THE ECONOMY AND POVERTY REDUCTION;
A DIMENSION OF HEALTH IN ISLAM

Angga Syahputra, Husna Hayati
Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business – IAIN Lhokseumawe
Jl. Medan-Banda Aceh Km. 275 No. 1, Alue Awe, Lhokseumawe – Aceh
anggasyahputra@iainlhokseumawe.ac.id
henyrofizar@iainlhokseumawe.ac.id

Laysi Syuja’
Fakultas Syariah - Universitas Islam Madinah, Arab Saudi
laysisyuja’@iu.edu.sa

Manuscript received 23 Months Agustus, reviewed 17 Months Oktober, approved 30 Months Desember

Abstract: Poverty and health have an inherent relationship like two sides of a coin. Poverty can make people live in poor health conditions, as well as poor health can make poverty. Individuals or communities who do not take care of their health conditions can encourage them to be trapped in increasingly severe conditions of poverty. Maintaining health includes self-care activities as commanded by Islam. Health is something that has a high level of urgency, because it has a direct impact on the economy. This study uses a qualitative method, using a literature review. The main data is obtained from previous studies, the results of the latest scientific publications and data published by the Central Statistics Agency. In order to create a healthy society, better management is needed from the Government in managing health programs and full support from the community in living a healthy life as taught by Islam.

Keywords: health, economy, poverty alleviation

INTRODUCTION

In July 1997, a monograph was published on the linkage of poverty and health as a regional issue in the Southeast Asian region. The monograph concludes that macroeconomic policies should be directed at ensuring economic growth and social development in tandem. Poverty reduction and health improvement in an analysis are proven to have a macroeconomic policy framework that is conducive to growing fast and equitable economic growth (Atmawikarta, 2009).

Health is the most valuable treasure in humans. Everything that humans have becomes meaningless if they are in an unhealthy condition. The relationship between health and poverty is like two sides of a coin that cannot be separated from one another. Poverty can make a person unhealthy, and vice versa, poor health can make a person fall into poverty.

Poverty has a very central impact on every individual. Poverty will have an impact on the lack of community access to meet food needs and access to health itself (Ulfani, Martianto, & Baliwati, 2011). Health indicators in poor and developing countries show that morbidity and mortality rates are inversely proportional to income. There are two reasons for the increasing disease burden on the poor, first, access to clean water, sanitation and limited nutritional adequacy. Second, the poor tend to be reluctant to access health due to limited funds to fulfill health and limited knowledge to deal with the illness they suffer (Atmawikarta, 2009).
On the other hand, social changes that are currently happening rapidly as a consequence of modernization and the era of digitalization also affect the values that exist in society. Changes that are so fast can not be followed by a few people which in turn causes stress and disease (Jauhari, 2011).

In essence, every individual wants to live and live a healthy life, but these expectations will not always be achieved. Islam is here with the aim that its people achieve happiness in the world and the hereafter; where one indicator of happiness is health. With a healthy body a person will be able to worship and do activities in order to seek the grace of Allah Swt (Husin, 2014).

Health is something that is abstract, its understanding is difficult to formulate concretely (HD, 2005). Humans can do activities comfortably, do good and provide benefits to others if they are in good health. Human health consists of many factors, physical, psychological, social and spiritual (Saleh, 2010). If one of these factors is problematic, it will automatically have an impact on human health. The level of individual health will also have an impact on the economy of a country and is closely related to existing poverty. For this reason, this article will review how Islam views the importance of health as a concept that is closely related to the economy and poverty alleviation.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is a descriptive qualitative research, where the phenomena between economics, poverty and health in Islam will be explored or photographed social situations that will be studied thoroughly, broadly and deeply.

In order to complete the results of this study, researchers used secondary data obtained from the results of previous studies, scientific journals, books, and other trusted websites.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Poverty and Health**

Health is a human right of every citizen regulated in the constitution. Healthy is also a state obligation because a healthy nation component is an investment for a country. The health of a people is not only expected physically, but mentally, socially and spiritually as well.

Health comes from the word healthy which is transferred from Arabic, *suhhah* which means healthy, not sick and safe (HD, 2005). In Law Number 23 of 1992, health is defined as a prosperous state of body (physical), soul (spiritual) and social that allows everyone to live socially and economically productive (FIP Education Science Development Team –UPI, 2007). The United Nations health agency, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as part of improving the human condition, physically, spiritually, intellectually, socially and not merely eradicating a disease. As a consequence of the health described in the definition above, humans can be said to be healthy if they are not sick, not disabled, not weak, spiritually happy, socially and physically prosperous in good condition (Mubarak, 2005).

