



CREATIVE MEDIA: ADAPTING CONTEMPORARY WAQF IN THE MALAYSIAN ISLAMIC BROADCASTING INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The Islamic creative media industry, which includes Islamic broadcasting institutions, needs to transition to new mechanisms for generating income, as the conventional business model based on ratings is no longer relevant for ensuring economic sustainability. This approach is not only ineffective but also contradicts the primary objectives of establishing Islamic broadcasting institutions when they adapt to the capitalist economic model. Therefore, this study aims to fundamentally propose contemporary waqf components that can be applied in the Islamic creative media industry. To achieve this objective, this qualitative study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, in which articles are analyzed to identify key themes. Through the screening process, six articles were selected as the basis for the study, and the results identified four main themes with the help of ATLAS.ti software. The findings show that contemporary waqf components such as knowledge waqf, cash waqf, service waqf, and intellectual property waqf can be applied to the Islamic creative media industry. These components provide an effective framework for ensuring the economic sustainability of Islamic broadcasting while adhering to Shariah principles. Therefore, the proposed waqf model framework can help clarify its benefits to the Islamic economy.

Keywords: Islamic Broadcasting, Knowledge Waqf, Service Waqf, Intellectual Property,

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1. Introduction

Waqf (Islamic endowment) is a significant component of Islamic philanthropy, providing a sustainable resource for various sectors, including education, healthcare, and religious activities. In Malaysia, the institutional management of waqf has expanded beyond traditional forms to include diverse options for Muslims to contribute. Among these is the Waqf Harta Intelek, which allows individuals to endow intellectual property assets such as copyrights, patents, industrial designs, optical discs, and trademarks. This innovative approach demonstrates Malaysia's commitment to modernizing waqf practices, making them relevant to contemporary needs and the evolving socio-economic landscape (Jalil, 2018).

Despite these advancements, there remains a critical gap in the formal recognition and categorization of media content, particularly digital media, as a waqfable asset. While intellectual property assets like trademarks and patents are well-defined, the waqf of creative media, especially digital content, lacks clear criteria and guidelines for its endowment. This oversight poses a challenge to the broader application of waqf in the media sector, particularly in Islamic broadcasting, which plays a pivotal role in shaping cultural and religious narratives in Malaysia (Muhammad & Ab Aziz, 2019). Addressing this gap is essential to ensuring that the waqf system remains adaptable to emerging media technologies and the creative economy.

Islamic broadcasting institutions in Malaysia face increasing pressure to adopt new mechanisms for generating income as they navigate the challenges of the digital age. Traditional business models that rely heavily on ratings and advertisement revenue are becoming less relevant in ensuring the long-term economic sustainability of these institutions. The adoption of conventional capitalist economic models further exacerbates this issue, as such models often conflict with the foundational purposes of Islamic broadcasting organizations, which prioritize religious and moral integrity over profit maximization (Al-Serhan & Abdalla, 2021). As a result, there is an urgent need for alternative funding strategies that align with Islamic principles.

The integration of contemporary waqf practices into the Islamic broadcasting industry offers a promising solution. Waqf, when appropriately applied, can provide a steady stream of income while preserving the ethical and religious values central to Islamic media. For example, waqf of media content, both digital and traditional, can ensure that the production and dissemination of Islamic teachings through broadcasting channels are maintained without reliance on commercial pressures. This approach not only secures the financial sustainability of Islamic broadcasting institutions but also reinforces their mission to deliver spiritually enriching content that adheres to Islamic tenets (Sulaiman & Zakariya, 2020).

2. The Creative Media Industry in Malaysia

The creative media industry in Malaysia has emerged as a dynamic sector contributing to the country's cultural identity and economic development. Encompassing film, television, digital content, music, and advertising, this industry has experienced significant growth

due to technological advancements and government initiatives promoting local content creation. Malaysia's National Creative Industry Policy (Dasar Industri Kreatif Negara), launched in 2010, set a strategic framework to enhance the creative sector's global competitiveness, creating a conducive environment for both local and international productions (Malaysian Ministry of Communications and Multimedia, 2010). The policy has helped expand the creative ecosystem, attracting investment and fostering talent development across the country.

Despite these advancements, the Malaysian creative media industry faces several challenges, including limited funding, competition from foreign content, and the need for more structured industry standards. The digital transformation has altered consumer behavior, with audiences increasingly shifting towards online platforms and streaming services. This shift requires Malaysian content creators to adapt by producing content that is both globally relevant and culturally distinct. The government's ongoing support, through funding initiatives such as FINAS (National Film Development Corporation Malaysia) and tax incentives, has been crucial in helping local creators navigate these challenges (FINAS, 2020). However, there is a need for more sustainable models to ensure long-term industry growth, particularly in terms of intellectual property management and creative financing.

