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**THE UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS OF WAQF *ISTIBDAL*
APPLICATION IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA**

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Abstract

Waqf is one of the important instruments in Islamic economic that benefit the development of socio-economic of a country. Among the waqf instruments that are innovative and practical is waqf *Istibdal*. Waqf *Istibdal* facilitates in developing underutilised waqf land that are small, scattered, difficult to develop and not beneficial to the economy. This indicates that if waqf *Istibdal* is managed appropriately, the development of waqf will be greater in promoting the socio-economic of ummah. It would be easier if Muslims themselves understand and aware on the application of waqf *Istibdal*. But question arise on how far Muslim specifically in Malaysia understand and aware about the concept and implementation of waqf *Istibdal*? Hence, this paper aims to answer two objectives; first, to identify the level of understanding and awareness of Muslim in Malaysia on waqf *Istibdal*. Second, to analyse the demographic differences of Muslim in Malaysia towards waqf *Istibdal*. The data is collected through the distribution of questionnaire and the result is analysed through descriptive statistic. The result shows that the overall level of understanding and awareness of Muslim in Malaysia is moderate except for the dimension of State Islamic Religious Council (MAIN) activities. It is also found that the level of awareness of Muslim in Malaysia are at a prominent level. The differences in the awareness level are significant in the demographic factor such as gender, age, education level and income whereas the differences in the understanding level are significant in age and gender.

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Keywords: Waqf *Istibdal*, waqf awareness, waqf understanding.



1. Introduction

The role of Waqf in Islamic economy is very significant, especially in developing the socio-economic of the ummah. One of the main innovation in the waqf development is the implementation of waqf *Istibdal*. Waqf *Istibdal* means the exchange of waqf property in the same form i.e land with land, selling and buying the waqf property in the same form, and eventually selling the waqf property then replace it with a purchased with new waqf property without altering the deceiver's intention (Meor Abd Malik, 2012; Bahari, 2013). Among the success stories of waqf *Istibdal* that has been done that is managed by respective *mutawalli* are in Penang, Malaysia and Singapore. Waqf *Istibdal* is significant in promoting the development of Islamic economy to develop the non-strategic land, low value of the waqf asset and lack of awareness and understanding towards waqf itself (Bahari, 2013).

In identifying the empirical studies of waqf that has been done in past research as well as literature, it shows that there is more study on waqf but none of them is focusing on analysing the understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal*. In the past research that has been conducted by Ahmed (2004), he found that the role of *Istibdal* as one of the best qualities waqf management to develop waqf other than the rest of waqf innovations. Whereas the study done by Ramli and Sulaiman (2006) revealed that waqf *Istibdal* implementation in Singapore is executed by converting potential waqf land to potential waqf property through WARESS4.

Furthermore, in Malaysia, there are few studies that had been done by scholars that are interested in developing and expanding the knowledge of waqf. Mohamad, Abdul Kader and Ali (2012) has accomplished a study on the law of waqf *Istibdal* and its implementation in the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. She found that waqf *Istibdal* practice has not yet expanding and more understanding and awareness need to be spread out. Moreover, Mat Rani (2010) research is focusing on the waqf *Istibdal* which is in line with the provisions of the special state enactment on the provisions of the National Land Code 1965 and the Land Acquisition Act 1960. His study involves the issue of pilfering waqf land by the State Authority which do not pay any compensation to the land as the replacement. In addition, the study by Rashid (2003) has reviewed the implementation of waqf *Istibdal* in Lot 334, Mukim of Kota Tinggi, Johor which involves a general waqf property which has no major pitfall towards it. A study done by Meor Abd Malik (2012) sees the implementation of waqf *Istibdal* in Penang since Penang is the earliest institution to carry out waqf *Istibdal* even though the it does not include in the state enactment. There are few cases of waqf *Istibdal* implemented in Penang. First, is the exchange on Teik Soon (Special Waqf Land) Maahad al-Mahsoor al-Islami with a 31 acres plot of land in Genting, Balik Pulau. Second, is the reclaim land at Lot 1066, Mukim 4 Seberang Perai Tengah with individual land in the Permatang Pauh Mosque.

