

# Waqf for Education in Malaysia: Historical Implementation, Types, and Significance

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Waqf for Education (Waqf al-Tadris) focuses on supporting educational institutions, such as schools, colleges, universities, and vocational training centres. The income generated from the waqf assets is used to fund the operational costs, scholarships, teacher salaries, infrastructure development, and educational programs of these institutions. This study aims to identify the concept and historical implementation of educational institutions based on waqf in Malaysia. The study also attempts to explain the types of waqf-based educational institutions in Malaysia. At the same time, this study also presents the reasons for the existence of such forms of waqf-based educational institutions in Malaysia.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The data and information for this study were gathered from library resources. Document analysis was used in examining and interpreting written or textual materials to gain insights and understandings about a particular topic, phenomenon, or research question.

**Findings:** This study concludes, Waqf education in Malaysia refers to the establishment and management of educational institutions and programs through the utilization of waqf funds. Waqf education plays a significant role in supporting educational initiatives and ensuring sustainable funding for educational institutions especially in Islamic-based education. Various types of waqf are established to serve different purposes and cater to the diverse needs of the community in Malaysia.

**Practical implications:** Efforts should be made to raise awareness and educate the community about the importance of waqf in education.

**Originality/value:** Waqf education serves as a catalyst for personal, social, and economic development, creating a positive impact on individuals, communities, and societies. It promotes educational inclusivity, fosters moral values, drives socioeconomic empowerment, and contributes to the overall well-being and progress of society.

**Keywords:** Waqf Education, Traditional Education Institution, Islamic Education Institution, Waqf Al-Tadris

## Introduction

In Malaysia, waqf or endowments are categorized into special (Waqf khas) and general (Waqf am) endowments, with contemporary terms introduced to attract endower interest (Mohd. Ali, 2019). Waqf am serves general welfare or public good without specific beneficiaries or purposes, contributing to the positive image of Islam and its community. Managed by State Islamic Religious Councils (MAIN), Waqf am benefits local communities. Conversely, Waqf khas designates benefits for specific purposes, such as cemetery land, mosques, and madrasahs, with endowers specifying recipients or purposes (Siti Mashitoh 2019, Mohd. Ali 2019). Various waqf types in Malaysia address diverse community needs. These includes:

1. *Waqf al-Tadris* supports educational institutions, funding operational costs, scholarships, teacher salaries, and infrastructure development (Mohd Zaidi et. al, 2022; Mohd Ali & Muhamad Rahimi, 2020; Wan Kamal Mujani et.al, 2016; Latiff Azha et. al, 2013).
2. *Waqf al-Sihha* aids healthcare facilities and services (Abang Marzuki et.al, 2021; Shadiya & Mohd. Mahdzir, 2018; Norizah Mohamed@Haji Daud & Asmak Ab Rahman, 2017).
3. *Waqf al-Ijtima'i* addresses social issues, supporting poverty alleviation, orphanages, and rehabilitation centers (Siti Nadiyah et. al 2016; Shahriar et. al 2018).
4. *Waqf al-Masajid* focuses on mosques and Islamic centers, covering operational expenses and community services (Wan Kamal Mujani et.al, 2016; Nur Khalidah et. al 2014; Ashlah & Adnin Ibrahim 2018).
5. *Waqf al-Qubur* maintains Islamic cemeteries, preserving burial practices (Mohd Zaidi et. al, 2022).
6. *Waqf al-Khayri* spans charitable initiatives like disaster relief and community development projects (Mohd Zaidi et. al, 2022; Marhanum et al, 2020).

Each waqf type serves distinct purposes, contributing to societal improvement. These initiatives showcase the commitment to addressing diverse community needs through Islamic endowments in Malaysia.

## Research Methodology

The process of data collection for this study primarily relied on library resources and employed document analysis as the chosen methodology. Document analysis is a research technique that involves the systematic examination and interpretation of written or textual materials to gain valuable insights and a comprehensive understanding of a specific topic, phenomenon, or research question (Strauss & Corbin, 2008; Rapley, 2007).

