



Optimizing Mosque Waqf Management in Supporting the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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Abstract. This paper examines how optimizing the management of mosque waqf (Islamic endowments) can support the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It explores the conceptual linkages between mosque waqf and sustainable development, analyzes the diverse roles of mosque waqf in addressing SDG targets, and proposes strategies for enhancing the efficiency and impact of mosque waqf management. The article discusses the potential of mosque waqf to contribute to poverty reduction, promotion of health and well-being, quality education, and environmental sustainability. It highlights the need for modernizing waqf management practices, drawing on principles of good governance, financial management, and social impact, to unlock the full potential of mosque waqf in supporting sustainable development initiatives.

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana optimalisasi pengelolaan wakaf masjid dapat mendukung pencapaian Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (Sustainable Development Goals/SDGs) Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa. Kajian ini mengeksplorasi keterkaitan konseptual antara wakaf masjid dan pembangunan berkelanjutan, menganalisis berbagai peran wakaf masjid dalam menjawab target SDGs, serta mengusulkan strategi untuk meningkatkan efisiensi dan dampak pengelolaan wakaf masjid. Artikel ini juga membahas potensi wakaf masjid dalam berkontribusi pada pengentasan kemiskinan, peningkatan kesehatan dan kesejahteraan, pendidikan berkualitas, serta keberlanjutan lingkungan. Selain itu, artikel ini menekankan perlunya modernisasi praktik pengelolaan wakaf dengan berlandaskan prinsip tata kelola yang baik, manajemen keuangan, dan dampak sosial, guna membuka potensi penuh wakaf masjid dalam mendukung berbagai inisiatif pembangunan berkelanjutan.



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INTRODUCTION

The role of religious institutions and practices in supporting sustainable development has gained increasing attention in recent years. One particular area of focus is the institution of waqf, or Islamic endowments, and its potential to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Waqf, defined as the dedication of a portion of one's wealth for charitable or religious purposes, has a long-standing tradition within the Islamic world, with mosques often serving as the centerpiece of waqf-funded initiatives.

As the world grapples with pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges, the effective management and utilization of mosque waqf presents a unique opportunity to bolster progress towards the SDGs. As community-based institutions, mosques possess institutional proximity that enables mosque waqf to function as an effective mechanism for localized SDG-oriented interventions. However, realizing this potential requires a strategic and systematic approach to mosque waqf management.

This paper examines the ways in which optimizing the management of mosque waqf can support the achievement of the SDGs. Drawing on the latest research, the article explores the conceptual linkages between mosque waqf and sustainable development, analyses the diverse roles of mosque waqf in addressing SDG targets, and proposes strategies for enhancing the efficiency and impact of mosque waqf management.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Waqf and Its Management

Waqf, as a central concept in Islamic philanthropy, refers to the dedication of a portion of one's wealth or property for charitable or religious purposes. This endowment is considered inalienable, as the ownership of the dedicated asset is transferred from the original owner to Allah (God), with the proceeds or usufruct being used for the designated beneficiaries (Çizakça, 2000). Mosques, as places of worship and community hubs, have historically played a pivotal role in the waqf system, with many mosques being established and maintained through waqf funds.

The management of waqf assets, including those dedicated to mosques, is a complex and multifaceted endeavor. Traditionally, waqf management has been the responsibility of appointed trustees or administrators, known as *mutawallis*, who are tasked with ensuring the preservation and productive use of the waqf assets. However, the governance and administration of waqf have faced various challenges over time, such as lack of transparency, mismanagement, and encroachment by the state or other parties (Jalil, 2020; Aziz and Ali, 2018). In addition, ineffective administration and management on waqf have hindered its development and expansion (Hassan et al., 2022).

In recent decades, concerted efforts have been made to modernize waqf management practices, incorporating contemporary principles of good governance, financial management, and social impact, such as the adoption of rigorous accounting standards (Ihsan & Ibrahim, 2011; Kamaruddin et al., 2024), diversification of asset portfolios (Sulaiman et al., 2019; Jatmiko et al., 2024), and integration of digital technologies (Megat et al., 2024). These developments have the potential to unlock the full potential of *waqf*, including mosque *waqf* in supporting sustainable development initiatives.