In the opposite, the study in finding the understanding and awareness about waqf in general is still lacking, especially study that emphasizes on the understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal*. However, there are studies that had been conducted in the Islamic finance sector that are focusing on understanding and awareness of consumer. Ridzwan and Shahwan (2007), found that the understanding and awareness of the staffs from the Centre for International Islamic University Matriculation on credit cards are still low. Likewise, the study that had been conducted by Rosly and Abu Bakar (2003) found that the understanding of the principles of shariah banking are minimal and unsatisfactory.

In other few findings on the understanding and awareness in Islamic banking research, Fatimah (2006) and Karim and Affif (2005) found that the awareness of the existence of shariah banking is high among Indonesian but the understanding of the shariah banking system and its products and services is still low. In the takaful sector, Mohd Zain (2000) and Salamon and Saad (2010) had conducted a study on understanding on takaful and awareness to measure the knowledge of the society towards the takaful products and services. Mohd Zain (2000) found out that the studying the understanding is at a moderate level based on his study on the understanding of Universiti Utara Malaysia staff towards takaful. In contradictory, this study is not focusing on the understanding and awareness of Islamic banking or takaful sector, but strictly emphasis on the understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* in Malaysia.

Although the implementation of waqf *Istibdal* has already exists and it is showing a success in the development of the waqf asset as well as the escalation of the waqf benefits. But it turns out to be there is a lot of waqf asset that have yet to implement the waqf *Istibdal* practice. This is due to the position of the waqf land, low economy value and the awareness and understanding of the Muslim community in Malaysia is still at a minimal level. On the other hand, other reason of the under developing of waqf asset is the understanding of the Muslim towards the State Islamic Religious Council (MAIN) *mutawalli* in managing and developing the waqf asset. Normally, Muslims only identified waqf asset on several understandings based on waqf Mosques, cemetery, schools and prayer rooms. Thus, before reaching on the acceptance and implementation of waqf *Istibdal*, this research aims to focus on identifying the understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* in Malaysia.

2. Problem Statement

According to Kamus Dewan dictionary third edition (1994), understanding means knowing something that has been learned and discussed whereas awareness carries out the meaning of knowing something that has been learned and wanting to implement it. Once an individual has a prominent level of understanding and awareness, the individual will behave in a better way. This shows the act of acceptance by the individual. Synchronising with the execution and implementation of waqf *Istibdal* by MAIN to succeed, it is necessary to see the understanding and awareness of the Muslim community especially in Malaysia where 60.2% of its majority population are Muslims. Knowing the understanding and awareness level are pertinent because when the Muslim community understand and aware of the concept and implementation of waqf *Istibdal*, this will precede the acceptance of the community. Therefore, it would be tranquil to MAIN to develop the waqf assets and to upsurge the waqf assets. Upon the successful of this, there will be less criticism towards the implementation of the procedure and mechanism of waqf *Istibdal*. (Al-Ghazali, 1980, p.17, as cited in Kamus Dewan dictionary third edition, 1994) mentioned that the aspect of understanding is a determinant in behaviour that is usually influenced by the degree of knowledge it possesses. This understanding will then create awareness for individuals to act which may be different based on their respective demographic factors. The following questions are likely to have the level of understanding and awareness of different Muslim societies in terms of demography, such as gender, education, age and income.

Hence, this paper aims to identify the level of understanding and awareness of the Muslim community in Peninsular Malaysia as well as to analyse the demographic differences in the aspects of

understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* of Muslims community in Peninsular Malaysia. This paper will be divided into several sections. The first part of the introduction; Second, the workshop, the third, the methodology, the fourth, the analysis of the study and finally the formulation of the study.

3. Research Questions

To accomplish the research objectives, two focal research questions are developed. This study is focusing in answering the following research questions:

3.1. How far Muslim specifically in Malaysia understand and aware about the concept and implementation of waqf *Istibdal*?

- What is the level of understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* application based on gender
- What is the level of understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* application based on age
- What is the level of understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* application based on education level
- What is the level of understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* application based on income

3.2. What are the demographic differences for Muslim in Malaysia in understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal*?