Library resources were instrumental in providing a rich array of textual materials for analysis. These resources included books, academic journals, reports, manuscripts, government publications, historical documents, and various other written sources that were relevant to the research topic. The use of library resources ensured that the study was grounded in existing knowledge and the extensive literature available on the subject.

Document analysis involved several key steps. Firstly, a comprehensive review of the collected textual materials was conducted, encompassing a wide range of documents related to the research focus. This process allowed for the identification of key themes, trends, and

patterns within the texts. Researchers also extracted relevant data and information to support the study's objectives.

### **Waqf Education in Malaysia**

Waqf education in Malaysia is a vital approach to establishing and managing educational institutions and programs by utilizing waqf (Islamic endowment) funds (Md. Nawawi & Che Daud, 2016). This model plays a significant role in supporting educational initiatives and ensuring sustainable funding for educational institutions across the country (Mustaffa & Muda, 2014). There are several key aspects to understanding waqf education in Malaysia:

1. **Historical Roots and Forms of Waqf:** Waqf is deeply rooted in Islamic tradition, where property or assets are dedicated for charitable, religious, or educational purposes. In Malaysia, this concept traces its origins to traditional educational institutions like Sekolah Agama Rakyat (SAR), Sekolah Agama Negeri (SAN), *madrassahs*, and *pondoks* (Ariffin et al., 2022). The assets dedicated to traditional educational waqf include land, houses, mosques, buildings, books, and more.
2. **Waqf Education Institutions:** Malaysia has established numerous waqf education institutions aimed at providing quality education to the community. These institutions encompass schools, colleges, universities, and vocational training centers. They are often managed by waqf boards or foundations responsible for administration, finances, and development. Prominent institutions following the waqf education approach include International Islamic University Malaysia (UIAM), National University of Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), and Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM).
3. **Objectives and Benefits:** Waqf education institutions in Malaysia serve multiple objectives. They make education accessible to underserved communities, reducing educational disparities (Mohiddin, 2021). Moreover, these institutions ensure sustainable funding through waqf assets, covering expenses such as teacher salaries, infrastructure maintenance, and student support (Md Nawawi et al., 2017). Additionally, they emphasize the integration of Islamic values into the curriculum, promote community development, and receive government support and regulation to ensure transparency and accountability (Muhammad Don, 2015).
4. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Waqf education institutions frequently collaborate with other educational institutions, government agencies, private organizations, and philanthropic individuals. These partnerships facilitate knowledge-sharing, funding support, capacity building, and expertise exchange (Mohiddin, 2021). Corporate entities like Johor Corporation Berhad (JCorp) and its subsidiary, Waqaf An-Nur Corporation Berhad (WANCorp), have played a role in enhancing educational waqfs.
5. **Impact and Future Outlook:** Waqf education institutions have made substantial contributions to Malaysia's education landscape, particularly in providing opportunities to marginalized communities. The sustainable funding model offered by waqf ensures the continuity and growth of these institutions (Mohiddin, 2021). There is a growing recognition of waqf's potential to address educational challenges and promote social and economic development in Malaysia.

In summary, waqf education in Malaysia represents an innovative and sustainable approach to addressing educational needs while upholding Islamic values and principles. These

institutions not only bridge educational gaps but also contribute significantly to the overall development of communities. With continued support and collaboration, waqf education is poised to play a pivotal role in shaping Malaysia's educational landscape and fostering social progress.