Mosque Waqf and Community Development

Mosques have long been at the heart of Islamic civilization, not only as centers of worship but also as hubs for social, educational, and economic life. The mosque waqf system, which dedicates assets for community

welfare, thus plays a vital role in supporting holistic human development. According to Sulaiman et al. (2019), the modern evolution of mosque waqf includes the establishment of unit trust waqf and corporate waqf models that combine philanthropic objectives with business sustainability.

Recent innovations also show that digitalization has revolutionized waqf management. Megat et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of waqftech, including blockchain-based smart contracts and online crowdfunding systems, in improving transparency and expanding public participation. These innovations have made waqf more inclusive and accessible to a younger, more technologically engaged generation of Muslims. By integrating governance, financial accountability, and technology, mosque waqf can evolve from a traditional charitable model into a strategic instrument for community-driven development. Such evolution allows waqf to contribute to multiple aspects of social progress, poverty reduction, education, health, and environmental stewardship.

Waqf for Social Welfare and Poverty Reduction

A recurring theme in the literature is the capacity of waqf to address poverty through sustainable social financing. Studies show that waqf-based microfinance and community empowerment programs have effectively improved livelihoods among the poor (Atan and Johari, 2017; Rusydiana, 2021). Mohsin (2013) highlighted that cash waqf schemes can be revitalized to fund small enterprises and generate continuous income for disadvantaged groups. In Indonesia, the rise of digital waqf platforms has further enhanced efficiency and transparency in channeling resources to poverty alleviation initiatives (Fanani et al., 2021). These developments underscore the potential of mosque waqf to transform charitable giving into a long-term economic empowerment tool, creating opportunities rather than dependency.

Waqf in Health and Well-being

The contribution of waqf to healthcare is well established in Islamic history, where many hospitals were founded and sustained through endowed assets. Contemporary research continues to highlight its relevance. Pamungkas and Zaki (2020) describe how waqf-funded hospitals in Indonesia provide affordable healthcare to underprivileged communities. Sulistyowati et al. (2022) found that waqf can play a key role in addressing gaps in public health funding by offering flexible, interest-free financing for medical infrastructure.

In practice, faith-based organizations such as Muhammadiyah have successfully operated waqf-funded clinics and hospitals that combine professional medical services with Islamic ethics (Wiguna and Utami, 2018). Beyond physical health, mosque waqf can also promote mental and spiritual well-being. Jamaludin (2024) showed that mosque programs aimed at youth counseling and mental health improvement contribute to social harmony and community resilience.

Waqf in Education and Human Capital Development

Education has always been one of the most prominent beneficiaries of waqf. Since the early centuries of Islam, endowments have supported madrasas, libraries, and higher education institutions (Kasdi, 2016). Azha et al. (2013) and Ab Ghani et al. (2019) observed that waqf provides a sustainable source of funding for educational institutions, reducing their dependence on external donations or government aid.

In Malaysia and Indonesia, waqf initiatives have successfully funded university buildings, scholarships, and research programs (Ab Ghani et al., 2019; Aziz et al., 2023). These contributions demonstrate the continuity between the classical waqf model and modern educational financing. More importantly, waqf-supported institutions promote holistic learning by integrating ethical, spiritual, and technical dimensions of knowledge—cultivating generations that are both intellectually competent and morally grounded.

Waqf and Inclusive Economic Empowerment

The literature also highlights the economic dimensions of waqf, particularly its ability to promote entrepreneurship, create jobs, and stimulate local economies. Budiman (2014) emphasized that productive waqf ventures can strengthen small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and foster self-reliant communities. Empirical findings from Yemen confirm that waqf-based SME financing has improved local productivity and employment rates (Saad et al., 2022).

Furthermore, waqf can be integrated with vocational training and entrepreneurship development programs, equipping individuals with the skills required to compete in modern labor markets (Mohsin, 2013). When properly managed, mosque waqf thus becomes not only a form of social finance but also a driver of inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Waqf and Environmental Stewardship

Environmental sustainability has emerged as a critical frontier in the development of waqf theory and practice. Anam et al. (2022) revealed an increasing trend in the use of waqf for ecological conservation and climate resilience. Ali and Kassim (2020) proposed the concept of the waqf forest, in which endowed lands are preserved and utilized for forest conservation, carbon sequestration, and public education.

