthropic practice, for which the initial goal was to raise humanitarian aid and charitable funds and to shift funds toward financing a campaign.

**Keywords:** Electoral votes; Jemaah Tarbiyah; philanthropy; political economy.

**Abstrak:** Sejak naiknya suara pemilih yang luar biasa untuk Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS) pada pemilu legislatif tahun 2019 di Kota Malang, Jawa Timur, kami menemukan bahwa dampak politik ekonomi dari keberadaan Jemaah Tarbiyah dalam masyarakat urban adalah sebagai kekuatan yang signifikan dalam menjaring suara untuk PKS. Subyek penelitian terpilih adalah sebuah organisasi filantropi Islam bernama Yayasan Ash-Shahwah (YASA) Kota Malang, dikelola oleh para aktivis Jemaah Tarbiyah. Faktor-faktor pendukung untuk menjalankan politik ekonomi Jemaah Tarbiyah termasuk strategi, peran, dan partisipasi YASA di Kota Malang. Melalui strategi da'wah, figur Jemaah Tarbiyah, Ustadz Abu Haidar, yang juga pimpinan Majelis Duha Malang, mengatakan bahwa shalat adalah kunci kesuksesan hidup, dan pernyataannya ini telah menarik ratusan anggota, khususnya program *Shalat Training 123*. Peran YASA disini adalah untuk edukasi masyarakat urban bahwa kewajiban zakat merupakan suatu gaya hidup untuk politik karitas Jemaah. YASA menjadi alat penghubung bagi elit-massa atau hubungan-hubungan para kader *mustahiq* untuk mendapatkan kepercayaan pemilih. Partisipasi masyarakat urban, khususnya *muzakki*, dapat terlihat dari antusiasme mereka dalam mendonasikan harta serta dalam menunjukkan solidaritas sesama untuk memperkuat kajian-kajian keagamaan di masjid-masjid. Temuan penting juga menyatakan bahwa politik ekonomi Jemaah Tarbiyah mencapai keberhasilan dalam menjaring sejumlah besar suara melalui praktek-praktek filantropi, digunakan sebagai dukungan tak langsung maupun pendanaan bagi kampanye politik. Jelasnya, terdapat sebuah tendensi politik bagi YASA dalam mengubah paradigma dari praktek filantropi dimana tujuan utamanya adalah menarik bantuan kemanusiaan dan dana karitas, tetapi akhirnya mengubah dana tersebut untuk biaya kampanye.

**Kata Kunci:** Suara pemilu; Jemaah Tarbiyah; filantropi; politik ekonomi.

## 1. Introduction

This article discusses the development of a philanthropic practice shifting to political interests from its previous purpose as a social activity for humanitarian aid. This alteration was crucial to *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS - Prosperous Justice Party), with votes in Malang City in the 2019 legislative election increasing significantly to nearly 100%, although later experiencing a downward trend. Accordingly, this research aims to explore profoundly why the PKS votes rose considerably in 2019 after PKS lost badly in the previous election (KPU Kota Malang, 2019).

Our interest lies in the political actions of PKS that were distinct from the existing discussions that focus on aspects such as politics and *da'wah* (preaching). In this study, we found that the political activity of PKS was mainly couched on philanthropic activities. We had focused on the Ash-Shahwah Foundation, a faith-based organisation supported by the Tarbiyah sympathisers group Jemaah Tarbiyah.

The term 'tarbiyah' refers to a religious social movement in Indonesia (Machmudi, 2008) that focuses on fostering individual, family, and community involvement. To date, *tarbiyah*, in a specific context, has been used to refer to religious social movements in Indonesia that have a process of developing an understanding of Islam, more precisely as a process of Islamisation that demands changes in individuals in terms of morality, intellectuality, and spirituality. This aims to foster students' education in improving spiritual qualities under the guidance of the teacher by forming a small circle religious group, which is a significant medium in indoctrinating and spreading ideals to Islamise individuals, families, communities, and the state. Although linguistically interpreted as education, *tarbiyah* in light of the current situation has been regarded as a movement that focuses on improvement aspects, such as theology (*tawhid*), morals (*akhlak*), and thought development (*fikrah*). This movement is known as the Tarbiyah Congregation (Jemaah Tarbiyah), and its structure tends to be collective. In short, *tarbiyah* is an understanding or ideology, while Jemaah Tarbiyah is a religious movement. Jemaah Tarbiyah initially developed its influence among students at secular public universities and Islamic campuses in Java and outside Java, such as Sumatra, Sulawesi, Maluku, and Kalimantan. Tarbiyah group promotes openness and consistency attitudes, which has become a principle in proselytising and mobilising public interest these days. The method of Jemaah Tarbiyah as a socio-religious movement is to carry out political activities informally and attract participation in the closest circles such as family, neighbours, colleagues, and relatives to become 'cadres' (Mayer et al., 1996).

Its collective structures are known as Jemaah Tarbiyah. *Tarbiyah* is its ideology, and Jemaah Tarbiyah is its religious movement. In its manifestation, this vehicle of the Islamic party adopts the ideology of *Tarbiyah*, called *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS) (Baswedan, 2004). The paradigms declared by Tarbiyah are inclusivity and consistency, which have become their guidance for conducting the mission of *da'wah* and mobilising the interest of society towards their actions. Their movement gathers resources and takes collective steps in formal and informal ways. Its role in empowering collective action is embodied in 'cadres' who are inclined to take massive actions (Rahmat, 2008).

The social changes that occurred in Malang city became notable to study after we found out that electoral votes for PKS increased significantly from 2014 to the 2019 legislative elections. PKS votes rose from about 25,000 votes in 2014 to 50,000 votes in 2019. This occurred amid claims that their voters consisted of non-organisational and non-Muslim sympathisers, especially from urban communities (KPU Kota Malang, 2019). The statistical data of the legislative election in Malang City illustrated that in 2009, the number of votes for PKS reached a stable result, at 25,646. Then between 2014 and 2019, there was a rise of 100% from the number of 26,082 in 2014 to 50,037 in 2019 (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, 2019). This finding indicated that PKS made strong efforts to rebuild people's trust after it had been losing votes for a long time previously, due to internal and external factors.

This considerable effort was essentially a response to PKS being defeated by *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan* (PDIP) when previously PKS had been dominant in Malang City. Regarding the defeat, Syaiful states that the people of Malang City voted for the PDIP in the election because the party

has been well-known for its nationalism. Since Indonesians recognise the PDIP as the party established by the first President of Indonesia, Soekarno, the PDIP has a powerful attraction for the majority, especially among the grass-root voters. Even without any notable issue to promote votes, this proprietary connection allowed PDIP to gain the majority vote in the country. Eventually, PKS in response created a strategy of interacting more closely with society through various programs and by gaining support from many parties (Moh. Syaiful Ali Fatah, Personal Communication, July 17, 2020).

