

***Fiqh Sosial* as a Conceptual Framework for *Pesantren*-Based Community Empowerment: Insights from *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh**

Siswanto¹, Muh Luthfi Hakim², Syamsuddin Asrofi³,
Muhammad Sirril Wafa⁴

¹Institut Pesantren Mathali'ul Falah Pati, Indonesia,

²Walisongo State Islamic University, Indonesia,

³Al-Azhar University, Egypt, ⁴Global University Beirut, Lebanon

Email: ¹siswanto@ipmafa.ac.id, ²23090290066@student.walisongo.ac.id,

³sepuhmanunggal@gmail.com, ⁴anakkr@gmail.com

Abstract

Fiqh Sosial, developed by *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh, is a paradigm of Islamic legal thought that integrates the normative values of *Shari'ah* with social realities. It positions *fiqh* not only as a body of legal doctrines but also as an instrument of community empowerment oriented toward public welfare (*maṣlahah*). This study analyzes the *pesantren*-based community empowerment model developed by *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh, drawing on Jim Ife's theory of community empowerment. It uses a descriptive-qualitative method with a library research approach. The analysis draws on Jim Ife's theory, which emphasizes participation, capacity building, community-based development, and social transformation. The findings demonstrate that the model is implemented through productive zakat management, human resource capacity strengthening, continuous community assistance, and the establishment of various *pesantren*-based social, economic, educational, and health institutions. Analysis through Jim Ife's framework shows that the model aligns with the principles of community development, particularly community participation, capacity enhancement, social capital development, expanded access to resources, and community self-reliance. *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh's Social Fiqh is a *pesantren*-based community empowerment model that integrates the social-humanistic empowerment paradigm with Islamic values and the *maqāsid al-shari'ah*.

Keywords: *Fiqh Sosial*, Jim Ife, *pesantren*-based community empowerment.

Introduction

Fiqh, as one of the disciplines of Islamic scholarship, constitutes a set of legal norms governing the relationship between human beings and God (*ḥablun minallāh*) as well as the relationship among human beings (*ḥablun minanās*) (Mahfudh, 2011). In contemporary Muslim societies, *fiqh* is predominantly understood as a body of positive legal rulings primarily concerned with determining the legal status of actions in terms of permissibility and prohibition,

rather than as an instrument of social ethics oriented toward the realization of public welfare (*maṣlahat al-ummah*) (Lufaei, 2020). This paradigm positions fiqh within a predominantly normative framework that remains distinct from social realities, thereby limiting the dialectical interaction between fiqh and social life. Consequently, fiqh has often been perceived as a discipline whose contextual relevance requires further development in addressing various contemporary social issues (Zubaedi, 2006).

Fiqh is a discipline that integrates the transcendental (*samāwī*) and human (*arḍī*) dimensions and synthesizes the authority of revelation and human reason in legal reasoning (*istinbāt al-aḥkām*). This characteristic establishes fiqh not merely as a collection of legal norms, but also as an intellectual instrument capable of responding to social dynamics and societal challenges. This perspective is consistent with the principle that Islamic teachings are *ṣāliḥ li-kulli ḡamān wa makān*, meaning that they remain relevant across all times and places (Albab, 2025). Such relevance can be realized through a dynamic interaction between fiqh and social reality, in which fiqh is understood as an adaptive, contextual discipline capable of responding to social transformation and contemporary challenges (Saefullah, 2026).

The adaptive, dialogical, and solution-oriented nature of fiqh emerges from the intellectual framework of a Muslim scholar who, as *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh describes, possesses a bidimensional disposition. This disposition entails integrating advanced mastery of Islamic sciences with the capacity to interpret and analyze social realities in a critical, objective, and comprehensive manner. The combination of a thorough understanding of classical fiqh texts and an acute awareness of the relevant social context enables the formulation of Islamic legal rulings that are both normatively legitimate and practically relevant to societal needs (Iqbal, 2022).

The development of fiqh thought is inherently embedded in specific socio-historical contexts and shaped by historical events, social and cultural conditions, prevailing interests, and the period's contexts. Fiqh reasoning, therefore, results from a dialectical process between the normative texts of Islam and evolving social realities (Nurdiansyah, 2016). In Indonesia during the 1980s, *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh identified socio-economic underdevelopment among Muslim communities as a critical issue requiring a substantive response from fiqh scholarship. He argued that fiqh should promote social welfare by offering practical and contextually relevant solutions. This approach was informed by social realities characterized by significant inequality, rapid

population growth, uneven population distribution, and a predominantly young population, all of which posed complex challenges for employment, education, economic development, and public health (Waskito & Nur Kholik, 2020).