In the Indonesian context, Budiman (2011) demonstrated that mosque waqf can fund waste management, tree-planting programs, and renewable energy installations. These initiatives reflect the Islamic worldview that humans are stewards (*khalifah*) of the earth, entrusted with the responsibility to maintain environmental balance. Thus, waqf can function not only as a social and economic tool but also as a faith-based mechanism for ecological protection.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative conceptual approach by synthesizing theoretical perspectives, empirical studies, and case analyses related to mosque waqf and sustainable development. The purpose of this method is to provide an integrative and conceptual framework demonstrating how mosque waqf can effectively contribute to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The research relies on content synthesis and analytical review of relevant literature, official reports, and academic studies concerning mosque waqf and sustainable development.

The study employs a conceptual and literature-based research design, utilizing thematic analysis to synthesize data from peer-reviewed journal articles, policy documents, conference papers, and institutional reports published between 2000 and 2024, to identify key themes and patterns in the intersection between Islamic endowment management and sustainable development frameworks. This approach allows for a systematic understanding of how mosque waqf aligns with global development objectives, particularly in the areas of poverty alleviation, health, education, economic inclusivity, and environmental conservation.

Data for this study were collected through a comprehensive literature review process that identified academic works. Sources were retrieved from databases such as Scopus, Emerald Insight, ScienceDirect, and open-access Islamic economic journals. Preference was given to articles and reports published within the last two decades to ensure contemporary relevance.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on recurring patterns and linkages between waqf management practices and sustainable development outcomes. The analysis proceeded in three main stages: Firstly, conceptual mapping, that is identifying key dimensions of waqf governance and mosque-based activities relevant to the SDGs; secondly, categorization, that is classifying findings under three

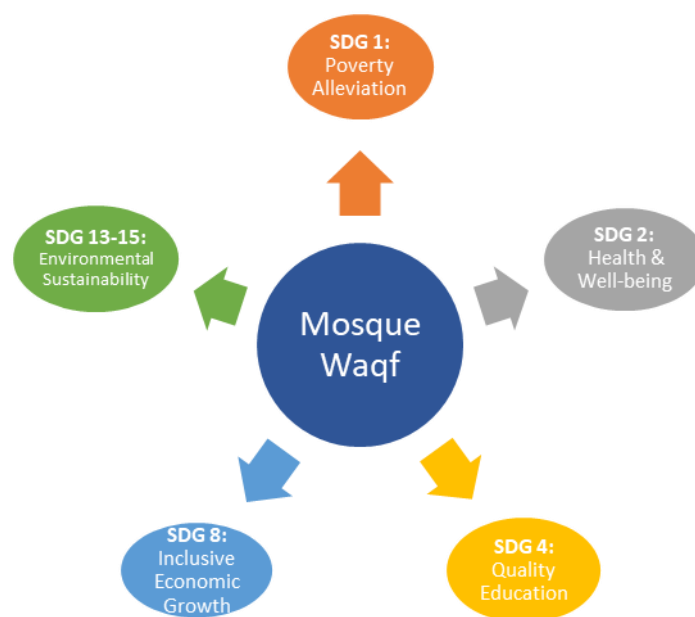
sustainability pillars, that is social (e.g., poverty, education, health), economic (e.g., employment, enterprise), and environmental (e.g., climate action, resource management); and thirdly, interpretation, that is synthesizing these findings into an analytical model that explains how mosque waqf can be optimized to support SDG targets.

The analytical process drew upon grounded reasoning from Islamic economic principles and contemporary sustainability paradigms. Descriptive comparison was used to highlight differences and similarities among existing studies and waqf management practices across countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and other Muslim-majority nations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the conceptual and literature-based analysis on the role of mosque waqf in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It discusses both the thematic contributions of mosque waqf to various SDG targets and the strategic frameworks required to optimize its impact. The findings demonstrate that mosque waqf plays a significant role in promoting multidimensional sustainability, encompassing social, economic, and environmental dimensions, consistent with Islamic principles of justice (*adl*), benevolence (*ihsan*), and public welfare (*maslahah*).