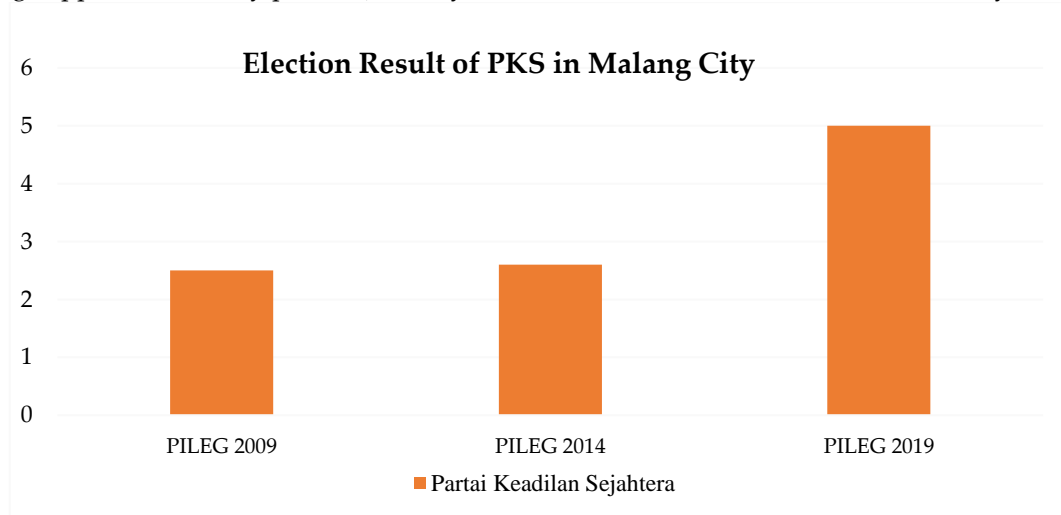


Figure 1 Data of Malang City Election

The rise of votes for PKS in 2019 led to candidates of Trio Agus Purwono, Asmualik, and Ahmad Fuad Rahman winning legislative seats as members of the PKS faction in the Malang City Regional Legislature (DPRD) during the 2019-2024 period (Pemerintah Kota Malang, 2020). This was an indication of the rise of Jemaah Tarbiyah in its political and *da'wah* movement. We observed significant changes between the 2014 and 2019 legislative elections. The political campaign had focused on two central areas, namely the Tunggulwulung and Tasikmadu subdistricts, where voter response was notable.

As explained earlier, our main argument is that the aspect of philanthropy became the focus of Jemaah Tarbiyah to reestablish people's trust to increase votes for PKS in the 2019 legislative election. The philanthropic approach was selected as a route to building people's trust in the wisdom of voting for PKS. We became interested in gathering observational data on philanthropic organisations, in particular the Social Charity Foundation of Ash-Shahwah. This foundation supports the efforts of Jemaah Tarbiyah as a movement to develop the PKS and campaign for its doctrines. YASA, with Andi Tricahyno as its director, provided entities with a legal identity in 2012 as charitable *zakat* institutions or Lembaga Amil Zakat. Each year this organisation receives funds of more than 1.7 billion rupiahs and implements a variety of programs (Toriquddin & Rauf, 2013). For our study, we emphasised the social economy program and religious campaign, which promoted electoral votes for Jemaah Tarbiyah.

Jemaah Tarbiyah as a religious social movement is routinely involved in social service programs, community empowerment, and humanitarian aid. Its members' positions in the city parliament play a major role in policymaking through the creation of economic regulations (Litbang Kompas, 2009). They also commit to building independence in the political economy on behalf of humanities programs involving social concerns, yet also interspersed with the political interest of the Islamic party of PKS. The sources of funds for this movement for *da'wah* are independent, and the group cannot receive significant financial support from the government because there are restrictions on sources for funding a political party. Thus, Jemaah Tarbiyah faced challenges amid a competitive race in politics. In the effort to be independent cadres, the *zakat* organisers accordingly allocate some proceeds for self-reliance.

When democracy acknowledges the existence of judicative, legislative, and executive organisations, as well as the freedom of mass media, the government does not provide funds for legislative campaigns, and the Indonesian party also rules limit sources of political funding (Mamonto, 2019; Mietzner, 2010). Currently, the President's Decree No 1 of 2018 Regarding Financial Aid for Political Party renewed the previous rules. As a result, money politics (or "dawn attack") occurs in the morning before the election when candidates blitz voters. Many aspiring politicians, via conglomerates that have independent funds, are then even trying an approach to be elected although they are not qualified. So even as a bedrock Islamic political party, the Tarbiyah movement struggles in a self-reliant political economy to have Islamic values-based leaders, and it criticises such regulation.

Previously, studies found that the urban society did not trust Jemaah Tarbiyah. However, with feelings of desperation and restlessness in this organisation, members of Jemaah Tarbiyah have wanted to show their identity to participate by donating some funds voluntarily for humanitarian reasons. This philanthropic approach was also used to carry out political activities and maintain the identity of the Tarbiyah cadres in improving the mission of the economy through resource mobilisation. In Malang City, the cadres have shown their concerns to society through programs to draw people's sympathy, particularly in the upper-middle class, for contributing to humanist activities employing donations and voluntary actions for the public good (Payton & Moody, 2008). This participation was usually accommodated in the social non-governmental organisations. Emphasising the necessary interconnectivity of all of its elements in the society was substantially related to the declaration of their identity as an Islamic *da'wah* party. Jemaah Tarbiyah as an Islamic movement was routinely involved in social service programs, community empowerment, and humanities aid (Litbang Kompas, 2009), in which their roles are closely related to the community to create economic regulation through policy-making at the parliament. This is to build independence of the political economy on behalf of the humanities program involving people's interests and the interest of the Islamic political party implicitly.