### ***Historical Background of Waqf Education in Malaysia***

The historical foundation of waqf education in Malaysia can be traced back to the rich Islamic tradition that permeated the Malay Archipelago, introducing the concept of waqf institutions. The spread of Islam brought with it a focus on education and knowledge, shaping the educational landscape in Malaysia. Waqf institutions for education, rooted in the Islamic civilization's emphasis on knowledge, were a natural extension of this tradition (Latif Azha et.al, 2013). Early educational institutions in Malaysia, such as *Pondok* and *madrasahs*, were primarily dedicated to religious education, often associated with mosques and supported by waqf funds (Mohd Ali 2016). These institutions played a crucial role in providing basic religious education to local communities, sustaining their operations, and meeting the needs of students and teachers (Fatin Dayana Rashid et al 2022).

Over time, the scope of waqf education expanded to include higher education, with the establishment of Islamic universities and colleges offering diverse degree programs. Many of these institutions received support from waqf funds, ensuring the provision of quality education (Rais Yasin et al 2023; Mohd Ali 2016; Latif Azha et.al, 2013; Asmak Ab Rahman, 2009). The influence of waqf extended to higher education institutions like the International Islamic University Malaysia (UIAM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and the National University of Malaysia (UKM) (Mohd Ali 2016). The Malaysian government recognized the importance of waqf education in the modern era, implementing regulatory frameworks, providing financial assistance, and encouraging collaboration between waqf institutions and the public education system. This governmental support has played a pivotal role in the growth and modernization of waqf education in Malaysia, where it continues to be a significant contributor to the country's education landscape by providing accessible education, preserving Islamic values, and fostering community development (Rais Yasin et al 2023). The historical journey of waqf education underscores its deep roots in the Islamic tradition and its adaptive evolution to meet the evolving educational needs of Malaysian society.

### ***Malay Traditional Waqf-Based Education Centre***

In Malay culture, traditional education centers, known as "Pondok" or "madrasah Pondok," were pivotal in the educational landscape, managed through waqf endowments. These Pondok were fundamental in disseminating knowledge and Islamic teachings (Mustaffa & Muda, 2014). Students, primarily young boys, lived in the Pondok under the guidance of a teacher, focusing on Quranic studies, memorization, Islamic theology, and Arabic. Waqf endowments, comprising land or financial assets, sustained these Pondok, covering operational costs like teacher salaries and student necessities. Community involvement was integral, with local individuals or organizations establishing waqf endowments to support education in their communities. Emphasizing Islamic values, Pondok instilled virtues and discipline, fostering a pious environment.

The waqf system ensured sustainability, enabling Pondok to endure across generations. These educational centers played a vital role in community development, offering education to diverse backgrounds, including orphans and underprivileged students (Syafe'i, 2017). The

Pondok environment empowered students to contribute to social, religious, and intellectual progress (Jaafar et al., 2017). Reflecting a profound commitment to education, Islamic values, and community development, these traditional education centers managed by waqf have been instrumental in preserving Malay Islamic heritage and shaping generations with robust religious foundations (Sabri et al., 2006; Mustaffa & Muda, 2014).

These traditional education centres managed by waqf in the Malay culture reflect the deep-rooted commitment to education, Islamic values, and community development. They have played a crucial role in preserving the Malay Islamic heritage and nurturing generations of individuals with strong religious foundations.

## **Waqf Education Establishment Around the World**

### ***Coverage area of Waqf Education Establishment***

Waqf education, rooted in the utilization of Islamic endowment funds, covers a comprehensive spectrum of initiatives aimed at advancing education within the Islamic framework (Md Nawī & Ismail, 2018). The multifaceted nature of waqf education includes the establishment and support of educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities (Md Nawī & Ismail, 2018), providing formal education at various levels along with vocational training and skill development opportunities (Putra et al., 2018). Scholarships, grants, and financial aid, a crucial component of waqf education, are dedicated to supporting deserving students, covering educational expenses like tuition fees, books, and materials (Md Nawī & Ismail, 2018; Mohiddin, 2021).

