

ACCOUNTING IN ISLAMIC SOCIETIES: AL BAQARAH 282-283

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Abstract: *Accounting as a part of social sciences cannot separated from the ethical, moral, and cultural values surrounding it. The arrival of Islam through the Qur'an provides the guidance of every life's aspects, including accounting. Accounting explicitly explained in Al Baqarah 282-283 and implicitly explained in various study of trading, zakah and usury. This is a qualitative study. The data collected by interviews, observations and literature studies. Data was analyzed and presented in the Miles and Huberman Models. The results of this study indicate that Al Baqarah 282-283 is the main reference of Islamic Accounting that explains the accounting hierarchy. Al Baqarah 282 explains four accounting process, including identifying, recording, communicating and witnessing. This verse also explains the qualitative characteristics for accountants and financial information.*

Keywords: *Al Baqarah 282-283, Islamic Accounting, Sharia*

1. Introduction

Islam is a universal religion, regulatig all aspects of life. Islam regulates tauhid, morals, politics, social, culture, economy and science. Islam is not limited by place and time, so it is suitable to be implemented anywhere and anytime.

The study of ethics, morals and spirituality in the scope of accounting is in great demand by academics. Some cases of ethical violations in the preparation of financial statements, such as Enron and Worldcom as well as several other organizations provide public awareness of the importance of ethical and moral values in accounting. Western accounting has spread the spirit of rebellion and totalitarianism among materialists, as well as destroying major social roots, Khoramin (2021). At present accounting is demanded not only as a tool for recording transactions to measure profits. Accounting has broader responsibilities with regard to ethics, morals, the environment and social society.

The development of science in the contemporary era has been separated from religion, Kaelan (2010). The growth of positivism has increasingly strengthened the position of science apart from religious domination. Postivism rejects religious interference in science because science must have freedom of value, including in accounting studies. So, the impact of business activities often cause social and environmental problems.

Accounting as part of social science can not be separated from the ethical, moral, and cultural values that surrounding it. Culture is an environmental factor that has a strong influence on the national accounting system, Askary (2006). There is a dichotomy between business morality and personal morality in the conceptual framework of accounting that is used in the West at the moment, Gambling (1991) and Lewis (2001). The value of morality that contained in the conceptual framework of Western accounting is considered contrary to Western ideology

itself. Then the question arises, is it true that the conceptual framework of accounting originates from the West?

Islam governs all aspects of life, both from small and large problems. Likewise Islam regulates accounting activities. Accounting has a strong relationship with economic activity. Where we have learned to know that the habit of first Arab nation was trading. The Quran has explained it in a surah Quraish.

Islam and Accounting

The basic framework of the Islamic economic system is a set of rules and laws, covering economic aspects of government, social, political, and Islamic culture or called Sharia, Askari et. al. (2010). Sharia law is derived from the rules ordered in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The most important thing in Islamic economics is justice and equality. Both are inherent in the Islamic economic system, from the production process to distribution. The Islamic paradigm combines a spiritual and moral framework that values human relationships above material ownership. So that there is a balance between meeting the material and spiritual needs of living things. The Islamic economic system also creates a balance of relations between individuals and groups. This is different from conventional economics which only focuses on individuals, groups, or communities. In addition, conventional economics appear only as an aggregate without the meaning of freedom of ownership. In fact, the recognition and protection of property rights for community members is the basis of the objectives of the stakeholders, defend the rights of all members, and remind them of their responsibilities. The main principle in the system of prohibiting usury (riba) is the advantages that are not justified by Sharia. Money as a potential capital and will become real capital if combined with other sources of capital for productive ventures. the concept of Islamic economic system is profits and risks sharing. The Islamic economic system prevents hoarding and prohibits transactions that contain uncertainty and lottery. Contract is sacred. Islam upholds obligations based on agreements and information disclosures whose purpose is to reduce the risk of information asymmetry and moral harm. Business activities must not violate sharia rules. In principle any injustice and exploitation in the transaction is prohibited.

The development and exploration of ethical, moral and spiritual studies in accounting has been occurring. This phenomena also covers Islamic accounting. Research on the influence of religion on the accounting system is not a new issue. Islam as one of the biggest religions has a strong influence in the world. The practice of accounting in the Islamic world can be traced back through the history of the Prophet Muhammad, so that Islamic accounting is not a mere claim, Askary (2006). The Arab economy at that time was very dependent on trade, even the Prophet Muhammad was a trader. The arrival of Islam through the revelation of the Qur'an provides guidance on every aspect of life. Economic activities also ruled by Qur'an. There is an order to record economic transactions or what is now known as accounting.