Ash-Shahwah Foundation contributed as a philanthropic organisation that arranges activities, including religious events to mobilise votes for the PKS. We chose to examine how the political economy of Jemaah Tarbiyah has developed, in particular by analysing strategies of Jemaah Tarbiyah's philanthropic practices for supporting the existence and electoral success of their party. Such a strategy was also used to mobilise the participation of urban society in the political economy. Accordingly, we were interested to explore in detail how Jemaah Tarbiyah drew the attention of urban citizens in Malang. Likewise, we also investigated the role of YASA in its encouragement of participation by the urban citizens in funding the political economy, as well as the main reasons for urban citizens becoming interested in participating with Jemaah Tarbiyah for its benefit in the political economy. This faith-based foundation initiates Islamic program activities, such as *Majelis Dhuha Malang* and *Da'wah* in Jail (Tricahyono, Personal Communication, September 30, 2020). We conducted observation as a case study in Malang City to characterize the political economics of Jemaah Tarbiyah via the Ash-Shahwah Foundation. This study uses descriptive and analytical research methods to reveal conditions in a phenomenon through several ways such as in-depth and informal interviews.

## 2. Method of *Da'wah* of Jemaah Tarbiyah in Urban Society

### *Genealogy*

YASA is a charitable *zakat* institution (LAZ). The scope of YASA's operation embraces *zakat* and *waqf* management. YASA was established in 1994, as initiated by a group of *da'wah student* activists to essentially compete with Christian missionaries in Southern Malang. In 2012, the LAZ of YASA obtained legal status from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, and in 2017, YASA obtained a decree from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The primary reason for its establishment was to provide solutions for Muslims to eradicate poverty rates and expand *da'wah* through religious social organisations to create pious benefactors and beneficiaries (Tricahyono, Personal Communication, September 30, 2020).

YASA has several programs, such as the educational segment managing scholarships called *Ayah Bunda Asuh* for orphan children and providing aid for programs, namely, "Loving Our Teachers" and "Brilliant Steps to School". In its charitable segment, YASA administers *zakat* and other donations for needy families, including aid for the elderly and the indigent; free ambulance service; health aid for beneficiaries; treatment of Covid-19; and food security for preachers. In its *da'wah* segment, YASA established the Malang Dhuha in Congregation; *Da'wah* in Jail, which was initiated by An-Nisa and At-Taubah Islamic boarding schools; *Da'wah* of Qur'an in the Islamic boarding school, namely *Syajarah Thayyibah* for university students. The food security aims at building networking with Islamic social organisations, broadcasting online *da'wah*, and distributing *infaq* in the month of *Ramadan*. In terms of education, YASA initiated the establishment of an Islamic boarding school, namely Al-Ikhlas for poor children; collected and distributed *zakat* funds; maintained investment, promotion, and marketing; and developed human resources.

In the field of *Da'wah*, activities held by Malang Dhuha in Congregation were led by a member of Jemaah Tarbiyah, Ustadz Abu Haidar, who has succeeded in drawing the attention of thousands of followers to participate in ritual ceremonies, such as *Shalat* Training 123. The activity also discusses a method to establish an egalitarian economy that is certainly related to the winning agenda, which has been explained in Table 1.1 on the rise of votes for PKS in Malang City. Several factors attributed to the winning of voters such as the preachers (*ustadz*), boosters for structural or cultural organisations, and sympathisers who experienced direct interaction with the communities. The votes of PKS were recorded at a rise of 300%, in which the votes increased considerably from 5000 votes to 15000 votes. This rise in the electoral votes reflected the hard work of candidates and the cadres of Jemaah Tarbiyah, particularly at the election in the Lowokwaru subdistrict. In this case, Ustadz Abu Haidar has charisma in political campaigns. Thus, we explained such a method becomes his characteristics.

In his *Da'wah* activity, Ustadz Abu Haidar gives religious advice about the importance of fixing a person's life by doing more practice of vertical worship such as *shalat* as the key to success in the life of Muslim urban society. Even though the preacher often started to give religious lectures with thematic speeches, Ustadz Abu Haidar usually provided some input with a little bit of satire to donate their fund or wealth to Ash-Shahwah. This showed a different way of distributing the donation in which if someone wants to distribute their wealth, this individual does not need to give it through the mosque, but through a religious learning group as it was created by the preacher, and the funds are then donated directly to the foundation under observation.

We identified the term urban Tarbiyah as a form of the extension symptom of urban *Salafi*, which was identified by Sapriillah et al. (Sapriillah, Juhannis, Said, & Al-Rasyid, 2020), in which the *da'wah* method and paradigm were fairly orthodox, not letting go of spirituality, and usually seen as inclusiveness. The difference is that urban Tarbiyah provides religious models, which represent a modern organisational design with an indication that urban Tarbiyah is able to embrace inclusiveness amid differences in the community. This community still pursues the same method by reaching out to engage community members meaningfully, such as family members, relatives, and neighbours, to participate in religious activities. However, according to the urban community's perspective, Tarbiyah's movement uses urban mosques to hold various religious learning activities to gain the participation of urban people.

As mentioned by Sapriillah et al. (Sapriillah et al., 2020), the characteristics of urban Muslim communities are that they have high enthusiasm and have resolved religious contestation, as the accumulation of all those traits was the effort to respond to modernity. Accordingly, it has become a characteristic of urban community piety that every urban mosque conducts a group learning discussion on Islamic issues to raise funds at the end of each session.

As the founding father of Tarbiyah, Ustadz Abu Haidar has dedicated his entire life to engaging with Islamic missionary work since 1989. He said in an interview that giving a religious talk in the public area in Malang was a hobby even though he was not a native of Malang. Ustadz Abu Haidar was just starting his first career as an Islamic preacher after marrying a local woman. Additionally, he accepted a suggestion from his old friend at the university to become a preacher (Abu Haidar, Personal

Communication, September 27, 2020). The establishment of the *Majelis Dhuha Malang* in 2014 was a follow-up action of his *da'wah* movement. Haidar was known as an Islamic preacher who focused on *Shalat Training 123*. He stresses that his life will surely be happy if a Muslim has finished his prayer.

From the phenomenon above, it is obvious that Islamic propagation (*da'wah*) is a manifestation of the Tarbiyah movement. As a socio-religious movement from the political vehicle of the PKS, Tarbiyah practically focuses on *da'wah* to sway urban voters particularly, in this context, Islamic propagation's implementation through philanthropy. In discussion, it is worth noting how the pattern of *da'wah* can attract urban society to volunteer or donate their money for the sake of Tarbiyah. This is a strategy of the socio-religious movement designed by Ustadz Abu Haidar who has the authority to mobilise resources through an informal approach such as family, relatives, neighbour, and non-governmental institutions which are established as a new space for the movement of political parties. The space is also used as a means to propagate the envisaged religious ideology.