The relationship between mosque waqf and sustainable development is multifaceted and deeply rooted in the principles of Islamic teachings. Mosques, as central institutions in Muslim communities, have historically served as hubs for various social, educational, and community-based activities, often funded through waqf endowments. This broad scope of mosque-based initiatives aligns closely with the holistic vision of sustainable development, which emphasizes the interdependence of economic, social, and environmental well-being. Recent studies have explored the ways in which mosque waqf can contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals as shown in Figure 1.



Source: Authors, 2025.

Figure 1 Mosque waqf and its contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Mosque Waqf and Its Socioeconomic Contributions to the SDGs

Poverty reduction (SDG 1)

Poverty reduction is a key priority within the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as outlined in SDG 1. The mosque waqf system can play a significant role in supporting the achievement of this goal through its ability to mobilize resources and implement targeted poverty alleviation programs. Mosques, as hubs of community engagement, are well-positioned to manage waqf assets and direct them towards projects that address the multifaceted nature of poverty. Waqf assets, such as land, buildings, or financial resources, can be utilized to provide direct assistance to the needy (Atan and Johari, 2017). Additionally, mosque waqf can be leveraged to establish income-generating initiatives, such as microcredit programs, small businesses, or skills training workshops, which empower individuals to become self-reliant and improve their economic well-being.

Mosque waqf can invest in the development of affordable housing, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions that cater to the needs of the underprivileged communities. By providing access to essential services and resources, mosque waqf can help alleviate the various dimensions of poverty, including lack of access to basic amenities, healthcare, and education. Furthermore, the waqf system allows for the establishment of endowments specifically dedicated to supporting the poor and disadvantaged, known as *waqf al-fuqara* (waqf for the poor). These specialized waqf funds can be used to provide housing, healthcare, and other essential services to those in need, directly addressing the multidimensional aspects of poverty (Rusydiana, 2021).

Mosques can also leverage their position as trusted community centers to raise awareness about poverty-related issues and mobilize volunteers for poverty alleviation initiatives. This can include organizing food banks, clothing drives, and other forms of direct assistance to the poor. By fostering a culture of social responsibility and community engagement, mosque waqf can contribute to the empowerment and self-reliance of the poor (Mohsin, 2013).

Meanwhile, the role of digital waqf in addressing poverty in Indonesia is also examined. The results indicate that waqf, when leveraged through digital platforms, can effectively mobilize funds and contribute to sustainable economic development. The study suggests that the digital waqf system has potential to promote financial inclusion and alleviate poverty in developing countries like Indonesia (Fanani et al., 2021).

Promoting health and well-being (SDG 3)

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all is a critical objective within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as outlined in SDG 3. Mosque waqf can significantly support the achievement of this goal by leveraging its resources and community-based approach to address health-related challenges.

One of the key ways in which mosque waqf can contribute to promoting health and well-being is through the establishment and management of healthcare facilities, such as hospitals, clinics, and medical research centers (Pamungkas and Zaki, 2020). Waqf funds can be used to construct and maintain these facilities, ensuring that they are accessible and affordable to the local community, particularly the underprivileged (Sulistiyowati et al., 2022).

Additionally, mosque waqf can be utilized to support health-related programs and initiatives, such as the provision of medical equipment, the distribution of essential medicines, and the implementation of health awareness campaigns (Wiguna and Utami, 2018). By leveraging the trusted and central position of mosques within communities, these health-focused waqf programs can effectively reach and serve the most vulnerable populations.

Furthermore, the holistic approach of Islamic teachings emphasizes the importance of spiritual well-being, which can be fostered through mosque-based activities and services. Mosque waqf can play a role in supporting the mental well-being of individuals and communities. By establishing counseling centers, support groups, and rehabilitation programs, waqf-funded initiatives can address issues such as depression, addiction, and social isolation. Waqf resources can be used to create spaces for meditation, counseling, and community-based support groups, addressing the mental health and overall well-being of the community (Jamaludin, 2024).

Improved access to education (SDG 4)

Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all is a core objective of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as outlined in SDG 4. Mosque waqf holds significant potential to advance this goal by leveraging its resources and community-based approach to expand access to education.

Mosque waqf has a long history of supporting educational initiatives, making it a valuable resource in addressing SDG 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Mosques have often served as the foundation for establishing schools, madrasas, and educational institutions, with waqf funds being used to cover the costs of infrastructure, teacher salaries, and student scholarships (Kasdi, 2016).