In general, health in the community has several factors that influence it, such as: cleanliness of clothes, quality of food, perfect breastfeeding (mother's milk) for toddlers and quality of sanitation (Ministry of Religion of the
Republic of Indonesia, 2009). A healthy human physical condition is needed as a capital given by Allah Swt. in carrying out his duties as caliph on earth. The task of humans as caliphs on earth is not only related to the life of the world, but also to prepare provisions for the hereafter.

Poverty in language is easily understood as a condition of lack of money and goods to meet the needs of life. According to the Chamber, poverty is an integrated concept that has five dimensions, namely poverty itself, powerlessness, vulnerability to emergency situations, dependence and alienation both geographically and sociologically (Nasikun, 2001). Further, the impact of poverty can be seen in the scheme below (Mas’oed, 1997):

![Figure 1. Poverty Trap](source: Mas’oed, 1997)

**Economy and Health**

Islam is very concerned about the importance of health in the individual body, even the Prophet Muhammad Saw. in the Hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari, from Ibn Abbas Ra. said, the Messenger of Allah said: “Many people lose because of two blessings: health and leisure.”

In the global index reported in 2017, according to The Legatum Prosperity Index 2017, Indonesia is in the 101st position out of 149 countries. This index is based on physical, mental health, health infrastructure and care to prevent various outbreaks or diseases. Compared to ASEAN, Indonesia is far behind. Singapore is in position 2, Thailand is 35, Malaysia is 38, Vietnam is 69 and even Laos is in 94th (Debora, 2017).
In 2019, Bloomberg also released the 50 healthiest countries in the world, but Indonesia was again not included in the release. The index is assessed from several variables, such as: life expectancy, risk of tobacco use, obesity, environment, access to clean water and sanitation. The report published by the Ministry of Health in 2018 also released Indonesia’s general health report, also making this country unable to enter the healthiest country in the world. Stunting in Indonesia is at 30.8%, malnutrition is 17.7%, cancer prevalence is 1.8%, stroke prevalence is 10.9%, chronic kidney disease is 3.8%, diabetes mellitus is 8.5%, hypertension is 34.1% (Inscription, 2019).

There are several characteristics of the poor (Salim, 1980):
1. Do not have production factors such as land, capital, work equipment and skills;
2. Low level of education;
3. Generally self-employed and is an informal small business, after being unemployed;
4. Many are found in rural areas or certain areas in urban areas;
5. Unable to meet basic needs, clothing, housing, health facilities, drinking water, education, transportation, communication facilities and other social welfare.

Figure 2. Health Index in the World in 2017

Source: Tirto.id
While the causes of poverty, among others, are caused by several factors, including (Suryawati, 2005):

1. Natural assets, namely inadequate soil and water conditions to be used as sources of life;
2. Human assets, namely the quality of human resources is still very low;
3. Physical assets, namely the conditions for accessing infrastructure and other public facilities which are still very low;
4. Financial assets, namely situations where there is a lack of savings funds and difficult access to capital;
5. Social assets, namely the network in obtaining a very weak source of bargaining position strength.

In relation to the economy, a person is said to be poor if he lacks resources to improve welfare both financially and all types of wealth that can improve people’s welfare. The economic dimension of poverty can be measured in rupiah (Ellies, 1994).

The World Bank itself measures poverty with a standard of 1 US Dollar, meaning that if a person earns less than 1 US Dollar, then the individual is categorized as poor (Suryawati, 2005).

**Economy, Poverty and Health**

Health is the main condition for the implementation of the economy in achieving good economic growth and leading to poverty alleviation. People who are in an unhealthy condition, it is impossible to carry out their economic activities. Poverty is the subject of debate in various forums at the local, regional, national and international levels, even though poverty is a classic problem that has emerged centuries ago. Many studies have shown that poverty is closely related to morbidity and mortality. Low income, difficult access to welfare facilities make it difficult to fulfill the need for nutritious food or the ability to protect oneself from various diseases (Salim, 1980).

**Figure 3. Health and Economy Linkages**

Source: Karjadi, D. Paper on Health Economics Workshop
Poor people who are faced with health problems tend to avoid outpatient facilities, delay hospital services, avoid specialist doctor services which tend to be more expensive, shorten the hospitalization period, only buy half of the prescribed drugs so that the healing process is not complete, seek other alternative treatments cheaper ones, all of which lead to more chronic illnesses (Suryawati, 2005).