Accounting in the Islamic world basically came before Luca Pacioli with several books, such as Summa de Arithmetica, Geometria, and Proportioni et Proportionalita, published in 1494. The assumption that Pacioli as the inventor of accounting is doubtful. This assumption is considered as a claim, because basically the accounting system has been used for trade around the middle ages, Zaid (2004) and Trokic (2015). The manuscript entitled Falakiyah Kitabus Kitabus Siakat written by Al Mazendarany in 1363 reinforced evidence that double entry accounting practices have existed in Islamic history, Zaid (2004). Furthermore, Al Baqarah 282-283 explicitly gives orders to record economic transactions that cause a liability. The principles

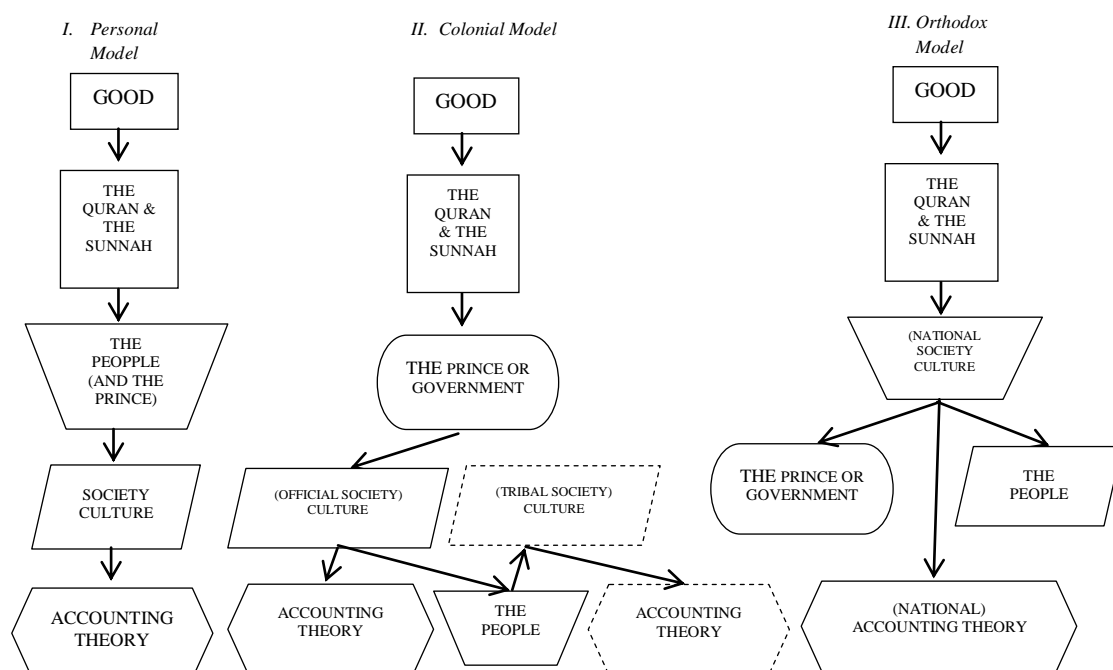
of Islamic accounting are based on Al Baqarah verse 282, namely the principle of accountability, the principle of justice, and the principle of truth. Islam has mentioned accounting both explicitly and implicitly. Accounting is explicitly explained in Al Baqarah 282-283 and implicitly explained by many muamalah studies, such as trading, zakat and usury (riba). Diverse forms of transactions or muamalah will be a special feature of Islamic accounting. The prohibition of usury and other vanity (batil) transactions will affect accounting values. Usury sanctions are not only for the culprit, but also applies to witnesses and note takers. The words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, Muslim Hadits (1918) :

From Jabir *radhiyallahu 'anhu*, "*Rasulullah sallallaahu' alaihi wa sallam cursed usury eaters, usury depositors, writers of usury transactions and two witnesses who witnessed usury transactions.*" He said, "*Everything is the same in sin.*"

The hadith proves that the activity of recording economic transactions had been occurred at that time, so that there was a prohibition to become a writer in usury transactions. The author here can be interpreted as a notary or accountant who records the transaction.