The integration of Islamic principles, such as waqf (Islamic endowment), into the creative media industry in Malaysia represents a potential solution for addressing financial sustainability. By utilizing waqf, creative professionals can access alternative funding sources that align with Islamic values. This approach can help ensure the continued production of culturally significant content while providing financial stability for the industry. Additionally, the intellectual property waqf model, where creators endow their works as waqf, allows for the monetization of creative assets through licensing and distribution, contributing to the sector's growth while preserving Islamic ethics (Cizakca, 2000). This innovative approach can offer a unique framework for other Muslim-majority countries looking to develop their creative industries.

3. Problem statement

As a creative media industry, Islamic broadcasting institutions are increasingly facing the challenge of adapting to new economic realities. The traditional business model of generating income through ratings-based advertising is becoming less viable, especially in a digital age where audience behavior is shifting rapidly (Sulaiman & Zakariya, 2020). This reliance on conventional capitalist models, which prioritize profit over content quality, conflicts with the mission of Islamic broadcasting institutions. These institutions are tasked with upholding Islamic values and delivering content that educates and enriches the spiritual lives of their audiences. The capitalist approach, however, often forces compromises that undermine these core objectives, thus necessitating the exploration of alternative, Shariah-compliant financial models.

One such alternative is the integration of contemporary waqf practices into the Islamic broadcasting industry. However, the current literature does not provide sufficient clarity on how these contemporary waqf models, particularly those practiced in Malaysia,

can be adapted to support the unique needs of Islamic broadcasting. The absence of a clear framework for applying waqf to digital media content leaves Islamic broadcasters without the necessary tools to leverage waqf as a sustainable income source (Al-Serhan & Abdalla, 2021). This is a significant oversight, given that waqf has historically played a crucial role in funding religious, educational, and cultural institutions across the Islamic world.

Given the urgent need for Islamic broadcasting institutions to find sustainable, non-commercial funding models that align with Islamic principles, it is essential to explore how contemporary waqf practices can be applied to this sector. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the fundamental components of Malaysia's contemporary waqf system that can be adapted to the Islamic broadcasting industry. By identifying these components and proposing a viable framework, this research seeks to contribute to the development of a sustainable economic model for Islamic broadcasting that aligns with its mission and values.

In conclusion, adapting contemporary waqf to the Islamic broadcasting industry in Malaysia is a crucial step towards fostering a more resilient and ethically sound media landscape. By recognizing media content as a waqfable asset, Islamic broadcasters can move away from capitalist models that compromise their core values and instead embrace a funding model rooted in Islamic principles. This paper seeks to explore the potential of contemporary waqf in supporting the Islamic broadcasting sector and offers recommendations for how this innovative approach can be effectively implemented.

4. Methodology and Analysis

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to explore the application of contemporary waqf in the Malaysian Islamic broadcasting industry. The SLR approach is a qualitative research technique that systematically identifies, evaluates, and synthesizes existing research to generate new insights. The SLR method is particularly effective in academic research as it allows for a thorough analysis of existing literature, ensuring that the themes identified are based on a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter (Petticrew & Roberts, 2008). In this study, 6 relevant articles were carefully selected through a rigorous screening process, forming the foundation for further thematic analysis.

The use of ATLAS.ti, a qualitative data analysis software, was instrumental in identifying key themes from the selected articles. ATLAS.ti facilitated the coding and organization of data, enabling the researchers to systematically analyze complex qualitative information. Through this process, 4 major themes were identified, which form the core of the study's findings. Thematic analysis, as an exploratory technique, allowed for the identification of patterns and relationships within the data, contributing to a deeper understanding of how contemporary waqf can be applied to the Islamic broadcasting industry (Clarke & Braun, 2013). This approach aligns with the study's objective of exploring the potential of waqf in supporting the economic sustainability of Islamic media institutions.

Despite the robust methodology, the study encountered certain limitations. One significant challenge was the limited availability of Malaysia-specific studies on contemporary waqf, particularly in the context of digital media and Islamic broadcasting. The lack of localized research made it difficult to develop a fully reliable framework for identifying suitable components that could be directly applied to the Malaysian Islamic broadcasting industry (Hashim, 2017).

5. Finding and discussion

In examining the potential of contemporary waqf practices within the Malaysian Islamic broadcasting industry, four critical components have been identified: Knowledge Waqf, Cash Waqf, Service Waqf, and Intellectual Property Waqf. These components provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how waqf can be adapted to meet the unique needs of Islamic broadcasting institutions, ensuring their financial sustainability while aligning with Islamic principles.