Curriculum development within waqf education institutions is designed to align with Islamic values, incorporating subjects like Islamic studies, Arabic language, and ethics. Moreover, waqf funds contribute to the training and professional development of teachers through workshops, seminars, and training programs, enhancing teaching methodologies and subject expertise (Putra et al., 2018). Research activities and the creation of educational resources, including textbooks and digital aids, are facilitated by waqf funds, fostering an environment of academic exploration.

The scope of waqf education extends to infrastructure development, encompassing the construction, renovation, and maintenance of educational facilities. This includes classrooms, libraries, laboratories, sports facilities, and other essential infrastructure to create conducive learning environments (Ismail & Wahid, 2021). Beyond formal institutions, waqf education embraces community outreach and adult education initiatives, providing educational opportunities to those with limited access to traditional institutions or requiring specialized support (Md. Nawī & Che Daud, 2016; Mohiddin, 2021).

Crucially, collaboration and partnerships form an integral aspect of waqf education, involving cooperation with various entities such as educational institutions, governmental organizations, private entities, and philanthropic individuals (Ismail et al, 2015). These partnerships enhance educational programs, facilitate knowledge-sharing, and leverage resources to maximize the impact of waqf initiatives (Ariffin et al, 2022).

In essence, waqf education serves as a comprehensive approach to advancing education within an Islamic context. By utilizing waqf funds across these diverse initiatives, educational institutions and programs are sustained, ensuring access to quality education for individuals and communities in need. This multifaceted strategy underscores the broader impact of waqf



education in contributing to the development and accessibility of education while preserving Islamic values.

### ***Educational Waqf Contribution In The Islamic World***

The history of waqf in the Islamic world spans different eras and civilizations. In the early days of Islam, there were several waqfs that focused on education and research. One of the early examples is Bait al-Hikmah in Baghdad in the 9th century AD which became the leading Islamic learning center at that time. These educational endowments reflect the great contribution that has been made by individuals and the Muslim community in advancing science and education. They have provided access to quality education to students from various socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. This helps develop quality and knowledgeable human capital in Muslim societies.

In addition, education waqf has also supported research, innovation, and the development of knowledge. These endowments have created a space for critical thinking, intellectual discussion, and the development of knowledge in various fields, including science, medicine, humanities, and social sciences.

### ***Famous Education Wakaf in the Islamic World***

One of the most famous educational foundations is Al-Azhar in Egypt. This waqf was established in the 10th century by the Fatimid Caliph, Al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah, and it still functions as an important center of Islamic learning to this day. Al-Azhar has trained generations of Islamic scholars and students from all over the Islamic world (al-Tabari, 1998).

Educational endowments in Turkey can be seen during the Ottoman Sultanate. The government also made important contributions to education through waqf. Madrasahs and universities were developed throughout the empire, providing access to quality education to students from all walks of life. This endowment has contributed to the spread of Islamic knowledge and culture (Şeker & Öztürk, 2012). Pakistan, on the other hand, has a rich history of educational waqf. Many madrasahs and higher education institutions were established through waqf donations. Institutions such as Dar al-Ulum Karachi are examples of institutions funded by educational waqf (Haque, 2012).

Malaysia also has an important history of educational waqf. An example is the Universiti Islam Malaysia Waqf (UIAM) which has contributed to the development of Islamic education in this country. IIUM is one of the leading Islamic universities in the Southeast Asian region (Ibrahim, & Jusoh, 2012). In Saudi Arabia, there are many educational institutions and universities that are financed through waqf. An example is Al-Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Riyadh (Al-Sayed, 2019).

### ***Muslim Country with Most Establish Waqf Education Initiatives***

Several countries have embraced waqf education initiatives to advance Islamic education and enhance accessibility to learning. In Turkey, a longstanding tradition of waqf education is evident through numerous institutions, including universities and vocational training centers, overseen by the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Mohar et al., 2016). Similarly, Saudi Arabia boasts a robust waqf education system, regulated by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, with notable institutions like the Islamic University of Madinah operating through waqf funding (Mohar et al., 2016). Malaysia has established a well-

developed waqf education system, featuring schools, colleges, and universities, managed by state Islamic Religious Councils (Rohayati Hussin et al., 2016).