The relationship between Islam and accounting is proven through the zakat instrument. Zakat is a major factor that contributes to the development of accounting systems, bookkeeping, recording procedures and financial statements, Zaid (2004). All of these are believed to be aspects that will influence the principles of Islamic accounting. The obligation of zakat requires every Muslim, both individuals and organizations, to periodically calculate and record their wealth. Zakat became one of the state revenues in the early days of Islamic government. Zakat becomes a driver for the distribution of wealth equally, because each individual does not have the same abilities and opportunities to fulfill his basic life's needs. The relationship between Islam and accounting can be explained through the following model:

Alternative Models of Religion, Society and Accounting Theory, Gambling (1986)



There are 3 (three) alternative models that explain the relationship of religion, society and accounting theory, namely:

- a. Personal model; Allah directly experienced through the Qur'an and Sunnah to every human being. Thus, Islam and sharia have become pervasive in humans, which eventually entrenched in social life and became an accounting theory.
- b. Colonial Model; when the leader is Muslim, the state might become an Islamic state. With majority and minority powers consist of Muslim, the results of society and accounting theory will be influenced by Islam.
- c. Orthodox Model; Allah has experienced through the Qur'an and Sunnah to the country. Then the big role was held by the country's mullahs. If they can make Islam their culture of life, then everyone will obey and agree to the rules of sharia in order to achieve salvation.

There are relatively few studies on the history of accounting in Muslim countries that have been translated into English, Napier (2009). Research and accounting references are more dominated by Western thought. Therefore, to develop the conceptual framework of Islamic accounting requires hard work. It would be better when Islamic accounting literature presented in a language that is easier to be understood by the world community, such as English.

2. Research Method

The research uses qualitative method with primary and secondary data. Primary data collected by deep interview and secondary data collected by literature study. Data analyzed by Miles and Huberman Model.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Accounting in Al Baqarah 282-283

Al Baqarah revealed in Madina or madaniyah verses, descended after the Prophet Muhammad migrated. While in Medina, Prophet Muhammad was involved in many social activities and business practices. The Arab Nation character was built from the culture of business or commerce (M.A.K. Hasan, Interview, 26 Februari 2019). Madina which was previously ruled by Jews both politically and economically required. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with his companions struggle to change it. On the other words, Islamic economics must be applied in Madina.

(2:282) O believers! Whenever you contract a debt from one another for a known term, commit it to writing. Let a scribe write it down between you justly, and the scribe may not refuse to write it down according to what Allah has taught him; so let him write, and let the debtor dictate; and let him fear Allah, his Lord, and curtail no part of it. If the debtor be feeble-minded, weak, or incapable of dictating, let his guardian dictate equitably, and call upon two of your men as witnesses; but if two men are not there, then let there be one man and two women as witnesses from among those acceptable to you so that if one of the two women should fail to remember, the other might remind her. Let not the witnesses refuse when they are summoned (to give evidence). Do not show slackness in writing down the transaction, whether small or large, along with the term of its payment. That is fairest in the sight of Allah; it is best for testimony and is more likely to exclude all doubts. If it be a matter of buying and selling on the spot, it is not blameworthy if you do not write it down; but do take witnesses when you settle commercial transactions with one another. And the scribe or the witness may be done no harm. It will be sinful if you do so. Beware of the wrath of Allah. He teaches you the Right Way and has full knowledge of everything.

(2:283) *And if you are on a journey and do not find a scribe to write the document then resort to taking pledges in hand. But if any of you trusts another, let him who is trusted, fulfil the trust and fear Allah, his Lord. And do not conceal what you have witnessed, for whoever conceals it, his heart is sinful. Allah has full knowledge of all that you do.*

In carrying out economic transactions, especially transactions that create debts (*dain*), there are often gaps to avoid liabilities (M.A.K. Hasan, Interview, 26 February 2019., and A. Hidayat, Interview, 10 May 2020). Islam as a religion makes a justice as the goal of sharia (*maqasyid syariah*), makes *Al Baqarah* verses 282-283 as a guidelines for maintaining rights and obligations, so that people not being trapped in sinful acts. Despite using the mention "O believers", this verse has a universal meaning, applies to Muslims and non-Muslims, as well as individuals and communities. The mention of "O believers" is a form of emphasis on those who believe, so that this matter becomes a concern.