This discussion elaborates on the role of each waqf component and its contribution to the industry. Based on the discussion of the results of the study, it was found that each component of this contemporary waqf can be channeled to different benefits as framework below:

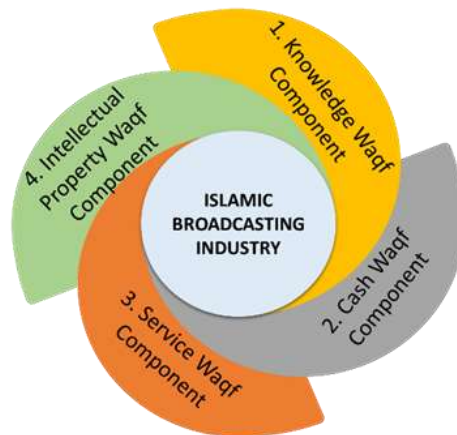


Figure 1: Component of contemporary waqf in Islamic Broadcasting Industry

5.1. Knowledge Waqf Component

The Knowledge Waqf component emphasizes the endowment of intellectual assets to produce high-quality Islamic media content. In an industry where the creation of impactful and educational content is crucial, leveraging waqf for knowledge production can provide sustainable funding for research and development (R&D). This component supports the generation of assertive and scholarly Islamic content that can educate and benefit the broader society.

Waqf, traditionally associated with physical assets, is now being expanded to include intellectual contributions. By funding R&D and covering educational costs through waqf, Islamic broadcasting institutions can ensure a continuous flow of informed, engaging, and culturally relevant content. The long-term impact of this approach includes elevating the intellectual capital of Islamic media, which can resonate with audiences on both spiritual and educational levels.

5.2. Cash Waqf Component

The Cash Waqf component focuses on the financial aspects of sustaining Islamic broadcasting. Cash waqf is a versatile tool that allows for the accumulation of financial resources through donations, which can then be invested in income-generating assets such as real estate and other profitable ventures. This model provides a steady stream of income that can be reinvested into the operation and administration of Islamic broadcasting.

One of the advantages of cash waqf is its flexibility, as it allows the funds to be used for immediate needs or long-term investments that ensure financial independence from conventional capitalist business models that rely on ratings. This aligns with the fundamental objective of Islamic broadcasting institutions, which is to operate in accordance with Islamic values and avoid the profit-maximization models seen in secular media industries (Kahf, 1998). The cash waqf component thus plays a critical role in ensuring the economic sustainability of Islamic broadcasting institutions.

5.3. Service Waqf Component

The Service Waqf component pertains to the contribution of professional expertise and services to enhance the creative output of Islamic media. In this model, professionals in the broadcasting industry offer their expertise as a form of waqf, thereby contributing to the creation of economically valuable content. This can include a range of services, from content production to legal and financial consultancy, provided that these services comply with Shariah regulations.

By attracting and utilizing professional expertise, Islamic broadcasting institutions can enhance the quality and scope of their programming, making it more competitive in the media landscape. Service waqf offers a unique approach to resource development, emphasizing the value of human capital in the waqf system. This approach is particularly beneficial for Islamic media organizations that may lack the financial resources to hire top-tier talent but can still access high-quality services through the waqf mechanism (Cizacka, 2000).

5.4. Intellectual Property Waqf Component

The Intellectual Property Waqf component represents a forward-looking approach to waqf in the digital age. This component involves the conversion of media content and intellectual property into permanent assets. Contributors of intellectual property, such as creators of Islamic media content, can endow their work as waqf, ensuring that it benefits both the institution and the broader community over time. This approach allows for the creation of a continuous revenue stream, as the intellectual property can be monetized through licensing, syndication, or other forms of content distribution.

Additionally, the income generated from these intellectual assets can be reinvested into the institution, creating a sustainable cycle of content creation and financial support. This model fosters a "win-win" situation where both the institution and content creators benefit from the waqf arrangement, promoting a culture of shared responsibility and collective benefit in the Islamic media landscape (Saad, 2011). Intellectual property waqf is particularly relevant in the digital age, where content can be easily distributed and monetized across multiple platforms.

6. Conclusion

The integration of Knowledge, Cash, Service, and Intellectual Property Waqf components offers a multidimensional approach to sustaining Islamic broadcasting in Malaysia. Each component plays a crucial role in ensuring the financial, intellectual, and creative sustainability of Islamic media institutions. By leveraging these waqf components, Islamic broadcasting can move beyond traditional funding models and align more closely with Islamic economic principles, creating a robust and ethically sound foundation for future growth. The adaptability of these components highlights the flexibility of waqf in meeting contemporary challenges, particularly in the digital media landscape. Moving forward, Islamic broadcasting institutions in Malaysia have the opportunity to innovate within the framework of waqf, ensuring that they remain financially sustainable while staying true to their religious and cultural values.

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