Ballesteros asserted that *da'wah* paradigm is the ability of social relations to control others, processes, and various things that are fragmentations of political economy (Ballesteros, Luján, & Pedro, 2010). Moreover, in the previous explanation, it is apparent that the overall substance of the Tarbiyah movement is to Islamise (*tarbiyah*) all elements of society from the smallest level to the largest scope. *Da'wah* is the basis of the mobility of the Tarbiyah movement. Therefore, Ustadz Abu Haidar's ability to preach to urban communities is part of *tarbiyah's* political economy to achieve the winning agenda.

### *Shalat Training 123*

*Shalat Training 123* is religious training, especially for prayer practice, which includes how to do prayer movements correctly, such as *ruku'* (belt-low bowing), *sujud* (full-earth low bowing), and *i'tidal* (rising from bowing). This training gained a positive response, and the congregation members attending the activity numbered 2000-2500 people. Ustadz Abu Haidar said that what is needed by urban people is to practice the Islam way of life correctly, which is started by improving prayer. He continued that urban people willingly participated in the training because the activity was free of charge and the material was presented using modern multimedia to ease participants' understanding. Ustadz Abu Haidar believed the most common life issue is that most people have different opinions on prayer. Since childhood, they have performed ablution and prayer, but this lacked perfection. This ideal perspective made many people reluctant to study prayer because they feel they already learned *shalat* when they were kids. Accordingly, Ustadz Abu Haidar assumed that people need to be trained again to perform the *shalat* correctly. *Shalat* training was not initially the theme, but instead, "coping with feeling confusion and hubbub is a prayer" was the beginning topic. The event was organised professionally to outshine even a music show. The grand event was prepared independently with a stage and full accouterments, all with the help of donations. The prayer training was conducted yearly, and the members who came continued to exceed the site's capacity. This indicates that amid the method of Ustadz Abu Haidar to draw the interest of Jemaah, there is a serious willingness among urban people.

The event was conducted at several campuses with costs for renting a room, buildings, and field being free. In 2014, Ustadz Abu Haidar, a current director of YASA, met with sympathizers of Tarbiyah to express his concerns that, in Malang City, many religious congregations had long been inactive, so he often moved from one Mosque to another because people could not routinely conduct *da'wah*. For these reasons, YASA established the Malang Dhuha in Congregation with Ustadz Abu Haidar as the main keynote speaker. The Malang Dhuha in Congregation is a *da'wah* program of YASA with thematic materials following the demands of people, such as Qur'anic teaching, morality, motivation, and how to be deeply religious and intelligent. The focus of Malang Dhuha in Congregation was the urban mosques, especially the Ramadan mosque, and the Ustadz Abu Haidar stated that the congregants lived all around Malang City and Greater Malang. Interestingly, the congregants were common people who had just made a move towards being religious (*hijrah*). The topics they usually asked for included issues related to worship, family life, Islamic business values, and everyday problems. The *da'wah* pattern presented by Ustadz Abu Haidar used multimedia. This differs from other preachers, in that

this prayer training employs TV, which eases access by the elderly. The congregants could be confused if they listened to other congregations, but they would feel a difference if they followed the training by Ustadz Abu Haidar. In addition, this preacher also told the importance of performing *shalat* and making the pilgrimage to Mecca. *Shalat*, according to Ustadz Abu Haidar, is a key to success in life, and this opinion is in line with Bowen's explanation regarding prayer in the Indonesian Muslim community, which focuses on local social meaning.

The prayer ritual itself is a format of worship, ritual, and practice, by all of which a person worships God. Bowen's (1989) study has articulated a phenomenon of *shalat*, as stated by Ustadz Abu Haidar, that prayer in congregations (*shalat jama'ah*) works better than praying alone. In the urban context, as mentioned earlier, *shalat* is conducted with many ethnic groups, since prayer can unite all people in a Mosque regardless of their differences. Moreover, in several other cases (Bowen, 1989), mosques have become places for congregants to gather to engage in discussions that are relatively open on social and political issues.

In relationship with philanthropy, Ustadz Abu Haidar's role is as a broker to establish philanthropy out of charitable practices towards political participation because the figure of Ustadz Abu Haidar has an attraction for thousands of Jemaah members to follow his teachings. Its effect is relevant to increase electoral votes. Philanthropy and *da'wah*, therefore, are closely related. According to Alawiyah (2013), non-governmental religious organizations reflected how non-profit organizations and philanthropic activities were influenced by religion in Indonesian Muslim communities. These organizations were different from conventional non-governmental organizations that do not have a religious background. The objective of philanthropic practices related to *da'wah* is to fulfill the public interest at the national level. Their methods are that Muslims manage charitable donations, such as *zakat*, *sadaqah*, *hibah*, *infaq*, and *waqf*. Meanwhile, the religious connotation is deliberately applied to show their identity and attract more Muslim benefactors (Alawiyah, 2013). The crucial point that needs to be underscored in this discussion is that we explain how the *da'wah* pattern of YASA can attract urban communities to donate their money voluntarily for the interest of Tarbiyah. This pattern became the method of the religious societal movement used by Ustadz Abu Haidar with his authority to mobilise resources through an informal approach, including families, relatives, and neighbors, and even to form non-governmental organisations as a new space for political party movement. The space is also used as a medium for promulgating idealised religious ideology. Here, thousands of Ustadz Abu Haidar followers give evidence that the theory of community empowerment with collective self-actualization determines their success. Political economy in a *da'wah* method focuses on social relations having the ability to influence other people and having a process to maintain the solidarity of followers (Ballesteros et al., 2010).

At this point, the author would like to argue that Ustadz Abu Haidar who carries out Islamic activities routinely and attracts thousands of people in Malang City is a new phenomenon of philanthropy in practice. Mostly, philanthropic activities are perhaps only limited to the practices of voluntarism, Caritas, or showing compassion. Then, the philanthropic trend in *tarbiyah* movement is labelled the term *da'wah* which is emphasised public to access philanthropic involvement. According to Mara Einstein, a phenomenon of 'faith branding' choose the moment of a general religious lecture at the urban mosques as a bridge to raise funds. In analogy to the phenomenon of the need for a large church, Mara Einstein noted that a large house of worship can serve more than 2,000 congregations; it can even be more than 20,000 congregations.