Al-Baqarah verse 282 gives an order to record economic transactions that create *dain*. It becomes mandatory if there are other people's rights that must be maintained, (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview) and Abdurrahman (2006). This is an advice and guidance for believers when doing *muamalah* in *dain*. They should record it to count and keep the amount correctly, time limit, and strengthen its validity, Ismail (1994).

3.2. Understanding Dain

Dain is a general term for economic transactions that give rise to rights and obligations or debts between two or more parties, (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview). Dain includes lending and borrowing transactions (*qardh*) and trading in maturity, such as *salam* and *istishna*, Al Maragi (1993). In addition, Dain also includes trusteeship transactions on the assets of orphans, endowments, representatives and trusts (*amanah*), Abdurrahman (2006). Unpaid zakat is debt, and there is no more primary debt to pay except debt (*zakat*) to Allah, (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview). In today's modern business practice, it also includes agency contracts with principals, workers with job providers, suppliers with companies, and companies with the government. Accordingly, dain are all forms of transactions that give rise to rights and obligations or debts, both in the form of payments and deferred services. Today, dain in modern accounting called liability.

If doing economic transactions in dain, it must be in a clear time periode, Al Maragi (1993). If the time period is unknown, it is not allowed to continue the transaction, because it is vulnerable to deception. The concept become the basis of periodicity in financial reporting. the financial statements must be reported within the specified time period.

3.3. Islamic Accounting Activities

Accounting in conventional literature is defined as a process of identifying, recording, and communicating the economic activities of an organization for the benefit of users, Kieso et. al. (2008). Identification is the process of determining economic transactions that are relevant to the business field. This is a basic analysis to find out whether a transaction has an economic effect on a company's wealth, such as assets, liabilities, and capital. If a transaction has an economic effect on a company's wealth, it must be recorded. Transactions are recorded in units of currency systematically that based on the chronology of events and its classification. Then the notes are summarized in the form of financial statements. Financial statements are communicated to users, both internal and external. Users of financial statements include management, employees, investors, creditors, suppliers, customers, government, and society. The financial statements are

used by users to carry out analyzes and interpretations for their respective interests that related to planning, controlling and evaluating, Institute of Indonesia Chartered Accountants (2015).

Al Baqarah 282-283 is the main reference of Islamic accounting which explains the accounting hierarchy, (M.A.K. Hasan, Interview). Al Baqarah 282 explains 4 (four) activities related to accounting. Those activities are identifying, recording, communicating, and witnessing activities

a. Identifying Activity

"O believers! If you carry out a transaction for another for a specified time, you should record it ... ". This verse contains the command of Allah to His servants to record every transaction in dain. The word "idza" can be interpreted as "if". It shows an event that has not yet happened, (M.A.K. Hasan, Interview). However, these events will surely be experienced by every human being. In other words, every human being both Muslim and non-Muslim will surely make transactions in dain. That word indicates an identifying process.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the identifying activity in Islamic accounting is the process of determining economic transactions in dain, either in the form of payments or deferred services. These economic transactions must be relevant to the business sector which will affect personal or company wealth (accounting units).

b. Recording Activities

The verse also explains the recording orders for economic transactions that give rise to rights and obligations. The recording activity is intended to maintain the rights and obligations of the relevant parties (stakeholders), Al Maragi (1993). This order was a blessing from Allah that given to humans. Where the elements of the world and religion will not be straight except by recording. Every economic transaction, both debts and trading with cash is very important to be recorded, (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview). The main objective revealed by Al Baqarah 282-283 is the requirement for recording economic transactions, both in time and cash, and both large and small ones.