- What is the difference of waqf *Istibdal* understanding and awareness based on gender
- What is the difference of waqf *Istibdal* understanding and awareness based on age
- What is the difference of waqf *Istibdal* understanding and awareness based on education level
- What is the difference of waqf *Istibdal* understanding and awareness based on income

4. Purpose of the Study

This study generally focuses on finding the understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* application in peninsular Malaysia. Thus, this study aims to answer the following objectives:

- 4.1.** To identify the level of understanding and awareness of Muslim in Malaysia on waqf *Istibdal*
- 4.2.** To analyse the demographic differences of Muslim in Malaysia towards waqf *Istibdal*

5. Research Methods

The research design used in this study is a descriptive research design with the type of application research. The data used in this research is from quantitative data collection with the analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics. Random sampling method is use in this study based on the two main cities of each state in the Peninsular Malaysia with the proposition of 1000 Muslim respondents. Respondents are divided into four zones which are the Northern Zone (Perak, Penang, Alor Setar and Perlis); Central Zone (Selangor, Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur and Negeri Sembilan); South Zone (Johor and Malacca), East Coast Zone (Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang). The data are collected using

questionnaire instrument consisting of contracts, dimensions and items. The analysis is done using SPSS Software (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 20 in order to analyse the descriptive statistics and inference for the purpose to identify the phases of understanding and awareness of Muslim community as well as demographic differences in the level of understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal*. Questionnaire created for this study is with the purpose that includes demographic factors and the elements of understanding and creating awareness of waqf *Istibdal*.

The questionnaire used in this study is part of the results of the discussion with the team of researchers in the waqf *Istibdal* Application group under the Research University Team (RUT)¹. However, 1000 questionnaires were distributed throughout the chosen major towns in the peninsula but only 979 were return back with filled information and the rest are considered as filled with missing data. Before the actual study, a pilot study was conducted and found that the validity and reliability of the test could be accepted for the study.

5.1. Respondent Profile

Based on the respondents' profile, this study consists of male respondent of 53.3 percent as compared to women by 46.7 percent. 62.3 percent of the respondents were married and 33.2 percent of the respondents are single. Most of the respondents are in the age range of 20-30 years. 59.0 percent of the respondents were those who were educated and followed by those with a secondary education of 31.6 percent. The occupation sector of the respondents is those who worked with the government with 27.1 percent and followed by 21.6 percent of those who work with the private sector. However, those who are professionals in the government and private sectors are 32.6 per cent bigger.

6. Findings

Before analysing the differences in demographic factors on the understanding of waqf, the analysis must be pre-requisite. The first step is to make sure the normality analysis of data for the scores of waqf understanding is reviewed from two aspects. First, through graphs such as histogram and normal probability plot (this result is not shown in this research). Second, through Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

6.1. Analysis of The Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding Application

The finding of the ANOVA One-Way Test on Table 01. shows that there is a significant difference between the male understanding as compared to the female. This means that male have a lower level of understanding of waqf according to the mean score (3.37 versus 3.36).

Table 01. ANOVA One-way Test: The Difference of Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding based on gender

| Gender | Min (M) | S. P (SD) | The value of t | SIG. |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------------|-------|
| Male | 3.37 | 0.353 | | 0.014 |
| Female | 3.36 | 0.315 | | |

¹ The questionnaire can be obtained based on application and permission of RUT

However, for age differences, there are differences in the mean of waqf *Istibdal* understanding based on the age group (see Table 02.). The results on the One-Way ANOVA test shows that there is a significant difference of less than 5 percent. This finding is similar to the findings of Metawa and Almoosawi (1998) and Adnan (2012).

Table 02. ANOVA One-way Test: The Difference of Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding based on Age

| Age | The Mean (M) | S. P (SD) | F | SIG. |
|----------|--------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Teenager | 3.33 | 0.320 | 3.628 | 0.027 |
| Youth | 3.39 | 0.323 | | |
| Adult | 3.39 | 0.355 | | |

Note: Teenagers (aged < of 30 years); Youth (aged between 31-40 years); and Adults (aged > 41 years)

The Post-Hoc Turkey HSD test is carried out as per the result shown in Table 03. for the purpose to see what age group is the most different in the waqf *Istibdal* understanding. Table 03. shows that teenager and adult aged groups have significant differences in the waqf *Istibdal* understanding. This is because the age group has a significant value of less than 5 percent (3.5%) that demonstrates adults are more knowledgeable and experienced and have a higher waqf understanding as compared to teenagers. Teenagers aged below 30 years old are mostly students and do not have the experience or participate directly in the application of waqf hence the result of low level of understanding as compared to adults.