The emergence of *Fiqh Sosial*, formulated by *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh* as a leading Muslim scholar and *pesantren* figure, is a significant contribution to Islamic legal thought in Indonesia. This concept seeks not only to preserve classical fiqh but also to revitalize its substantive values so they remain relevant in contemporary social contexts (Prasetia et al., 2023). It emerged from *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh*'s reflections and practical experiences in responding to social challenges in Kajen Village and the surrounding areas, including poverty, limited educational opportunities, and public health concerns. Accordingly, *Kiai Sahal* understood fiqh not merely as a body of normative legal doctrines, but also as an ethical and transformative instrument for social change (Asmani, 2015a).

As a practical manifestation of his empowerment-oriented vision, *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh* initiated various institutions to address community needs in several strategic sectors. In the economic sector, he established the *Biro Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat* (BPPM), which focused on strengthening community-based economic empowerment through *pesantren* institutions. In education, *Perguruan Islam Mathali'ul Falah* (PIM) and *Institut Pesantren Mathali'ul Falah* were developed as institutions committed to producing intellectually capable and morally grounded human resources. In healthcare, *Rumah Sakit Islam Pati* (RSI Pati) was established to enhance both accessibility and quality of services for the wider community. In the field of social welfare, *Panti Asuhan Darul Hadlanah* was founded as an institutional expression of concern for child protection and social development. The establishment of these institutions demonstrates that *Fiqh Sosial* has evolved beyond a purely conceptual framework and has been actualized through the institutionalization of empowerment programs to promote the sustainable improvement of community welfare and social well-being (Fajar, 2008).

Kiai Sahal Mahfudh's contribution to community empowerment extended beyond institutional development to the transformation of societal views on worldly life. He sought to revise prevailing perspectives on worldly affairs by presenting worldly life as a divine trust (*amānah*) and as a means of realizing virtuous, devotional deeds, while also preparing for the hereafter. Although the fulfillment of spiritual needs is a primary objective, human beings are equally bound by the legal and social order governing worldly existence. In this regard,

worldly life functions as the sole *wasilah* through which human beings pursue eternal life in the hereafter (Mahfudh, 2011, p. xxii).

From this Islamic reflection on social transformation emerged the concept of *Fiqh Sosial*, a paradigm that positions *fiqh* not merely as a body of normative legal doctrine, but also as an instrument of empowerment and social engineering for the realization of public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*). *Kiai* Sahal's intellectual framework integrated the *al-fiqhiyyah* tradition (the heritage and classical texts of *fiqh*) with the principles of *maqāṣid al-shari'ah*, ensuring that legal formulations possess not only normative legitimacy but also the capacity to respond effectively to the evolving needs and challenges of society (Mahfudh, 2011).

Previous research has investigated *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial* using diverse perspectives and methodological approaches, as demonstrated by the works of Muhyar Fanani (2015), Chasanuddin and Nafisah (2019), Hakim (2019, 2022, 2024), Umadatul Baroroh (2020), Albab (2025), and Nazar (2021). These studies have significantly advanced the understanding of *Kiai* Sahal's intellectual legacy, particularly regarding the conceptual and normative aspects of *Fiqh Sosial*. Nevertheless, analyses of *Kiai* Sahal's concepts and practices of community empowerment, specifically through the framework of contemporary empowerment theories, remain limited.

While many studies have addressed *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial*, there is a lack of research that specifically examines the community empowerment model developed and implemented by *Kiai* Sahal, drawing on Jim Ife's empowerment theory. Employing this analytical framework provides valuable insight into the implementation of *Fiqh Sosial* principles through participatory, institutional, and sustainable community empowerment models.

This study's primary contribution is the integration of *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial* with Jim Ife's theory of community empowerment to elucidate *Kiai* Sahal's *pesantren*-based empowerment model. This approach facilitates a comprehensive analysis of the interconnections among *fiqh* construction, empowerment practices, and social transformation.