These larger churches are very evangelical conservatives compared to smaller churches. In the case of religion, when marking spirituality, religion could be traded. Then, people are increasingly inclined to be consumers or fond of shopping, religion will not only increase the level of marketing and promotion amid other brand forces, but they will also be increasingly vulnerable to creating products that religious consumers will buy by changing products to fit the market. Religion changes over time and the key point is the speed at which change occurs. Finally, adding marketing is a new goal to grow religious institutions (Einstein, 2008). The *da'wah* of urban society is closely related to 'social piety' through philanthropy, but the authors see an anomaly. The problem lies in the achievement of piety

which is shown based on material things. Moreover, the purpose of social piety is not directed to the Divine, although not much more predominantly the goal of philanthropic practice is revealed to his fellow human beings. Thus, the essence of the real spiritual has shifted to materialism which eventually forms social piety. It is apparent that urban society has shown that being pious is not only related to prayer, fasting, preaching, or other worship but rather to materialist things such as giving charity either for worship to the Divine or the recognition of fellow human beings. The political aspect of philanthropy can be seen in how Muslim politics relates to competition symbols in response to the interpretation of religion where there is a Muslim competition about who is the most religious. This is rather ambivalent about either relationships or competitors. The political aspect is seen by influencing people to do charity. Then, charity is part of *da'wah* and strengthening political concern, because the PKS is a *da'wah* party that embodies Islamic aspirations.

### 3. The Role of YASA in Augmenting Political Economic Participation in Urban Society

Political economy refers to the politicisation of economic life. In this case, this illustrates how economic flows run through philanthropy which has been mixed with politics. Further, this approach conceptualised by internalising a religious text into urban society. This comparison of 'market' (an item sold, which the author calls philanthropy) with 'beliefs' (everything that is considered true, which the author calls religion) is a phenomenon in Muslims called 'normalisation of identity' through the behavior of consumerism. This political economy strategy begins when an economic player (party elite) designs a marketing strategy (*da'wah*-based philanthropy) that targets a group (urban society). The context of political economy prompts the discussion of how a party has expenditures and incomes for its existence and party operations. A large party will have huge expenditures and massive incomes in organising its movement, then it is necessary to question where the source of the funds comes from. One of Tarbiyah's cadres explained that a high percentage of funds came from the cadres themselves, which further, from the philanthropic perspective, the funds came from almsgiving, spending (*infaq*), gifts, and donations. To strengthen the party's economy, strong cadres are needed so that it will increase the donations to distribute (DTDT, Personal Communication, March 25, 2021). The authors, therefore, argue that the political economy of the Tarbiyah Congregation has considerably influenced a large number of the electoral vote of the PKS in the legislative election 2019 in Malang City.

After recognising the method of Jemaah Tarbiyah as a form of partisan economic mobilization, we collected data from the director of YASA to study the foundation's role in attracting political-economic participation within urban communities. YASA director Andi Tricahyono stated that he had been involved in the non-governmental organisation for 14 years. According to him, many people are interested to work in LAZ (Lembaga Amil Zakat – Alms institution) as a soul calling and as a form of contribution to *ummah* (Muslim community). The job is a part of such passion. The specific programs, which become the main concern at LAZ of YASA include education, *da'wah*, health, economy, and social humanity.

Every legislator should create an independent fund created while facing the general election and grand campaigns. In the case of the PKS, its legislators were supported by Jemaah Tarbiyah's facilities. The winning of PKS votes in the 2019 legislative election was not separated from infrastructure supports established through philanthropic practices or independence initiatives. Every organisation has its strategies to mobilise its legislator candidates. Based on the countless *da'wah* opportunities carried out by Jemaah Tarbiyah, it started to draw people's participation with rational and trust options. Regarding this, Braham and Holler (2009) emphasised a beneficial symbolic relationship, such as campaign promises and community benefits policies. On the other hand, there is a benefit to the existence of the policymaker, that is, the election party (Heroepoetri & Santosa, 1993). Thus, Tarbiyah moves were initiated by the opportunity of *da'wah* and people's rationality towards Tarbiyah ideology and movements. The effort was conducted to maintain Tarbiyah's existence as a philanthropic organisation by fighting for society's interest. In this study, we limited the focus to YASA, which was established with the strong support of Jemaah Tarbiyah. In Malang City, the cadres have shown their strength in addressing community concerns through programs such as societal bridge-building, social



services, and humanitarian activities, all of which can attract the middle class to contribute to events by means ranging from donations of materials to active participation at the localities.

Candland (2001) reveals that highly religious people affect community formation in building non-profit religious organizations. Furthermore, concerning this matter, Alawiyah (Alawiyah, 2013) asserted that the organizations had steps to gain their "religious" identity by mobilizing more Muslim benefactors because principles of faith and Islamic values will provide public legitimacy. It was seen that the philanthropic practices had many *da'wah* programs which relied on the benefactors or were dedicated to the beneficiaries (Alawiyah, 2013). Accordingly, the common belief admits that if someone is compassionate with others, in which the rich help the poor and the strong help the weak, they will obtain the Creator's mercy regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, and skin color. The reward is regarded as being beyond human understanding because it is God's prerogative, in that He values each deed according to the state of the intention. Therefore, philanthropic intention is regarded as even more valuable than material things.

#### *Philanthropy to support political objectives*

The philanthropic actors correlate their actions with piety values. Thus, we assumed that there was a correlation between piety and its actualisation, which manifested through *da'wah*. Tricahyono maintained that *zakat* is a means of purifying one's sins. Hence, the purpose of such a statement is to create a lineage for *zakat* becoming a lifestyle, so that *zakat* is donated monthly. Dealing with this matter, Tricahyono (Personal Communication, March 30, 2021) said:

In fact, it was also the other way around, in that the poor also take benefit from the rich people. There are some works, that rich people cannot do, so mutual symbiosis was inevitable. In Qardawi's perspective, a good relationship protected the poor people's rights, in which if someone did not pay his *zakat* obligation, the punishment should be equal to those who did not perform *shalat*" ((Tricahyono, Personal Communication, March 30, 2021).

Morally, a philanthropic organisation must place itself in a neutral area. According to the rules in the Constitution, it is not allowed to favouring a political party (Fauzia, 2013). Choosing to join a political party is a personal matter, and thus in an organisation's view, philanthropy cannot be affiliated with any certain political party (Fauzia, 2013). There is still an openness in organisational structure allowing individuals to be sympathisers on a personal basis. Even though an inclination toward indirect aid is still possible, there is little information provided by Tricahyono about management operations in organisation, by either input or distribution, usually prioritised the cadres because, in a trustworthy manner, the cadres have contributed greatly to the growth and development of YASA's movement.