Table 03. Post-Hoc Tukey HSD of Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding based on Age

| Variable | (I) | (J) | The difference Min (I-J) | Standard Error | SIG. |
|----------|----------|----------|--------------------------|----------------|------|
| | Age | | | | |
| | Teenager | Adult | -.05982* | .02403 | .035 |
| | Adult | Teenager | .05982 | .02403 | .035 |

Additionally, in the level of education, there are differences in the mean of waqf *Istibdal* understanding (see Table 04.). The result for ANOVA one-way test in the mean of waqf *Istibdal* understanding based on level of education shows that there is a significant difference of less than 5 percent. The outcome of the result demonstrates that there are differences in the waqf *Istibdal* understanding for those who have a higher education level of bachelor degree and went to Islamic boarding school record a higher min score (3.63). The level of education for Islamic boarding school present a highest score of waqf *Istibdal* understanding.

Table 04. ANOVA One-way Test: The Difference of Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding Based on the Level of Education

| Education Level | The Mean (M) | S. P (SD) | F | SIG. |
|-------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Secondary | 3.31 | 0.342 | 3.134 | 0.014 |
| Certificate or Diploma | 3.37 | 0.348 | | |
| Bachelor Degree | 3.40 | 0.315 | | |
| Do not go to school | 3.32 | 0.206 | | |
| Islamic Boarding School | 3.63 | 0.267 | | |

The Post-hoc Tukey HSD is necessary to identify the level of education that are most significant in the waqf *Istibdal* understanding. As in Table 4.5, the results of Post-hic Tukey HSD shows that the higher the education level, the more understanding they have on waqf *Istibdal*. The result that illustrate in the Table 05. shows the significant difference between the level of secondary education and bachelor degree. Those who have an education level of bachelor degree have a better understanding on waqf *Istibdal* far more than with those who are only have their education in the secondary school.

Table 05. Post-Hoc Tukey HSD of Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding based on Level of education

| Variable | (I) | (J) | The difference Min (I-J) | Standard Error | SIG. |
|----------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------|------|
| | Education Level | | | | |
| | Secondary | Bachelor Degree | -.08590* | .02595 | .009 |
| | Bachelor Degree | Secondary | .08590* | .02595 | .009 |

The differences in the understanding based on income levels can be seen in Table 06. ANOVA One-way Test shows that there is a significant difference between income groups. This is due to the significant indication of zero (below the 5 percent significance level) which illustrates the sturdy differences in the income group between respondents. The income group are separated based on group 1 to group 4. Group 1 are for respondent with no income, group 2 are for low income earner for respondents with monthly gross salary of RM1500 and below, meanwhile group 3 is focusing on medium income respondents with monthly gross salary between RM1501 and RM5000 and group 4 are for respondents with high income for respondents with monthly gross salary of RM5000 and above.

Table 06. ANOVA One-way Test: The Difference of Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding Based on the Level of Income

| Level of Income | The Mean (M) | S. P (SD) | F | SIG. |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| No Income (1) | 3.34 | 0.297 | 6.987 | 0.000 |
| Low Income (2) | 3.30 | 0.359 | | |
| Medium Income (3) | 3.40 | 0.332 | | |
| High Income (4) | 3.46 | 0.342 | | |

To identify the level of income that are most significant in the waqf *Istibdal* understanding, the Post-hoc Tukey HSD is used. The results in table 07. shows that the significant differences are between the low level of income and medium level of income. However, there are also differences that occur between no low-income group level with high level of income group that earn between RM1500 to RM5000 and above.

Table 07. Post-Hoc Tukey HSD of Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding based on the Level of income

| Variable | (I) | (J) | The difference Min (I-J) | Standard Error | SIG. |
|----------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------|------|
| | Level of Income | | | | |
| | Low Income | Medium Income | -09582.* | .02701 | .002 |
| | Low Income | High Income | 15457-.* | .04110 | .001 |
| | Medium Income | Low Income | .09582* | .02701 | .002 |

6.2. Analysis of The Waqf *Istibdal* Awareness Application

The analysis of differences in waqf *Istibdal* understanding is according to demographics, the same procedures and methodology of ANOVA One-way test are used in the analysis of the waqf *Istibdal* awareness application. In the case of gender, the difference of gender in the waqf *Istibdal* awareness application shows that the mean score and the standard deviation of both gender has a slight differ. This demonstrate that with a significant result, both gender of male and female have no significant difference in the awareness of waqf *Istibdal* application. The in the table 08. shows that the test result is $p = 0.163$ more than 5 percent.