This research adopts a descriptive-qualitative design (Creswell, 2019) and utilizes a library research methodology. The concepts of community empowerment and Jim Ife's empowerment theory serve as analytical frameworks to examine *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh's empowerment model from the perspective of *Fiqh Sosial* (Ife, 2002). Jim Ife's theory was chosen for its emphasis on participation, capacity building, community-based development,

and social transformation, which closely align with the principles of *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh's Fiqh Sosial* in developing *pesantren*-based community empowerment. Accordingly, this study analyzes the community empowerment model established by *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh* in Kajen through the lens of *Fiqh Sosial*, employing Jim Ife's empowerment theory as the primary analytical framework.

Result and Discussion

Fiqh Sosial as a Framework for *Pesantren*-Based Community Empowerment

Poverty continues to present a significant challenge to Indonesia's development. As a multifaceted social phenomenon, poverty necessitates a clear conceptual framework and comprehensive analysis of the factors underlying its persistence. This analytical foundation is essential for developing effective strategies to reduce poverty and improve social welfare (Pinontoan, 2020).

Multiple factors contribute to the persistence of poverty. A primary factor is the limited quality of human resources, as indicated by insufficient knowledge, skills, and capacity to identify and develop societal potential. Additionally, restricted access to essential facilities and infrastructure, such as education, capital, employment opportunities, technology, and public services, further exacerbates community economic conditions. Poverty also limits educational attainment and constrains opportunities for capacity development, perpetuating a cycle in which restricted access to education and human resource development reinforces the persistence of poverty (Rohmi et al., 2023). Within this context, *pesantren* play a critical role in community development by first enhancing their institutional capacities and cultivating skilled human resources capable of managing and developing resources within the surrounding community (Mahfudh, 1999, p. 2).

Poverty alleviation initiatives should not rely exclusively on consumptive assistance but must prioritize strengthening community capacity and promoting self-reliance. Communities require targeted assistance, education, and training to optimize available capital, generate added value, and enhance their standard of living. This strategy aligns with *Kiai Sahal's* perspective on community development, which emphasizes improving social welfare and living standards through processes rooted in identifying community needs and social challenges (Mahfudh, 1999).

Kiai Sahal Mahfudh emphasized that effective poverty alleviation cannot be achieved solely by providing ongoing material support to communities.

Instead, it requires equipping individuals with the means to achieve self-sufficiency. However, providing resources alone is inadequate unless accompanied by the necessary knowledge and skills to use them effectively. Communities need guidance on appropriate techniques, resource optimization, and strategies for managing existing capacities to achieve sustainable outcomes (Mahfudh, 2011). The empowerment model developed by *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh, therefore, integrates capital assistance with the enhancement of human resource capacity through ongoing education, training, and mentoring. This model seeks to foster economic self-reliance, reduce dependence on external aid, and support the development of sustainable economic activities that improve long-term community welfare.

Access to capital is widely recognized as a critical factor in poverty alleviation. Muslim communities possess significant economic potential through the institution of zakat. Within Islamic teachings, zakat is an obligatory act of worship for Muslims who meet specific wealth ownership criteria, such as attaining the *niṣāb* threshold and fulfilling other relevant conditions. Zakat, therefore, encompasses both an individual devotional aspect and a strategic socio-economic function, serving as a mechanism for wealth redistribution to reduce inequality and enhance social welfare. When managed professionally and with a focus on empowerment, zakat can be an effective instrument for expanding access to capital among economically disadvantaged groups, thereby fostering economic self-reliance and contributing to poverty reduction (Fajrina et al., 2020).

In this context, Islamic *da'wah* plays a significant role in supporting poverty alleviation initiatives. Two primary approaches can be identified. First, *da'wah* fosters social awareness and solidarity among economically capable Muslims, encouraging resource sharing and contributions to social welfare. Second, *da'wah* can be realized through concrete action (*da'wah bi al-ḥāl*), specifically by implementing community empowerment programs that directly address societal needs and challenges (Mahfudh, 2011).

Within this context, *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh played a pivotal role in rearticulating Islam as a *keāffah* religion, defined as a tradition that integrates both theological and sociological dimensions. Through the concept of *Fiqh Sosial*, *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh aimed to translate the normative values of Islam into community empowerment practices that address various social challenges. Islamic *da'wah* is thus expressed not only through spiritual and ritual cultivation but also through concrete actions that promote social welfare, economic self-

reliance, social justice, and the realization of public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*). This approach illustrates the capacity of Islamic teachings to engage constructively with social realities and provide sustainable solutions to the complex challenges society faces (Asmani, 2015b).