We observed that YASA did not fund the PKS campaign directly, but YASA functioned as a connector between the party's cadre, philanthropy, and communities in need. As stated by Latief (2013) earlier, PKS seeks to build its social utopia through its charity foundations. PKS plays an important role in shaping Islamic deeds. This matter was strengthened by Hamayotsu (2011), who noted that PKS has strategic cooperation, particularly with Islamic foundations with the sole purpose to expand the connection to legitimate PKS social activities. Even though the YASA case, referring to Tricahyono, was not tightly linked with the social activities of PKS, the political domination of Jemaah Tarbiyah sympathisers led to PKS. We believe YASA is an aid organisation that is well-organised and professional in Malang City. Then, as highlighted by Hamayotsu (Hamayotsu, 2011), there is a relationship between cadre and mass. We found such a relationship in the methods of fund flow statements used by YASA. However, it is important to note that there is a different relationship regarding the effect of the increase of PKS votes particularly in the legislative election of 2019.

Tricahyono assumed that YASA's role in establishing connections between members and masses of the political party was provided with an illustration that poor and needy people also required aid with their homes struck by disaster or due to experiencing other hardships. Then, when a party member knew of such situations, he would contact YASA to do follow-up action by a means of philanthropic aid. This could lead to an inference that the needy people who seek help will trust the party member

and, consequently, that this method of approach indirectly was one of the factors in the rise of PKS votes in the legislative election.

Additionally, at the moment of *ied al-fitr* (the holy day after the month of Ramadan) celebration, people were paying *zakat al-fitr* to the needy people (*mustahiq*) (Latief, 2013). In this case, YASA cooperates with the members of Jemaah Tarbiyah to divide the distribution plots, and for this purpose, YASA stated that the *zakat* was received from YASA benefactors, not from PKS. It means that the YASA authority may be misused as philanthropy for political purposes or changed for the sake of social interests. Hamayotsu (Hamayotsu, 2011) emphasised that PKS made a shortcut by providing welfare services to recruit and mobilise their supporters (Hamayotsu, 2011). In short, YASA, established by the domination of Jemaah Tarbiyah sympathisers, used their influence in philanthropic activities to affect PKS electoral votes in Malang City.

As explained earlier, the essence of such circulation is that YASA has quite a safe position to avoid breaching the Act. On the other hand, Tricahyono, as a Tarbiyah sympathiser, stressed that the bill also forbids political party officers to take a position as *zakat* organisers (*amil*). It means that the political party structure must be free from non-government organisations (Tricahyono, Personal Communication, March 30, 2021). At this point, it is obvious that PKS has a political-economy strategy that conforms to the opportunity and chances by which it is quite successful in driving its political agenda.

Concerning the rules of prohibition above, about a political party operating a charity foundation, PKS chooses to establish cooperation with various organisations of Islamic civil society and aims to be an intermediary of resources and provision by continuously providing social services to the society with Islamic base inclusion. Tan (2002) mentioned that the Muslim community was made to imagine the better and more professional role of a charitable organisation in serving social interests and prosperity to attract political parties (Tan, 2002). Accordingly, YASA is a charity organisation dedicated to legitimate political party movements to draw people's support or participation.

PKS was not the only party that could do such a process within YASA. It does not rule out the possibility that all affiliates can make this rotation. However, in line with Tricahyono's statement, the party's members are prioritising more on follow-up actions. Thus, the crucial point underlined here is that we do not jump to the conclusion that philanthropy funds a political campaign. The data obtained only helps to connect it, not to fund it. Indeed, philanthropy deals with rules on the prohibition to fund a political party. Likewise, a *zakat* organiser must not aid or donate funds for political campaigns. Therefore, from this point, we can deduce that the relationship of the party's cadre with the masses and a philanthropic intermediary became the parameter for the rise of PKS votes in the 2019 legislative election in Malang City.

The relation has been explained by Permata (2008b, 2008a) that, indeed, the *mustahiq* and *muzakki* (benefactor) usually have a cadre-and-sympathiser relationship in which the *muzakki* is an educated person from an urban region identified as a cadre, while the *mustahiq* normally comes from a lower social class identified as a sympathizer. It means that secular economic principles will obstruct the path to the beneficiaries' prosperity. On the contrary, Islam-based economic principles will impel the flow of a fund's circulation correctly between *mustahiq* and *muzakki*. Therefore, YASA often provides discourse in live streaming or through magazines regarding economic awareness to do the right actions based on Islamic principles.

We can conclude that YASA is helpful to society. In addition, the benefactors and every element in YASA are common people in various communities. This result is similar to the report by Latief (Latief, 2013) who stated that PKS's role is to associate themselves through Islamic charity for social good with the community. Therefore, philanthropy is legal if they collect funds from various communities.

As previously explained, the YASA role started as an intermediary/connector between the party's elite and the masses. Then, the implication for the masses is trust, while the consequences for the party's elite are increases in electoral votes. After making such a connection, this shows the presence of political economy practice, in which to compensate for political interest, there is a strategy to control the

economy (Abu-Dahir, 2016). Besides, it was seen that PKS actions attempted to significantly increase their electoral votes in the 2019 legislative election in Malang City through a charity foundation as in YASA.

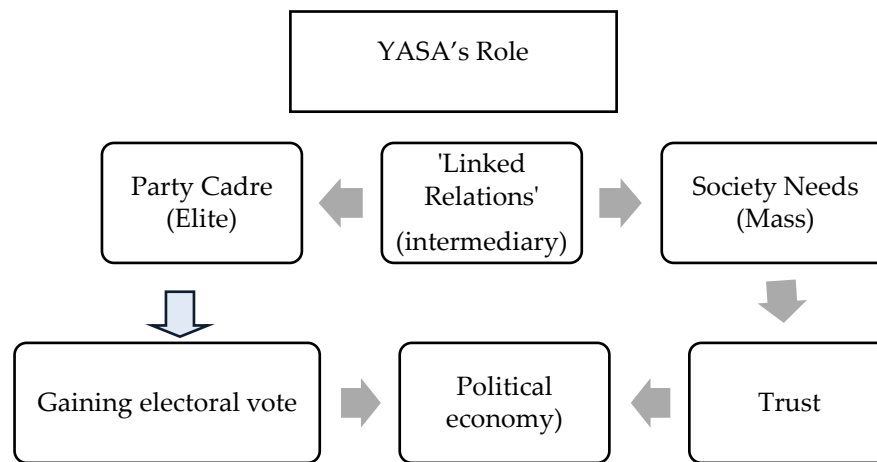


Figure 2 The relationship between YASA and PKS

Furthermore, the PKS's slogan '*sundu buna juyu buna*' means the party's fund comes from its own pocket. Then, we interpreted, at the same time and based on observation results in the field, that a funding relationship of "elites to grass-roots" was mediated through YASA. The party's cadres, called the elite, dispensed funds systematically, together with the *infaq* donated for those in need or the religious masses that have a *da'wah* dimension (Hamayotsu, 2011). The people's choice, particularly in urban society, was to donate their wealth as much as possible through philanthropic organisations (Wasisto, 2015). Hence, YASA directed the funds so that society would follow YASA. Thereby the *infaq* is always right on target for the needy.