Table 08. ANOVA One-way Test: The Difference of Waqf *Istibdal* Awareness based on Gender

| Gender | Min (M) | S. P (SD) | The value of t | SIG. |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------------|-------|
| Male | 4.33 | 0.57 | -1.010 | 0.163 |
| Female | 4.37 | 0.53 | -1.015 | |

From the other demographic scope by age group, Table 09. shows the ANOVA one-way test that express the result that is almost significant (with a 5.5% confidence level). The age group is divided into three age groups. The first group consists of respondents aged 30 years and below. The second group comprise of respondents aged between 31 years and 40 years old. Meanwhile, the third group involve adult respondents that aged 41 years and over. Therefore, be concluded that there is no difference in awareness among age group of teenager, youth and adult with the mean value that only has a slight difference.

Table 09. ANOVA One-way Test: The Difference of Waqf *Istibdal* Awareness based on Age

| Age | The Mean (M) | S. P (SD) | F | SIG. |
|----------|--------------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Teenager | 4.31 | 0.536 | 2.917 | 0.055 |
| Youth | 4.42 | 0.488 | | |
| Adult | 4.35 | 0.587 | | |

Note: Teenagers (aged < of 30 years); Youth (aged between 31-40 years); and Adults (aged > 41 years)

Table 10. ANOVA One-way Test: The Difference of Waqf *Istibdal* Awareness Based on the Level of Education

| Education Level | The Mean (M) | S. P (SD) | F | SIG. |
|-------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------|------|
| Secondary | 4.26 | 0.601 | 3.465 | 0.08 |
| Certificate or Diploma | 4.36 | 0.516 | | |
| Bachelor Degree | 4.41 | 0.524 | | |
| Do not go to school | 4.70 | 0.128 | | |
| Islamic Boarding School | 4.39 | 0.236 | | |

The difference of waqf *Istibdal* awareness in Peninsular Malaysia from aspects of level of income can be analyse based on Table 11. The finding shows that the level of income is significant on waqf *Istibdal* awareness. The level of significance is less than 1 percent and the value of F is at 5.85. The income group level is divided into 4 group with Group 1 are for respondent with no income, group 2 are for low income earner for respondents with monthly gross salary of RM1500 and below, meanwhile group 3 is focusing on medium income respondents with monthly gross salary between RM1501 and

RM5000 and group 4 are for respondents with high income for respondents with monthly gross salary of RM5000 and above.

Table 11. ANOVA One-way Test: The Difference of Waqf *Istibdal* Understanding Based on the Level of Income

| Level of Income | The Mean (M) | S. P (SD) | F | SIG. |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------|------|-------|
| No Income (1) | 4.39 | 0.497 | 5.85 | 0.001 |
| Low Income (2) | 4.22 | 0.592 | | |
| Medium Income (3) | 4.38 | 0.546 | | |
| High Income (4) | 4.41 | 0.521 | | |

7. Conclusion

The overall result of the study shows that in the overall the level of understanding of the waqf *Istibdal* application in Peninsular Malaysia is moderate. This is because waqf management is entrusted in the enactment of the state Islamic council. In the opposite, the level of awareness of the waqf *Istibdal* application in Peninsular Malaysia is at a high level. This high level of awareness shows that most of the people in Peninsular Malaysia have gained the interest in the responsibility of waqf especially in waqf *Istibdal* in developing the waqf property as well as the socio-economics of Malaysia.

The differences in the level of understanding based on the gender, age, level of education and income level shows that the level of understanding is moderate. The understanding based on age pattern especially for the teenager and youth as well as those who earn less than RM1500 per month need to be developed by providing more waqf related activities and awareness activities. Education plays an important role in creating more understanding that will ensure the objective of waqf application is understood by all Muslims. Even though the level of awareness of waqf *Istibdal* is significant, more waqf based awareness activity via social-media and promoting through all means that are available to expand the information of waqf especially on the waqf *Istibdal* application.

The significant of this study is to create more understanding and awareness of waqf *Istibdal* and providing an overview for the needed development to undertake in promoting waqf to the community. In addition, this study also can be used as the basis in waqf education in creating extra added knowledge on the waqf application in peninsular Malaysia. Waqf education is also needed to be taught at the level of secondary school as well as universities. It is pertinent to educate the community to show the importance of waqf and its mechanism.

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