Educational waqf is a potentially useful instrument in Malaysia that can assist universities in improving their financial systems, infrastructure, and overall growth while lessening their reliance on government support (Ab Ghani et al., 2019; Aziz et al., 2023). Moreover, mosque waqf can be utilized to provide educational resources and programs that cater to the diverse needs of the community, such as adult literacy classes, vocational training, and specialized education for marginalized groups. By integrating waqf-funded educational initiatives with mosques, these institutions can serve as hubs for lifelong learning and skill development, contributing to the holistic development of individuals and communities.

In addition to providing physical infrastructure and financial support, mosque waqf can also contribute to the enhancement of educational quality and relevance. Waqf-funded educational institutions can develop curricula and programs that cater to the specific needs of the local community, incorporating vocational training, entrepreneurship education, and Islamic studies (Azha et al., 2013).

Inclusive economic growth and job creation (SDG 8)

Promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all is a key objective of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as outlined in SDG 8. By leveraging its resources and strong community base, mosque waqf can meaningfully support this goal by promoting economic development and generating job opportunities.

Mosque waqf can contribute to the achievement of SDG 8, which aims to promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. By investing waqf funds in income-generating initiatives, mosques can support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives, and other economic ventures that create job opportunities and foster entrepreneurship within the community (Budiman, 2014).

Moreover, mosque waqf can be utilized to provide vocational training, skills development programs, and entrepreneurship support services, equipping individuals with the necessary skills and resources to secure sustainable livelihoods. This approach not only addresses unemployment but also promotes the development of a skilled and productive workforce, contributing to inclusive economic growth (Mohsin, 2013). Additionally, mosque waqf can be leveraged to establish waqf-funded microfinance institutions or to provide access to affordable credit and financial services, particularly for underserved populations, enabling them to participate in economic activities and break the cycle of poverty.

One of the ways in which mosque waqf can contribute to inclusive economic growth is through the establishment and management of waqf-funded enterprises and businesses. These waqf-owned ventures can provide employment opportunities, generate income, and reinvest profits back into the community, thereby creating a sustainable cycle of economic development. Mosque waqf can also support the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by providing access to financing, business development services, and training programs. Waqf funds can be used to offer microfinance loans, financial literacy workshops, and entrepreneurship development initiatives, empowering individuals to start and grow their own businesses (Saad et al., 2022).

Environmental sustainability (SDG 13 and SDG 15)

One of the important contributions of mosque waqf is in efforts to preserve the environment and support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land). Waqf has the potential to contribute to sustainable development through the preservation of natural resources and the promotion of environmental conservation initiatives. Waqf lands and properties can be utilized for activities such as reforestation, renewable energy projects, and waste management programs, thereby advancing the goals of environmental protection and sustainability (Anam et al., 2022).

Mosque waqf can be directed towards the preservation and restoration of natural environments, such as the establishment of waqf-funded nature reserves, urban greenspaces, or reforestation initiatives (Ali and Kassim, 2020). These efforts not only contribute to SDG 15 (Life on Land) but also provide opportunities for environmental education, community engagement, and the promotion of biodiversity conservation.

Mosque waqf can also be utilized to support waste management and recycling programs within the mosque premises and the surrounding communities. By implementing sustainable waste disposal practices, mosques can reduce their environmental impact and raise awareness about the importance of resource conservation and responsible consumption (Budiman, 2011). Mosques, as community hubs and sacred spaces, can leverage their waqf resources to implement sustainable practices and raise environmental awareness among their congregations.

Furthermore, mosque waqf can be leveraged to fund research, advocacy, and educational initiatives that promote environmental stewardship and climate action. This can include the establishment of waqf-supported research centers, the provision of scholarships for environmental studies, and the organization of community-based awareness campaigns on topics such as renewable energy, urban farming, and water conservation.

Harnessing Mosque Waqf for Sustainable Agromaritime Development

Waqf traditionally involves the endowment of assets for charitable or religious purposes, with mosques being one of the most common beneficiaries. These assets, however, are not limited to buildings or land for worship; they can include agricultural land, water resources, and even income-generating businesses. When these assets are utilized for agromaritime projects, they can create a sustainable economic base that supports both the mosque and the wider community.