In Egypt, the historical significance of waqf education is exemplified by Al-Azhar University, supported by waqf endowments for centuries and renowned for its contributions to Islamic scholarship (Mohar et al., 2016). Jordan has implemented waqf education initiatives overseen by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, benefiting institutions like the University of Jordan and Jordan University of Science and Technology. Indonesia's vast waqf education system includes Islamic boarding schools supported by waqf endowments, regulated by the Indonesian Waqf Board (Almanaseer & Bashar, 2014). The United Arab Emirates has made significant investments in waqf education, establishing waqf-funded educational institutions like Zayed University (Arab et al., 2023).

These examples showcase the diverse global landscape of waqf education, with each country tailoring initiatives based on local contexts, cultural factors, and government policies. The overarching goal remains consistent—to promote Islamic education and expand educational opportunities for individuals within the framework of waqf endowments.

### **Waqf-Based Education Centres Around the World**

There are several education centres around the world that are managed with waqf funds. Here are a few examples:

1. Al-Azhar University (Egypt): Al-Azhar University, located in Cairo, Egypt, is one of the oldest and most prestigious Islamic educational institutions in the world. It has been supported by waqf endowments for centuries. The university offers a wide range of programs in Islamic studies, Arabic language, theology, law, and other fields (Abdullah, 2020).
2. Al-Qarawiyyin University (Morocco): Al-Qarawiyyin University, located in Fez, Morocco, is considered one of the oldest continuously operating universities in the world. It was founded in 859 CE and has been supported by waqf endowments throughout its history. The university offers programs in Islamic studies, social sciences, languages, and more (Hoque & Abdullah, 2021).
3. Al-Madina Institute (United States): Al-Madina Institute, based in the United States, is an educational organization that offers a variety of programs and courses in Islamic studies, spirituality, and personal development. It operates through waqf funds and relies on community support to provide accessible education to individuals interested in Islamic learning.
4. Al-Hikmah University (Nigeria): Al-Hikmah University, located in Ilorin, Nigeria, is a private university that operates through waqf funds. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs in various disciplines, including Islamic studies, law, humanities, management sciences, and natural sciences (Adebayo & Jawondo, 2018).
5. Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Centre for Islamic Studies (Brunei): The Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Centre for Islamic Studies, located in Brunei, is an academic institution dedicated to Islamic studies. It operates through waqf funds and offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs, as well as research activities focused on Islamic scholarship (Hubur, 2019).
6. International Islamic University Malaysia (Malaysia): The International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) is a comprehensive university in Malaysia that integrates Islamic values into its curriculum. It receives waqf support and offers programs in

various fields, including Islamic studies, humanities, science, engineering, and social sciences (Saidon & Azam, 2023).

7. Darul Uloom Deoband (India): Darul Uloom Deoband, located in Uttar Pradesh, India, is one of the prominent Islamic seminaries in South Asia. It operates through waqf funds and provides traditional Islamic education in various disciplines, including Quranic studies, Hadith, Islamic law, and theology (Naseef & Santhosh, 2021).

These are just a few examples of education centres that are managed with waqf funds. Waqf-based educational institutions can be found in different countries, promoting Islamic education, research, and knowledge dissemination (Awalluddin, 2023).