Poverty has become a worldwide humanitarian problem. Poverty is even latent and actual, which generally occurs in developing countries including Indonesia. In Islam, poverty is a problem that must be solved because it has a wide impact on everything. Poverty is a threat that needs to be eradicated because it is dangerous in people's lives (Kholis, 2014).

The poor generally work relying on muscles or physically to earn a living. An unhealthy body will affect the amount of income earned. For this reason, health needs to be seen as an investment in an effort to improve the welfare of the community and as a human right of the community. WHO concludes that the importance of health for each individual, because unhealthy conditions can cause pain and ultimately pain will make individuals fall into poverty (Argadiredja, 2002).

The relationship between poverty and health can be seen from the following table:

### Cycle of Poverty and Pain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Karakteristik Keluarga Miskin</th>
<th>Kondisi Kesehatan Buruk</th>
<th>Pendapatan Berkurang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency, the number of poor people in Indonesia is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Poor People (millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>28.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>27.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>25.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>25.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>27.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.bps.go.id (data has been processed)

In addition, BPS also released as of September 2020, the income of the poor per capita/month is Rp. 458,947, while per poor household there are 4.83 people (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2021).
If viewed from the existing data, the income of the poor is very small, even to meet their daily needs for food and drink is still far from sufficient. Not to mention other needs, making it difficult for them to meet basic health needs.

The poverty factor can directly affect the pace of a country’s economy. Widespread poverty will have an impact on the difficulty of access to credit loans, the inability to finance children’s education, no opportunity for physical and monetary investment which causes small per capita growth (Toddaro, 2006). Increased poverty will weaken productivity so that it will slow down economic growth. Improvement of various infrastructure including health is one of the efforts to strengthen the economy. With a strong economy, it will be able to reduce poverty levels effectively. This means that there is a strong reciprocal relationship between poverty and the economy (Megasari, Amar, & Idris, 2015).

There are five interrelated factors that can explain the importance of health in the concept of economic improvement and poverty alleviation (Atun, Chaumont, Fitchett, Haakenstad, & Kaberuka, 2016):

1. **Financial protection**
   Eliminating the financial difficulties of accessing health services will allow for easier use of health services when needed and help households at risk of overspending and poverty.

2. **Education**
   Excellent health in education will have an impact on better student attendance at school and better cognitive function. The prospect of a longer and healthier life encourages people to invest more in human capacity development as capital, as they are better able to realize long-term future gains in employment and income.

3. **Productivity**
   Productivity can be increased through the contribution of better health which results in increased worker capacity, lower absenteeism and lower labor turnover. A healthy and educated workforce is better able to use capital investment efficiently, thereby increasing profits for the company. In addition, the contribution of workers in both manual and non-manual tasks will increase, physical and mental capacity will also increase along with improving health.

4. **Capital investment**
   Individuals who live longer and have higher incomes will be able to save more for retirement. This will automatically increase the economic capital available for investment. Better health will reflect higher capital investment in countries with appropriate institutional and economic conditions. Better health means people expect to reap future profits by encouraging them to allocate more income to capital investments.

5. **Demographic advantage**
   When health outcomes improve, mortality rates fall and life expectancy increases. This will provide an opportunity to take advantage of the existing demographic bonus. Under the right conditions, changing population ages, structures with a growing and educated workforce will create greater opportunities for economic growth.
Islam is not just a religion but a complete way of life revealed to humans by the creator (Albadry, 2019). Islam views health as an essential need of every human being, both physical and spiritual health. With excellent health, humans can carry out various activities on earth. The criteria for a healthy human being according to the Qur’an and Hadith are humans who are physically, mentally/mentally, socially and spiritually healthy (Hawari, 2004).

In the Qur’an, Surah Al-Baqarah: 195, Allah SWT. said: “…and do not throw yourselves into destruction.” Maintaining health and illness is a form of protecting oneself from destruction, this is also in line with the rules in ushul fiqh that taking care of oneself is more important than things that cause harm.

In order to maintain health in various conditions, some Islamic recommendations include:

1. **Maintain cleanliness**
   This is as in the Qur’an, Surah Al-Baqarah: 222, that Allah SWT. loves his servant who repents and maintains his sanctity/cleanliness (Ministry of Religion, 2006: 158). In line with this verse, Rasulullah Saw. also said that “Cleanliness is part of faith.”