Agromaritime refers to the integration of agricultural and maritime activities, encompassing practices that enhance the productivity and sustainability of both farming and maritime sectors. In modern contexts, integrating waqf with agromaritime initiatives can contribute to several SDGs, including poverty alleviation, sustainable agriculture, economic growth, and environmental sustainability.

Linking mosque waqf with agromaritime sector

Agromaritime initiatives focus on the sustainable use of agricultural and marine resources. By aligning waqf with agromaritime projects, mosques can become hubs of economic activity, promoting sustainable farming, aquaculture, and fisheries. This not only provides a steady income stream for the maintenance

and activities of the mosque but also empowers local communities by creating jobs, ensuring food security, and fostering sustainable resource management (Maulina et al., 2023).

Historically, mosques funded by mosque waqf serve as centers for religious activities, education, and social welfare (Hassan and Ab Rahman, 2018). However, the assets associated with mosque waqf, such as land and financial resources, could also be strategically redirected to support the agromaritime sector. For instance, land owned by mosques or funded through waqf could be utilized for establishing community-based agricultural projects or aquaculture facilities. Waqf land can be allocated for agricultural purposes, enabling farmers to cultivate crops without the burden of land ownership costs (Khan et al., 2021). Waqf funds can be directed towards the development of supporting infrastructure, including facilities for processing marine and agricultural products, ports or docks for fishing activities, irrigation and drainage systems, and access roads to the agromaritime areas. This infrastructure can greatly enhance the productivity and efficiency of the coastal communities engaged in these projects.

Implementing waqf can also be a valuable approach in supporting agromaritime projects in coastal areas. One key aspect is the acquisition of strategic and fertile coastal lands through waqf funds. These lands can then be utilized for various agromaritime activities, such as the cultivation of food crops, plantations, and fisheries. This approach could involve converting underutilized mosque properties into productive areas that support sustainable farming or fishery practices, thus enhancing local food security and economic development.

Financial support in the form of loans, grants, and subsidies enables farmers and fishers to acquire the necessary equipment and materials, while also facilitating access to education and training programs that enhance their skills and knowledge, leading to improved productivity and sustainability (Citaningati and Kamaluddin, 2022). Waqf can also be linked to the agricultural sector through a combination of *salam* and *muzara'ah* contracts. Likewise, an Islamic financial strategy that integrates cash waqf and blue sukuk called Cash Waqf Linked Blue Sukuk CWLBS) is also suggested to support sustainable management of exclusive economic zones and enhance access to capital for fishing enterprises (Mutmainah et al., 2022). These models are suggested as solutions to support small farmers who often face difficulties in accessing financing. By utilizing waqf, the funds collected can be used to finance agricultural activities, providing broader benefits to society (Majid, 2021).

Furthermore, the financial resources accrued through mosque waqf can be invested in developing vital infrastructure that benefits both the religious and broader community. By allocating funds towards building or improving fishing ports, agricultural processing units, or sustainable aquaculture systems, mosque waqf can facilitate advancements in these sectors. Such investments not only bolster local economies but also contribute to the environmental sustainability of maritime and agricultural practices (Rafianti et al., 2023).

Moreover, waqf fosters innovation and market access by directing funds towards research and development, enabling the introduction of new technologies and sustainable practices. By creating networks and markets, waqf institutions help ensure fair prices for agricultural and fishery products, thereby supporting economic stability within these sectors. The social welfare aspect of waqf is also significant, as profits generated from productive waqf can be used to support the well-being of workers in agriculture and fisheries, providing them with access to healthcare, education, and housing. Through these comprehensive contributions, waqf not only supports the economic aspects of agriculture and fisheries but also promotes social equity and sustainability (Citaningati and Kamaluddin, 2022).

Additionally, mosques, as community hubs, can play a crucial role in educating and training local populations on sustainable practices. Mosque waqf can support educational programs that focus on sustainable agriculture and fisheries management, leveraging the mosque's status as a center of learning and community engagement. By fostering knowledge and skills in these areas, mosque waqf can enhance the resilience and self-sufficiency of local communities.