### **Waqf-Based for Early Education Centres**

Early education centres managed by waqf have existed throughout history in various parts of the Muslim world. These centres played a crucial role in providing foundational education and nurturing young minds. Here are a few examples:

1. Kuttab: Kuttab was an early education centre in Islamic societies during the early centuries of Islam. It was usually a small neighbourhood-based institution where children received basic education, including Quranic recitation, memorization, and basic literacy skills. Kuttab centres were often supported by waqf endowments, ensuring their sustainability and accessibility to the community (Mujani et al., 2018).
2. Madrasahs: Madrasahs, which are Islamic educational institutions, have been managed by waqf funds since their inception. These institutions provided a more comprehensive education beyond the basic *kuttab* level. Madrasahs offered a curriculum that included Islamic studies, Arabic language, Quranic sciences, Hadith, Islamic law, and other subjects. They were supported by waqf endowments to cover expenses such as teacher salaries, facilities, and maintenance (Nasution et al., 2023).
3. Waqf-Funded Mosques: Mosques, which serve as centres of worship and community gathering, have often included educational components supported by waqf funds. Many mosques established attached rooms or spaces for educational purposes, where children received religious education under the guidance of qualified teachers. These spaces were maintained through waqf endowments to ensure the continuity of educational activities (Khan & Jareen, 2015).
4. Waqf-Funded Libraries: Libraries were an integral part of waqf institutions and served as centres for knowledge and learning. These libraries, established and supported by waqf endowments, provided access to a wide range of books, manuscripts, and scholarly resources. They were open to the public and served as educational hubs for students, scholars, and the wider community (Khan, 2015).
5. Waqf-Funded Orphanages: Some waqf endowments were specifically designated to support orphanages, which served as early education centres for orphaned children. These institutions provided not only shelter and basic needs but also educational opportunities. Orphanages often had teachers who provided education and upbringing to orphaned children, enabling them to acquire knowledge and skills (Mohd et al., 2018).

These early education centres managed by waqf played a crucial role in the dissemination of knowledge, preservation of Islamic teachings, and nurturing young minds. They contributed to the intellectual and social development of communities, ensuring that education was accessible to children and promoting a strong foundation of Islamic education and values.



### Malay Traditional Waqf-Based Education Centre

In Malay culture, traditional education centres managed by waqf were an integral part of the educational landscape. These centres, known as "*Pondok*" or "*madrasah Pondok*," served as important institutions for the dissemination of knowledge and Islamic teachings (Mustaffa & Muda, 2014). They were typically supported by waqf endowments, which provided the necessary resources for their operation and maintenance. Here are some key features of Malay traditional education centres managed by waqf:

1. *Pondok* Education: *Pondok* education refers to the traditional Islamic education provided in these centres. Students, often young boys, lived in the *Pondok* under the supervision of a teacher known as a "*ustaz*" or "*kyai*" (Syafe'i, 2017). The curriculum focused on Quranic studies, memorization of the Quran, Islamic theology, Arabic language, and other subjects related to Islamic sciences (Jaafar et al., 2017).
2. Waqf Support: Many *Pondoks* were established and sustained through waqf endowments. These endowments, consisting of land, buildings, or financial assets, were dedicated to supporting the operational expenses of the *Pondok*. The income generated from the waqf properties was utilized to cover the costs of teacher salaries, student accommodations, meals, and other educational resources (Sabri et al., 2006).
3. Community Involvement: Malay traditional education centres managed by waqf were deeply rooted in the local community. The waqf endowments were often established by community members, including wealthy individuals, families, or organizations, who recognized the importance of education and wanted to contribute to the advancement of Islamic knowledge in their community (Mustaffa & Muda, 2014).
4. Integration of Islamic Values: These educational centres emphasized the integration of Islamic values and moral teachings in the education process. Alongside academic studies, students were taught virtues such as humility, respect, discipline, and community service. The *Pondok* environment fostered a sense of camaraderie and encouraged students to live a pious and disciplined life (Syafe'i, 2017).
5. Sustainability and Continuity: The waqf system ensured the sustainability and continuity of these educational centres. By establishing waqf endowments, the founders ensured that the *Pondok* would continue to provide education for future generations. The income generated from the waqf properties allowed for the ongoing support and maintenance of the *Pondok*, ensuring its longevity.
6. Contribution to Community Development: Malay traditional education centres managed by waqf played a significant role in community development. They provided education to individuals from various backgrounds, including orphans and underprivileged students who may not have had access to formal schooling. The knowledge and skills acquired in the *Pondok* empowered students to become active members of their communities, contributing to social, religious, and intellectual progress.