From the perspective of Islamic law, zakat is fundamentally defined as wealth that must be transferred by a *muṣakki* to those legally entitled to receive it (*mustahiq*). When zakat is distributed directly by the *muṣakki*, without the involvement of authorized institutions or governing bodies, it is typically transferred as zakat assets rather than being converted into other forms of assistance. This provision suggests that zakat can function not only to fulfill recipients' immediate needs but also as a source of productive capital (Riza, 2021).

Historically, the distribution of zakat has primarily focused on fulfilling consumptive needs, with *muṣakki*s providing zakat to *mustahiq* in the form of goods or cash, as prescribed in classical fiqh literature, including *Fath al-Qarib al-Mujib* (Al-Ghazzī, 2005), *Tuḥfat al-Tullāb* (Al-Anṣori, 1997), and other authoritative sources. *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh* contends that this distribution pattern has had a limited impact on improving beneficiaries' quality of life, as it has not sufficiently promoted economic self-reliance among zakat recipients (Asmani, 2015c; Hanif et al., 2022). In response, *Kiai Sahal* advocated for a more productive paradigm for zakat management through a professional, accountable governance system focused on community empowerment.

Kiai Sahal asserts that, with the consent of the *mustahiq*, zakat distribution is not limited to goods or cash for consumptive use. Instead, zakat may be allocated as productive capital and invested in economic activities. This approach to productive zakat management is expected to strengthen recipients' economic capacity, foster business opportunities, generate sustainable income sources, and progressively transform *mustahiq* into economically self-reliant individuals (Mahfudh, 2011).

Within the framework of *fiqh al-ṣakāh*, *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh's* approach constitutes a notable innovation in zakat management. Zakat assets are not required to be distributed to *mustahiq* in their original form; rather, their allocation may be adapted to meet the needs and objectives of community empowerment. In this context, zakat can serve as productive business capital to enhance beneficiaries' economic self-reliance (Wijaya, 2025, p. 170). Therefore, zakat management should be conceptualized not only as a mechanism for

wealth distribution, as emphasized in classical *fiqh al-ṣakāh*, but also as a tool for community empowerment, systematically aimed at improving social welfare, alleviating poverty, and generating sustainable economic benefits (Al-Qaraḍāwī, n.d.).

Although *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh introduced significant innovations, his ideas were not intended to modify the fundamental principles of *fiqh al-ṣakāh*. Instead, they aim to develop and contextualize the classical *fiqh* tradition to address contemporary societal needs more effectively. This approach is evident in the continued adherence to essential principles governing zakat distribution (Zubaedi, 2006). For instance, while zakat may be managed as productive business capital rather than distributed solely in its original form, its implementation still requires the consent of the *mustahiq*. This stipulation indicates that *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh's model of productive zakat maintains the principles of voluntary consent, public benefit, and the protection of beneficiaries' rights. As a result, these innovations remain consistent with Islamic law and align with the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*.

Kiai Sahal Mahfudh's approach to using zakat as productive business capital was informed by empirical observations of the community's social conditions. First, he observed that many *mustahiq* had generally achieved the ability to meet their basic daily needs, such as food and clothing. As a result, consumptive forms of zakat assistance produced only a limited impact on enhancing their overall quality of life. Second, zakat was often regarded by *mustahiq* as temporary assistance or supplementary income and was primarily allocated for consumption, including non-essential expenditures. These utilization patterns were deemed inadequate to foster economic self-reliance or improve the long-term welfare of zakat recipients.

Building on these observations, *Kiai* Sahal contended that basic human needs encompass more than food and clothing, extending to broader dimensions essential for achieving the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, such as the protection of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), intellect (*ḥifẓ al-'aql*), life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*), and lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*). Achieving these objectives requires communities to have sufficient access to education, skills development, and economic resources to strengthen their capacities and improve their quality of life. *Kiai* Sahal identified limited educational attainment, inadequate skills, and restricted access to productive resources, particularly capital, as primary causes of poverty (Mahfudh, 2011). Consequently, he advocated that zakat be managed as a productive tool for economic empowerment by using it as business capital. This

approach positions zakat not only as a mechanism for short-term assistance but also as a means of fostering economic self-reliance, enhancing social welfare, and sustainably improving the socio-economic status of *mustahiq*, consistent with the principles of *Fiqh Sosial* developed by *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh*.