Observing the case in Malang City and the participation of the urban society Jemaah Tarbiyah, as shown in Table 2.1, philanthropy is seen to have brought a significant electoral change in politics which, broadly speaking, cannot be separated from their cadre's role in who guards, attends to, and supports such changing processes. The effect of the aspirational civil society, seen in an urban context with the involvement of party cadres, was accompanied by an increase in PKS votes in the last legislative election.

#### 4. Political Economic Participation of Urban Society

Data obtained from Idxchannel states that based on *zakat*-mapping indicators (IPPZ), the potential of Indonesian *zakat* was 233.8 trillion rupiahs (Rizky, 2021) as of 2019. Even in 2015, the potential of *zakat* had already been quite considerable, at 15-20 trillion per year (Zuhri, 2015). The funds were largely obtained from the urban Muslim middle class. These numbers show that urban residents' monetary participation in philanthropic activities has been increasing. It also shows that the number and the capacity of benefactors and charity organisations are also increasing. Besides, it has been observed that social rituals such as charity, *zakat*, and *sadaqah* are growing significantly in urban society (Wasisto, 2015).

The collection of such funds in society is also an indicator that the levels of both materialistic demand and philanthropic supply are rising. It has also been documented that philanthropic expression affects donors such that the more wealth that they spent, the more piety they felt. These conceptions became a source of new expressions and rituals in religious life. The focus of such expression is the recognition of equal humanity and a view of horizontal relationships among people as preferable to vertical relationships (Wasisto, 2015).

#### *Conversations with benefactors and sympathisers*

The benefactors' point of view in carrying out their philanthropic actions through YASA has become significant to analyze. The viewpoint can engender political and economic participation by urban society seeing it as a purpose of new Islamic life. And our interview with Rofita Dewi, who is a YASA benefactor and a sympathiser with the Jemaah Tarbiyah, revealed how benefactor involvement contributes to the political economy of the Jemaah Tarbiyah (Rofita Dewi, Personal Communication, September 24, 2020).

For an example of the overlap of piety and politics, Vita was interviewed as one of the YASA benefactors. She initially had heeded a recommendation from her husband, who regularly participates in a religious discussions at urban mosques in Malang City. One of the mosques that became the center of the religious meeting is the Ramadan mosque, where Malang Dhuha in Congregation was held. Previously the event was only the Malang Dhuha in Congregation, where they usually held regular events at the Ramadan mosque. Currently, we can see that urban mosques were widely used for religious activities including inserting people into the network of YASA. Buehler (2009) states that PKS was previously accused of using mosque property for political activities. We indeed observed that YASA, as an organisation dominated by the Jemaah Tarbiyah, uses mosques to mobilize people's participation and for raising funds. And Vita was one of the respondents who were attending the religious activities held by YASA and who became willing to donate as much as they could. She thereby became an occasional contributor to YASA, having seen a YASA advertisement in a booth at the Ramadan mosque, which is located at the front of the urban central mosque (Rofita Dewi, Personal Communication, September 24, 2020). Every religious activity always serves free cakes and the promotion of YASA programs. In Vita's case, she was motivated to donate to YASA as a good deed.

Judged from this point of view, we see a correlation with Weber's term called the Protestant ethic, in which a person works hard and seriously with an afterlife orientation while largely neglecting worldly reward. In her participation in the religious discussion, Vita did not much consider worldly matters because she just sought blessings and mercy to redound to her. As she works hard daily, Vita's participation can affect economic growth, and in such ways, followers of Islam will consequently increase either in number or support (Weber, 2001).

This study's field data, obtained during direct observation in a religious congregation, observed that there was a religious campaign, playing videos and descriptions of Palestine's condition, in PowerPoint slides displayed on the LCD screen. The purpose was to bolster sympathy from congregants towards their fellow Muslims in Palestine who needed their help, as with Qur'anic *shadaqah*, savings for Qur'an memorizers. Because of viewing this video presentation, which took the form of a religious marketing strategy, Vita described that it had increased her trust and that her heart had been moved by seeing these presentations about Palestine's situation.

About religious marketing strategy, and as explained by George Stigler in his book *The Economics as Preacher and Other Essays*, religious activity can be similar to aspects of a commercial transaction because it is voluntarily performed and it repeatedly encourages a person to be honest, transparent, and trustworthy, eschewing lying or deception (Stigler, 2009).

Vita described that it did not matter whether philanthropy prioritises their affiliation because it was undeniable that philanthropy would not operate independently without any political interest behind it. In terms of religious interest, a social movement in operating philanthropy could lead to a solidarity motive. As illustrated by Fiske (2004) in *Social Solidarity and the Gift*, there is a gesture to ensure initiative and mobilise resources and then it would be accepted by society if philanthropy will focus on prosperity. The motive was carried out solely to maintain support for their activism, starting with the effort to attract sympathy, and then it ended with participating as a member (Komter, 2005).

For a second example of the overlap of piety and politics, we participated directly in several mosques in Malang City. Every congregant competed to hold religious discussions with their affiliation. Indeed, it becomes a religious storefront for urban society and Tarbiyah themselves. The activity aims to attract people's participation for piety, but it also led to political and economic participation. There were examples of how religious discussions were bridged to enhance the political-economic participation of urban society. In religious discussions at Ahmad Yani Mosque in the urban

area, in which we became attendees, the congregants typically were so numerous that the area outside the mosque was filled with visitors and with admirers of one of the keynote speakers. On this occasion, the event was notable due to the attendance of Astri Ivo, a celebrity who had submitted to God with the uplifting of her life due to her ability in the *da'wah* (Observation).

At the beginning of the event, the congregants were presented with several promotions and fund-raising drives for the Palestine people, and they heard Astri Ivo as a speaker. Several video slides displayed on the LCD of the mosque attracted the congregants' sympathy as they created compassionate feelings and aroused concerns. After the promotion finished, Astri Ivo started the discussion with thematic content related to urban people. At the end of the show, the fund-raising was mentioned again explicitly. She began with a statement that donations to Uyghur communities would strengthen brotherhood (*ukhuwah*) and congregants' connections. She noted that Uyghur communities share the brotherhood and fellowship in Islam so if Uyghur brothers felt pain, their fellow Muslims should also feel the same way. Ivo asked for the congregants to commit to distributing their funds in a certain amount, which was quite considerably large.