Recording must be done fairly. Fair does not always mean the same. Fair is proportional attitude. Fair in recording means that records are made with clear standards and measurements, (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview). Fair in terms of the writer (accountant) means neutral or impartial attitude. The author should record the transaction completely and clearly and be based on submission to Allah, Al Maragi (1993). The author has consequences in each of his notes (Muslim Number Hadits, 1598). The perfection of recording and fairness in muamalah can be achieved if the writer has expertise in composing words and sentences that related with all forms of muamalah (account classification). In addition, fair recording must be haq, or presented honestly and fair value. Accordingly, recording is the process of recording economic transactions based on (muamalah) classification in a fair, standardized, clear, neutral, honest and fair value. With these records, it will further preserve rights and avoid disputes.

c. Communicating Activity

Submitting financial information is the responsibility owed by the agent who holds the mandate of the interests of all stakeholders. It based on the verse of Al Baqarah 282, "... and bring the person who owes it to pay, and ask him to fear Allah, his Lord, and do not add the slightest to his debt ...". Financial information that is conveyed and presented must be given on taqwa to Allah by returning the rights and not removing some of it, Al Maragi (1993). Financial statements must be submitted objectively and impartially, (A. Hidayat, Interview).

Islam encourages transparency and accounting is a tool that can be read by stakeholders. If stakeholders need data for certain interests, they can refer to or view the report. Therefore, financial information must have at least three characteristics : fair, correct, and easy to understand. The information presented must reflect the needs of (relevant) users of financial statements, (M.A.K. Hasan, Interview).

Communication is an integral part of the accounting process. Communication is an activity of conveying financial information to all stakeholders, based on taqwa to Allah. Financial information can be used by stakeholders in making decisions related to planning, controlling, and evaluating. Financial information must be able to ensure the rights and obligations of stakeholders are well fulfilled, and their interests can be fulfilled as well. As explained earlier, information will be useful if it is presented on time or in a clear period.

d. Witnessing Activity

The presence of witnesses in economic transactions is part of the order to further strengthen its validity. Basically, witnessing are not only needed for transactions in dain, but also for cash transactions that may lead to disputes in the future, such as buying land and other transactions that have material value, (A. Hidayat, Interview).

Witnessing can be classified into two : direct witnessing indirect witnessing. Direct witnessing requires witnesses present who witnessing the transaction, as referred to this verse. Indirect witnessing are witnesses who are questioned for their expertise, such as auditors. These witnessing function is to provide information as a reinforcing note. It should not be difficult for witnesses (auditors) and writers (accountants) to provide information. The witness (auditor) must provide information if requested by the stakeholders, (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview).

3.4. Qualitative Characteristics of Islamic Accounting

In addition to explaining accounting activities, Al Baqarah 282 also explains the qualitative characteristics that must be possessed, both for accountants and the financial information produced. Qualitative characteristics of financial information, including fair, absolute truth (haq), eliminating doubts, easily understood, and taqwa.

a. Fair

The characteristics of fairness have been partly explained in the previous discussion. Fair is putting things in their place (proportional). It can be done by recording economic transactions in accordance with its classification (muamalah). Fair is the sense of using clear standards, so that financial statements can be presented consistently, (M.A.K. Hasan, Interview). Fair also means using clear measurement, so that financial statements can be used for comparisons and predictions. Fairness will be difficult to achieve if the measurement is not clear. Islamic Sharia prohibits uncertainty (gharar). This means, every business must have measurable consequences. Under what conditions the company will reach a break event point. So company can calculate or predict when company will profit and loss.

Fair also means being neutral. Financial information must provide the data needs of all stakeholders and be impartial for the interests of certain parties. Information is not neutral would only benefit certain parties and harm others.

Fair in accounting is a form of guarantee that the financial statements have been presented fairly and in accordance with standards, (Yakub, Interview, 4 July 2019). The guarantee is strengthened by the statement of the auditor which guarantees that the financial statements are

fairly presented. Fairness encourages information disclosure that can meet relevant and reliable information needs for stakeholders.

b. Absolute Truth (Haq)

Recording economic transactions aims to preserve the rights of each party. Haq is absolute (permanent) truth from Allah, which cannot be denied (the law is obligatory), (A. Hidayat, Interview). Examples of haq are honest, pray, pay zakat, fasting and pay debts. An accountant must do the right thing by presenting financial information with honesty and fair value. Haq is something that comes from Allah, and humans are instructed not to hesitate in carrying it out [Al Baqarah: 147].