These traditional education centres managed by waqf in the Malay culture reflect the deep-rooted commitment to education, Islamic values, and community development. They have played a crucial role in preserving the Malay Islamic heritage and nurturing generations of individuals with strong religious foundations.

**Benefit, Barriers and Challenge*****Benefit from Waqf Education Activities***

Waqf are established for the benefit of religion, including the framework of performing charitable deeds to earn rewards and seek forgiveness for sins. Additionally, they serve the innate instinct to safeguard wealth and prevent it from being used for wrongful purposes and wastage by heirs. At the same time, they ensure the interests of family members by providing sustenance for the future. Waqfs also safeguard the interests of the community by providing essential public necessities for those who wish to contribute (Mohd. Ali 2019).

Four factors have been identified as the most prominent factors that drive the society to donate for the interest of Islamic education: looking for Allah's blessing, the spread of Islamic religion, the purpose of nations' education and encouraging the development of economy (Latif Azha et.al, 2013). On the other hand, waqf education offers numerous benefits to individuals, communities, and societies. Waqf education institutions help bridge the educational gap by providing access to quality education for individuals who may have limited financial resources. By utilizing waqf funds, these institutions can offer affordable or free education, scholarships, and financial aid to deserving students, ensuring that education is accessible to a broader segment of society.

In addition, waqf education emphasizes the holistic development of individuals by incorporating both academic and moral education. It integrates Islamic values, ethics, and teachings into the curriculum, nurturing well-rounded individuals who possess knowledge, skills, and ethical values to contribute positively to society (Latif Azha et.al, 2013). Besides, education is a powerful tool for socioeconomic empowerment. Waqf education enables individuals to acquire knowledge, skills, and qualifications that enhance their employment prospects, income potential, and socioeconomic status (Raja Nor Ashikin & Nor Adha 2014; Mas Nooraini Mohiddin 2021). It equips them with the necessary competencies to secure better job opportunities and improve their quality of life (Latif Azha et.al, 2013; Asmak Ab Rahman 2009).

Clearly, waqf education institutions play a crucial role in community development. By providing education and skills training, they contribute to the overall upliftment of the community. Educated individuals become agents of change, driving progress, and development within their communities through knowledge dissemination, innovation, and community service. After all, waqf education places a strong emphasis on moral and ethical values rooted in Islamic teachings. It promotes virtues such as integrity, compassion, justice, and social responsibility. By instilling these values in students, waqf education cultivates a sense of ethics, empathy, and civic consciousness, leading to responsible and principled individuals who contribute positively to society. After all, waqf education provides a sustainable funding model for educational institutions. By utilizing waqf funds, these institutions have a reliable and ongoing source of income to cover operational expenses, infrastructure development, scholarships, and other educational initiatives. This ensures the continuity and growth of educational programs and institutions (Mas Nooraini Mohiddin 2021).

Waqf education serves as a catalyst for personal, social, and economic development, creating a positive impact on individuals, communities, and societies. It promotes educational inclusivity, fosters moral values, drives socioeconomic empowerment, and contributes to the overall well-being and progress of society.

**Main Challenges in the implementation of educational waqf**

Although waqf has been implemented by Muslims since ancient civilization, it is still in the process of improvement whether from the point of view of management, distribution, expansion, and others. Among the challenges and obstacles in implementing education waqf in Malaysia are:

The main challenge faced is the lack of awareness in society about educational waqf. Many people may not fully understand what educational waqf is and how it can benefit society (Abdul Aziz, 2018). The community may have recognized and understood what waqf is, but education waqf is still poorly understood by a large number of the community. They are also not disclosed about the potential and great impact of waqf on the development of Muslim education. Therefore, there should be an effort to increase awareness and understanding of this concept through information campaigns, seminars, and public education aimed at forming a positive view of educational waqf.