The congregants who were willing to dispense their funds were asked to move forward to tell their stories about why they were motivated to donate. The writers did not observe a large number of benefactor congregants, even though each donor received as a bonus the opportunity to receive a handshake, hug, and photo with Astri Ivo. The congregants who moved forward to tell their reasons for donating spoke similarly to each other, about their self-awakening to spend their funds because they intended to improve their submission and increase their piety to God.

The intention was revealed in front of the public and explored with illustrations of how piety is shaped into social piety. As stated by Iannaccone (1988), a new religious attraction was seen in its rational option and a man can voluntarily choose to participate in religion by maximizing purpose through the analysis of basic economic principles such as cost-benefit considerations (Iannaccone, 1988). Thus, the participation by Astri Ivo's congregants in the religious domain could be seen as individual rational options for religious faith in which they maximize behavior related to having the group within a mosque fulfill one's piety. Then, with the same pattern, in the next religious discussion at the Ramadan Mosque, the writers were also participants as congregants in the urban area. At this point, the organizer invited another prominent celebrity, Indadari, a former wife of a Cesar dancer, who had been moved to complete submission and who established the *niqab squad* community ([https://www.instagram.com/niqabsquad\\_official/](https://www.instagram.com/niqabsquad_official/)).

Astri Ivo delivered a talk on the theme of "A Muslim's Reflection." In the beginning, as usual, attendees were given brochures about *sharia* cosmetic products, which company also supported the event. The congregants were given an envelope containing paper with the name of the fund and options for the amount to donate, but the congregants were not required to make these donations. Then to wrap up the event, a man from the organiser committee moved forward to give a compelling speech with exhortations for the congregants to spend their funds on that day and if possible to donate quite a considerable amount of money.

### *Political economy in fundraising*

'Brutal alms' (*sadaqah brutal*), as proposed by fund-raisers, denoted a religious club model, as explained by Iannaccone (Iannaccone, 1988), that provides intense religious experiences to their organisation members. Religious economics on a personal basis essentially refers to people intentionally and systematically trying to achieve lofty purposes. Rationality is accordingly applied in religious behaviors and choices, similar to the methods of individual and social decisions.

In economic terminology, a person "buys" religious goods in the sense that they spend their time and resources on religion. If a religion demands its adherents to attend formal services every week, perform *shalat* five times daily, donate 20% of their income, or wear certain clothing, those things in aggregate may become expensive in time and money. Then in some cases, a person may decide to decrease their participation or choose a less demanding religion. Each person in this outlook is viewed as a consumer of religious goods and services, and this means that a person has demands on their time

and funds due to their religious participation. In this way, religion is a participant in commerce, wherein its followers choose how, and how much, to invest time and resources in religious activities (Iannaccone, 1988).

The third example of the overlap of piety and politics is seen in how mosques as a place for philanthropy can attract participation in the political economy of urban society, as we observed at the Manarul Sawojajar Mosque in the outskirts of Malang City. Palestine issues were presented directly by a guest star, namely the famous Qur'anic reciter Baraa Masoud. Masoud told how his dreadful condition in Palestine was due to continuous attacks from Israel. As a Palestinian, Masoud vividly described Palestine children's conditions and sadness. The organizers then took a moment to attract the participation and donations of urban society. They also offered a chance for congregants to become volunteers, and many members were indeed moved to participate.

While we were participants among the congregants, we were also conducting our observations, and we were similarly moved to feel the Palestinian children's sadness. With the same religious marketing style as described above, a man as a committee member moved forward with agitation and gave a compelling speech to impel congregants to donate considerable funds. Part of the speech was as follows.

A person who gives charity can be said to have given a true charity. It is a person who spends his fortunes considerably. However, there is a mistake done by many people who spend alms as when they have 2000 rupiah and 20.000 rupiahs in their wallet, surely they will choose 2000 rupiah instead of the other to do his alms. This logic must be changed. *Sadaqah* should be donated with the highest amount, not the other way around (Rofita Dewi, Personal Communication, September 24, 2020).

The several instances above show the activity patterns of urban mosques, which have almost the same nature, in that they employ a religious congregation moment as a bridge to fund-raising. In the examples above, the organizers were not directly from YASA but rather were from other non-governmental organizations, such as OneCare, ACT, and YDSF. Nonetheless, the pattern and purpose of those organizations have similarities. The outward expression of piety was leveraged within the urban community, as mentioned by Wasisto Raharjo, whereby the people huddled together were motivated and urged to dispense their funds as a sense of identification with urban society itself. The notable growth of philanthropic activities is centered in urban mosques. The urban people were motivated that Islam provides a newly expanded basis for spending money on various causes, even possibly more compelling the worship (divine) itself.

## 5. Conclusion

The phenomenon of the PKS votes in the 2019 legislative election rising to 100% in Malang City shows social changes in urban society. To explore and document this, we took the philanthropic landscape as a factor behind the increase in electoral votes and campaign funds. It was found that the current philanthropic development has shifted its orientation to the political interest, in contrast to what was previously an activity for societal generosity and apolitical humanity. It was observed that the political movement of PKS based on *da'wah* was modeled from philanthropic organizations. The writers found that the funds collected were not always for donation to the needy, but were generally diverted to campaign funds. We formulated this shifting as a political-economic interest that significantly contributed to the rise of PKS votes.

Through several stages, the political economy has shown that philanthropy tends to become a political relationship. Intending to do truly religious marketing and the purpose of *da'wah*, the political economy emerged with the role of Ustadz Abu Haidar in Malang City. Thousands of congregants were urged to make donations by his method and *da'wah* paradigm. Then the authority of YASA in attracting the support and sympathy of urban society correlated with the rise of PKS electoral votes. This participation in the political economy by the urban community indicates that philanthropic expression

in piety has transformed from vertical to horizontal connections, which are shaped by religious symbols.

The political economics of the Jemaah Tarbiyah played a significant role in boosting the electoral votes for PKS in the 2018 legislative election. From the perspective of philanthropy, we observe that it is experiencing a process of “charities politics”, and/or there is a process of making philanthropy political. This kind of politics indirectly has urban people donating their funds, thus having philanthropy serve purposes other than purely humanistic generosity. In other words, many charitable actions have shifted to having a political tendency, rather than staying with the ideal of organized philanthropy being purely a religious or societal humanist generosity. It was found that broker's cadres used a bridge between philanthropic trust and needy communities to motivate donation of charity funds for political purposes.

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