2. **Consuming halal and good food**
   Islam emphasizes the importance of consuming halal and good food, as did the Prophet Muhammad. said, "The source of disease is food. While taking care of food is the source of all medicine" (K, 2003: 41). The Qur’an also confirms in Surah Al-Baqarah: 168 which means, “O mankind, eat what is lawful and good from what is on earth…”

3. **Stay away from food that is not fit for consumption**
   In addition to ensuring that the food consumed is halal and good, Islam also emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the food/drink consumed whether it is appropriate or not for consumption, because this will affect the health condition of the consumer.

4. **Eat and drink the right way**
   In the medical world, excessive consumption of food and drink causes slowing down and burden of digestion and fermentation of food in the stomach. In fact, this can cause wounds and inflammation of the stomach, duodenum and esophagus, flatulence and other negative things (Hlmabi, 2005). This is actually in line with the Qur’anic commandment not to eat and drink excessively (Surah Al-A’raf: 31).

5. **Adequate sleep**
   Adequate sleep has an impact on the human body. With adequate sleep the muscles relax, blood pressure will drop, soothe the eyes, remove toxins from the body and cure various diseases (Hlmabi, 2005).

6. **Exercise regularly**
   In the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad. said that: “A strong believer is more beloved to Allah than a weak believer” (Su’dan, 1997: 286). Exercising is also able to maintain body and mind fitness to stay fit in daily activities.

7. **Medication if sick**
   Islam emphasizes the importance of guarding oneself from various harms, including illness. For this reason, if you experience an
illness, you are required to immediately seek treatment at the existing health services.

On the other hand, actually being sick is not just a physical condition, there are many things that can make a person fall in a sick condition. Especially in the midst of changing times that are so fast today. For that every individual must also build social health and especially spiritual health. Individuals who are able to maintain their spiritual health will essentially be able to maintain their overall health. By maintaining spiritual health, individuals will create uluhiyah intelligence (the ability to interact with Allah Swt. by avoiding all prohibitions and carrying out His commands), rubbubiyah intelligence (individual ability to protect themselves from harmful things), ubudiyah intelligence (ability to apply worship). Sincerely, and khuluqiyah intelligence (the ability to say and do good) (Abidin, 2012).

The health advice above can actually be implemented by every individual, even in a weak economic condition. For access to health services themselves, the current government has poured huge funds for health services for the poor. Through the Health Insurance Administration Agency (BPJS), the government has established the National Health Insurance – Healthy Indonesia Card (JKN – KIS) program. As of May 10, 2019, the participants of the JKN-KIS program have reached 221,580,743 people (BPJS Kesehatan, 2020:7). Meanwhile, until December 8, 2020, the realization of the JKN – KIS program contribution assistance reached Rp. 2.7 trillion, 65.6% of the budget ceiling. Meanwhile for the poor, the government has disbursed Contribution Assistance Recipients (PBI) for 96.8 people with a total of Rp. 48.8 trillion (Endarwati, 2020).

The large budget disbursed by the government and the number of people covered, health services should no longer be an obstacle for the poor. Health services, which have been considered as a luxury item, should no longer be avoided by the poor. This program has touched many people from various circles, especially the lower classes, although in practice there are still many poor people who have not been touched by this program.

The government through the level of apparatus in the regions needs to conduct a more perfect data collection on the community, so that this health service can be felt by all poor people. World health indicators and rankings, which so far have placed Indonesia far from the healthy category, should be a benchmark for improving health in this country as a whole. The amount of available health budget should be able to provide more feedback to the community, of course, if the budget is managed professionally. For this reason, the government must continue to strive to provide the best service and socialize existing programs so that it can be felt by all levels of society.

**CONCLUSION**

Health in the concept of self-preservation in Islam is an important thing. Without good health in a society, it is impossible for the economy to run smoothly. With fit health in the human body, it is hoped that the economy will continue to run and humans can achieve *falah*.
If the economy does not run as expected, then poverty will continue to exist and even get bigger and have an impact on other sectors. Poverty that continues to be nurtured can become an enemy for a nation because it has an impact on various sectors and can destroy the social fabric of society. As an effort to protect the community, the government has now implemented the JKN-KIS program which also covers the poor. So, now there is no longer a reason for the difficulty of accessing health facilities for the poor. The government is also expected to maximize its role as a party that is obliged to protect its people by optimizing health programs, socializing and improving health services.

REFERENCES