An Analysis of Jim Ife's Empowerment Theory in Relation to the *Pesantren*-Based Empowerment Model in *Fiqh Sosial*

The community empowerment initiatives introduced by *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh* through zakat management in Kajen Village, Pati Regency, illustrate that zakat functions not only as a religious obligation focused on consumptive assistance but also as a tool for economic empowerment to improve social welfare, by implementing professional and productive zakat management (Mahfudh, 2011, p. 149), *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh* aimed to promote community economic self-reliance by increasing access to capital and by providing capacity building, mentoring, and ongoing support. These efforts enabled *mustahiq* to establish sustainable economic activities and livelihoods.

Beyond implementing productive zakat, *Fiqh Sosial*, as a *pesantren*-based empowerment model, is further demonstrated through the establishment of institutions dedicated to community development. In the economic sector, *Kiai Sahal* established the *Biro Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat* (BPPM), which focuses on community-based economic empowerment, and *Bank Perkreditan Rakyat Artha Huda Abadi*, which offers financial services to local residents. In the health sector, *Rumah Sakit Islam Pati* was founded to enhance the quality of public healthcare services. For social welfare, *Panti Asuhan Darul Hadlanah* provides care, education, and protection for orphaned children. In the educational sector, *Kiai Sahal* developed *Institut Pesantren Mathali'ul Falah*, a higher education institution committed to producing competent graduates with strong moral character and social awareness (Asmani, 2015b).

The establishment of these institutions demonstrates that *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh's Fiqh Sosial* extends beyond a normative conception of Islamic law, providing a practical and sustainable model for addressing diverse social problems. This approach enabled the integration of *Shari'ah* values with society's empirical needs, leading to the development of institutional innovations that effectively addressed economic, educational, healthcare, and social welfare challenges in Kajen and its surrounding areas.

The empowerment model developed by *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh* aligns with the core objectives of community development as outlined in contemporary

empowerment theories. Community development primarily aims to achieve empowerment by enhancing the quality of life, dignity, and human well-being. Empowerment is defined as the process of developing the capacities, potentials, and resources of communities, enabling them to address challenges, meet needs independently, and advocate for their interests without reliance on external actors (Ife & Tesoriero, 2008). Thus, empowerment involves more than providing assistance; it emphasizes strengthening both individual and collective capacities to enable communities to sustainably optimize their potential.

In line with this perspective, Suhartini and colleagues, in *Model-Model Pemberdayaan Masyarakat*, state that the primary objective of community empowerment programs for economically disadvantaged communities is to improve residential environments, strengthen self-reliance, and develop the capacity for productive economic activities. This approach supports communities in addressing immediate needs while also fostering the capacities, skills, and access to resources required for sustainable improvements in social welfare (Muslim, 2007).

Grounded in this conception of empowerment, *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh's practice of productive zakat aligns closely with Jim Ife's framework of community development. Jim Ife defines community empowerment as a process that enhances community capacity through improved access to resources, opportunities, competencies, and knowledge, thereby enabling individuals and communities to make informed decisions and overcome dependency (Ife, 2016; Ishom et al., 2021; Malta, 2023, p. 30). Within the context of productive zakat management in Kajen Village, *Kiai* Sahal regarded *mustahiq* not solely as recipients of aid but as agents with developmental potential. The integration of business capital with education, training, and mentoring (Hanif et al., 2022), exemplifies a systematic approach to strengthening individual and community capacities, facilitating independent and sustainable economic resource management.

The empowerment model established by *Kiai* Sahal also embodies Jim Ife's principle of participation, which prioritizes the active engagement of community members and recognizes them as subjects of empowerment rather than passive recipients (Ife & Tesoriero, 2008, p. 285). Poverty is conceptualized not only as limited income but also as a result of restricted access to resources, opportunities, and essential goods and services (Shaikh et al., 2023, p. 2). Therefore, empowerment initiatives should focus on broadening access to capital, knowledge, skills, and social networks. In implementing productive

zakat management, *Kiai Sahal* utilized zakat to expand economic opportunities for *mustahiq* communities by providing business capital and concurrently enhancing their capacity to utilize these resources effectively (Asmani, 2015c; Hanif et al., 2022). As a result, zakat is reframed as an instrument for resource redistribution aimed at fostering social and economic transformation, rather than serving solely as short-term consumptive aid.