Mosque waqf, agromaritime, and Sustainable Development Goals

The integration of mosque waqf and agromaritime development can contribute to the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals in a multifaceted manner (Khan et al., 2021; Citaningati and Kamaluddin, 2022). Investing in the agromaritime sector through mosque waqf can create employment opportunities, diversify income sources, and improve the livelihoods of marginalized communities, thereby reducing poverty and aligning with SDG 1 (No Poverty). Mosque waqf can also support sustainable agricultural practices, enhance food production and distribution, and improve food security, all of which contribute to the eradication of hunger as per SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) Citaningati and Kamaluddin (2022).

Moreover, mosque waqf can promote environmentally-friendly practices in the agromaritime sector, such as organic farming, sustainable fishing, and waste management, fostering responsible production and consumption patterns in line with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production). Recognizing the pressing need for climate action, mosque waqf can also fund initiatives that mitigate the impact of climate change on the agromaritime sector, including the restoration of coastal ecosystems, the adoption of climate-smart agricultural techniques, and the development of renewable energy systems, thereby contributing to SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Expanding the scope, mosque waqf can contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources, protecting biodiversity and ensuring the long-term viability of the maritime industry, as per SDG 14 (Life Below Water). Simultaneously, mosque waqf can support the preservation and restoration of terrestrial ecosystems, including agricultural lands and forests, which are essential for the sustainability of the agromaritime sector, aligning with SDG 15 (Life on Land). Through this holistic approach, the strategic utilization of mosque waqf can create synergies between the agromaritime sector and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, contributing to a more equitable, resilient, and environmentally-conscious future Citaningati and Kamaluddin (2022).

In a nutshell, the innovative application of mosque waqf to support the agromaritime sector exemplifies how traditional Islamic endowments can contribute to modern sustainability goals. By leveraging these resources to enhance infrastructure, support sustainable practices, and foster economic growth, mosque waqf not only fulfills its traditional role but also advances key global objectives for sustainable development. This holistic approach reflects a commitment to both spiritual values and practical solutions for contemporary challenges.

Strategies for Optimizing Mosque Waqf Management

Optimizing mosque waqf management requires strategic reform and innovation to ensure sustainability, accountability, and relevance in addressing modern socio-economic challenges. Drawing upon the synthesis of theoretical and empirical findings, this section outlines four key strategies: strengthening governance and transparency, diversifying waqf asset portfolios, aligning waqf programs with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and enhancing community engagement and awareness. Each strategy represents a practical step to transform mosque waqf from a traditional religious endowment into an integrated instrument for sustainable and inclusive development.

Enhancing governance and transparency

Effective governance and transparency are fundamental to ensuring that mosque waqf institutions operate with integrity and professionalism. Previous studies emphasize that the long-term sustainability of waqf depends on robust governance structures, clear accountability mechanisms, and the professionalism of the *nazhir* (trustees) (Hassan et al., 2022; Kamaruddin et al., 2024).

To achieve this, mosque waqf management should adopt shariah-compliant governance frameworks supported by standard operating procedures, periodic audits, and clear reporting systems. Transparent disclosure of financial and operational information builds public trust and encourages continued donor

participation. The adoption of digital governance systems, including online dashboards, electronic reporting, and blockchain-based transparency tools, has been found to increase efficiency and minimize corruption (Megat et al., 2024). These tools enable real-time monitoring of donations and expenditures, thus ensuring that waqf funds are managed responsibly.

Moreover, capacity-building programs for mosque administrators and *nazhir* are essential. Training in financial management, project evaluation, and impact assessment strengthens institutional competence. Partnerships with national waqf boards, Islamic financial institutions, and universities can further enhance governance quality. In essence, good governance transforms mosque waqf into a credible, accountable, and resilient institution capable of managing long-term social assets.

Diversifying waqf asset portfolios

Diversification of waqf assets is crucial for achieving financial sustainability and reducing dependency on single-source income. Historically, mosque waqf assets have been limited to land and buildings, often used for worship and education. However, modern practice requires a broader, more dynamic approach (Sulaiman et al., 2019; Budiman, 2014).

Mosque waqf can diversify into productive sectors such as renewable energy, halal food industries, healthcare services, and Islamic social enterprises. For example, waqf-funded solar panels can reduce energy costs while generating additional revenue through energy trading. Similarly, waqf-based microenterprises can provide employment opportunities for local communities while generating steady income for mosque operations.