The second challenge is from a legal point of view, which is related to the legal position in implementing educational waqf. Existing waqf regulations may not be sufficient to effectively promote educational waqf (Ismail & Mustafa, 2019). Among them is the legal ambiguity such as how educational waqf can be implemented effectively. Likewise, the issue of management of educational waqf property can be complicated. Trustees or institutions need to comply with strict laws especially in the issue of resource distribution to eligible students and infrastructure maintenance and waqf education development. Therefore, changes and enforcement of laws should be considered to incentivize individuals and organizations to endow their property for educational purposes.

The third challenge is related to efficient waqf management. This includes the selection of waqf recipient students, allocation of resources to educational institutions, and monitoring of student performance. The effectiveness of waqf management is important because if it is not managed well, the resources given may not be used optimally (Othman, & Hashim, 2017).

The fourth challenge is related to the development of quality education infrastructure to support education waqf. Malaysia needs good educational institutions to maintain a quality level of education. This includes the construction and maintenance of schools, colleges, and universities which require high costs. This challenge involves continuous and sustainable funding to ensure that educational institutions that receive waqf can function properly (Abdul Rahman, & Sulaiman, 2020).

The fifth challenge is related to the active participation of the community in educational waqf. The success of education waqf depends on the participation and support of the community. This involves encouraging the community to contribute to education waqf as well as getting support and concern from local stakeholders (Abdullah, & Ibrahim, 2016).

Education endowment is an important initiative in improving the quality of education in Malaysia. Although there are challenges that need to be faced, with high awareness, appropriate legal changes, efficient management, good educational infrastructure, and active community participation, education waqf can be an important catalyst in the development of the country's education. Continued efforts in addressing these challenges are important to ensure the success of educational waqf in Malaysia.

To overcome these challenges as well, the government needs to review and renew the waqf law and develop clearer and more specific guidelines in implementing educational waqf. This will help ensure that educational waqf can be implemented effectively, fairly, and comply with the principles of Islamic law and the needs of the community in a better way. In addition, education and understanding of waqf law needs to be increased in the community to clarify the role of law in the educational waqf process.

### **Conclusion**

The historical background of waqf education in Malaysia can be traced back to the Islamic tradition and the establishment of waqf institutions throughout the centuries. Waqf education continues to play a significant role in Malaysia's education landscape. It provides access to education, preserves Islamic values, and contributes to community development. The historical background of waqf education showcases its deep roots in the Islamic tradition and its evolution to meet the changing educational needs of Malaysian society.

Waqf education activities offer significant benefits, including promoting religion, safeguarding wealth, and providing sustenance for families and communities. They contribute to society by encouraging donations for Islamic education, fostering holistic development, and empowering individuals economically. Waqf education institutions play a vital role in community development by producing educated individuals who drive progress and uphold moral values.

However, several challenges hinder the effective implementation of educational waqf in Malaysia. First, there is a lack of awareness and understanding about educational waqf among the public. Second, existing waqf regulations may not adequately support educational waqf. Third, efficient management of waqf resources is essential. Fourth, developing quality education infrastructure requires sustainable funding. Lastly, community participation is crucial for the success of educational waqf.

To address these challenges, the government should review and update waqf laws and provide clearer guidelines. Additionally, efforts should be made to raise awareness and educate the community about the importance of waqf in education. These steps can help ensure the success of educational waqf in Malaysia and improve the quality of education in the country. This study was conducted in a document analysis, therefore not reporting or combining data from the interviews to minimize bias and establish credibility was included in this study. Thus, a future study with incorporated of interview data in studying waqf in Malaysia to understand further on the actual implementation of waqf operation in the country could be conducted.

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