Kiai Sahal's approach exemplifies the enhancement of social capital, as highlighted by Ife and Tesoriero (Ife & Tesoriero, 2008, p. 35). The effectiveness of community empowerment initiatives relies not only on economic capital but also on social capital, including social networks, trust, and collective action (Prince, 2024, p. 56). Social capital encompasses networks, relationships, and norms that facilitate collaboration and the pursuit of shared objectives (Prince, 2024, p. 59). Through *Fiqh Sosial*, *Kiai Sahal* cultivated participatory relationships among zakat management institutions, *pesantren*, and local communities, thereby establishing social bonds that reinforced empowerment programs. This approach demonstrates that empowerment is grounded in the collective strengthening of community capacities to advance social welfare.

Beyond social capital, Jim Ife's theory of empowerment underscores the importance of participation, collaboration, and the development of community roles and capacities (Ife & Tesoriero, 2008). These principles are evident in *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh's* formulation of *Fiqh Sosial*. *Fiqh Sosial* affirms the continued relevance of fiqh by maintaining its function as legal guidance and as a means of addressing diverse social realities and human challenges. In this context, fiqh serves as a practical framework for responding to contemporary issues in individual, social, and communal life (Mahfudh, 2011).

Consequently, fiqh necessitates ongoing development and revitalization to remain relevant amid evolving societal dynamics. It should be regarded not only as a collection of normative legal provisions but also as a tool for social transformation, including the enhancement of the Muslim community's economic welfare. By adopting a contextual approach, fiqh is positioned to address social challenges and guide society toward welfare oriented to *sa'adat al-dārayn*, which refers to well-being in both this world and the hereafter (Mahfudh, 2011, p. xxvii).

The argument for revitalizing *fiqh* originates from *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh's* assertion that *fiqh* texts should not be interpreted exclusively through a textual lens; instead, they require contextualization within the dynamic realities of

society. *Kiai* Sahal maintains that *fiqh* is a product of Islamic legal reasoning that must continuously respond to social change and the evolving needs of communities (Mahfudh, 2011). Building on this perspective, *Kiai* Sahal introduced the concept of *Fiqh Sosial*, a paradigm that synthesizes the normative values of the *Shari'ah* with the empirical conditions of social life.

By employing the *Fiqh Sosial* approach, *Kiai* Sahal redefined *fiqh* as an instrument of empowerment that produces measurable impacts at individual, familial, community, and institutional levels. This paradigm encourages society to move beyond a purely textual comprehension of Islamic teachings and to apply *Shari'ah* values across diverse aspects of life, particularly in economic empowerment, education, healthcare, and social welfare. Consequently, *Fiqh Sosial* not only advances the intellectual tradition of Islamic legal thought but also cultivates social awareness of the importance of using *fiqh* as a foundational framework for developing a more self-reliant, productive, equitable, and prosperous society.

The empowerment model developed by *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh, particularly through the management of productive zakat, aligns with the primary objectives of empowerment articulated by Jim Ife: promoting self-reliance and enhancing community well-being. Both frameworks position society as the central subject of development and emphasize empowerment through capacity building, increased access to productive resources, and ongoing assistance and mentoring. This approach to empowerment goes beyond meeting immediate needs to transform individuals and communities into self-reliant, empowered agents capable of determining their own futures.

However, a significant distinction exists between these two approaches. While Jim Ife's conception of empowerment is rooted primarily in a social-humanistic development paradigm, *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh integrates this paradigm with the values of *Fiqh Sosial* and the *maqāṣid al-shari'ah*. As a result, the objective of empowerment in Mahfudh's model extends beyond improving material welfare to include the realization of *maṣlaḥah*, social justice, and the sustainable well-being of the Muslim community.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that *Kiai* Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial* serves as a model of *pesantren*-based empowerment, integrating normative Islamic values with society's empirical needs through participatory, contextual, and *maṣlaḥah*-oriented methods. This empowerment model is realized through the

management of productive zakat, enhancement of human resource capacities, ongoing mentoring, and the establishment of social, economic, educational, and healthcare institutions that promote social welfare. Analysis using Jim Ife's theory of community empowerment indicates that *Kiai Sahal's pesantren*-based model aligns with core principles of community development, particularly capacity building, community participation, increased access to resources, development of social capital, and promotion of self-reliance. However, *Kiai Sahal Mahfudh's Fiqh Sosial* provides a unique contribution by embedding the social-humanistic paradigm of empowerment within an Islamic framework. As a result, empowerment efforts focus not only on improving material welfare but also on achieving *maṣlahah*, social justice, and the sustainable well-being of the Muslim community.

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