The opposite of words from haq is vanity (batil), (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview). Islam forbids people to do vanity or mix between haq with vanity [Al Baqarah: 42]. Islam expressly forbids taking assets, or doing false transactions, such as bribing, gambling, and usury [Al Baqarah: 188 and An Nisa: 29]. Islam has strengthened the haq (Islam) and prevented sleaze (shirk) [Al Anfal: 8].

c. Eliminates Doubts (Reliability)

Among the conditions of accounting in Islam is to eliminate doubts and strengthen the validity of economic transactions. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) ordered his people to leave the doubters and take the ones who did not doubt (Tirmidhi Hadits No. 2518; An Nasa'i No. 5714). Doubtful financial statements make stakeholders difficult to understand the information, (M.A.K. Hasan, Interview). Doubtful information can mislead stakeholders in making decisions. So, information must be reliable. Information has a reliable quality if the presented information is free from misleading notions and material errors, Institute of Indonesia Chartered Accountants (2015).

Human memory is weak and prone to forget. Every transaction has a potential dispute. Recording has a function to strengthen the existence of economic transactions. Accountants prohibited from being bored or hesitant in recording economic transactions, even though the nominal is small, (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview).

d. Easy to Understand

Writers (accountants) and witnesses (auditors) are prohibited from complicating each other. In other words, both parties have to make things easier for each other. Financial reports are made to facilitate stakeholders in understanding the needed information. The teachings of Islam make it easier, not complicate. When facing the choices, choose the easier ones as long as they don't cause sin (M.A.K. Hasan, Interview). Therefore, financial statements must be made to make it easier for stakeholders to understand the information. The financial information presented must adjust the information needs of its users. Making it difficult to prepare financial statements is a fasiq act. Fasiq means coming out of obedience to Allah. Every fasiq is a sin, and every sin must be avoided.

e. Taqwa

The characteristics of taqwa have been explained in the discussion above. Taqwa is the main qualitative characteristic in Islamic accounting. The taqwa must be reflected in a note taker (accountant) and the results of his/her notes (financial reports). Taqwa is carrying out the commands (haq) of Allah and away from all its prohibitions (batil), as well as leaving doubtful matters (shubhat). Accountants who are cautious must provide fairness in presenting information. The quality of taqwa must be reflected in the information presented as a form of accountability to Allah.

3.5. The meaning of Al Baqarah 283

Al Baqarah 283 explains the leniency in recording and witnessing between parties who deal with each other. It deals with the situation when both parties do not have ability to write it or do not find other parties who can be act as writers and witnesses. The debtor can provide a guarantee to the creditor. However, if both of them trust one another with respect to Allah, then the transaction can be carried out even without recording. But this is not the goal of the Shari'a. The main purpose of Al Baqarah 282-283 is the teaching to record every economic transaction. So the slightest transaction must be recorded, moreover the transaction has the potential for disputes (M.A.K. Hasan and A. Hidayat, Interview).

4. Conclusion

The results of this study prove that Islam has explained the accounting process long before modern references appeared, namely more than 14 centuries ago. Al Baqarah 282-283 is the main reference of Islamic Accounting which explain the accounting hierarchy. Al Baqarah 282 explains 4 (four) activities related to accounting : identification, recording, communication, and witnesses. The identification determining whether an economic transaction occurs for a specified period of time. If a transaction creates rights and obligations between one party and another that must be fulfilled, then the transaction must be recorded. Recording is a process of recording economic transactions based on their classification (muamalah) in a fair, measurable, and using clear standards. Recording must be carried out in accordance with its muamalah forms, so that it easier to be understood and does not cause doubts. The perfection of recording and justice in muamalah can be achieved if the writer has expertise in composing words and sentences that comply with all forms of muamalah, as well as being obedient to Allah.

Communication is an integral part of the accounting process. Communication is an activity of conveying financial information to stakeholders. Presentation of financial information must be based on taqwa to Allah by not committing wrongdoing, vanity, and complicating stakeholders. Financial information is useful for stakeholders in planning, controlling and evaluating. Financial information must be able to ensure that the rights and obligations of stakeholders are well fulfilled, as well as their interests. Information will be more useful if it is reported in a timely manner.

In addition to explaining accounting activities, Al Baqarah 282 also explained the qualitative characteristics that must be possessed, both for accountants and the financial information produced. Qualitative characteristics include, fair, absolute truth (haq), eliminating doubts (reliability), easy to understand (not to complicate each other), and taqwa.

In principle, the main objective of Al Baqarah 282 - 283 is the requirement for recording the slightest economic transactions to avoid doubts and disputes. Although Al Baqarah 283 explains the leniency in recording, it is not the main objective.

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