The concept of impact investment offers another pathway for diversification, where waqf assets are invested in ventures that generate both financial returns and measurable social or environmental benefits. This approach aligns with the *maqasid al-shariah* (objectives of Islamic law) by ensuring that economic activity promotes welfare (*maslahah*) and avoids harm (*mafsadah*).

Furthermore, establishing partnerships with Islamic banks and investment agencies allows mosque waqf institutions to participate in structured financial products such as Cash Waqf Linked Sukuk or Islamic REITs. These instruments enhance liquidity and scale up waqf impact while maintaining compliance with Islamic ethics.

Aligning waqf initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

To ensure that mosque waqf initiatives contribute effectively to global development priorities, it is essential to align them with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Such alignment enhances coherence between Islamic social finance and the international sustainability agenda, highlighting waqf as a faith-based model for achieving equitable progress.

Mapping waqf activities to SDG indicators such as poverty alleviation (SDG 1), health (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), economic growth (SDG 8), and environmental protection (SDG 13 and 15) provides a structured framework for impact measurement (Atan and Johari, 2017; Fanani et al., 2021; Budiman, 2011). This mapping also allows policymakers and practitioners to evaluate the contribution of mosque waqf programs to national development plans.

Integrating the SDG framework into waqf planning promotes evidence-based decision-making. For instance, mosque waqf could establish specific indicators: number of households lifted from poverty, number of students supported, or amount of carbon emissions reduced through waqf-based environmental projects. At the policy level, governments can institutionalize waqf-SDG integration by providing legal recognition, fiscal incentives, and partnerships with development agencies. This synergy demonstrates that Islamic economic principles, when operationalized through mosque waqf, offer tangible contributions to sustainable development that complement global initiatives.

Enhancing community engagement and awareness

Community engagement is vital to ensuring the continuity and social legitimacy of mosque waqf. Since mosques are inherently community-based institutions, their waqf programs must be designed through participatory processes that involve local stakeholders, religious leaders, and civil society organizations.

Enhancing public awareness about the socio-economic potential of waqf encourages greater participation from individuals and institutions alike (Sulaiman et al., 2019; Megat et al., 2024). Educational programs, workshops, and waqf literacy campaigns can cultivate a culture of giving and empower communities to become active partners rather than passive recipients.

The use of digital platforms and social media can further expand outreach, especially among youth and urban populations. By promoting micro-waqf or collective waqf schemes, mosques can mobilize small but regular contributions from a large donor base, democratizing participation and strengthening solidarity.

Moreover, incorporating waqf education into religious classes, community events, and school curricula helps reinforce its spiritual significance and developmental value. This holistic engagement ensures that mosque waqf is perceived not merely as an act of piety but as a strategic instrument for social transformation.

CONCLUSION

The institution of mosque waqf possesses immense potential to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. As community-based hubs with access to valuable resources, mosques can leverage their waqf funds to address critical development challenges, from poverty alleviation and improved access to education to environmental sustainability and inclusive economic growth.

Optimizing mosque waqf management has significant potential to support the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Mosque waqf can contribute to poverty reduction (SDG 1) by mobilizing resources for targeted programs, income-generating initiatives, and direct assistance to those in need. It can also support health and well-being (SDG 3) by funding healthcare facilities, medical programs, and promoting mental and spiritual well-being through community-based activities.

In education (SDG 4), waqf can expand access to education, fund schools, provide scholarships, and develop curricula tailored to community needs. Additionally, mosque waqf can foster inclusive economic growth (SDG 8) by supporting small and medium enterprises, providing vocational training, and funding microfinance initiatives, which create job opportunities and promote entrepreneurship. Furthermore, mosque waqf can play a role in ensuring zero hunger (SDG 2) by supporting food security initiatives and sustainable agricultural practices. It can also contribute to responsible consumption and production (SDG 12) by promoting sustainable practices, waste management programs, and resource conservation. Environmental sustainability (SDGs 13, 14, and 15) can be supported through projects like reforestation, renewable energy initiatives, sustainable fisheries, and marine conservation, all of which contribute to climate action and biodiversity.

This research underscores the urgent need to modernize waqf management practices through the adoption of good governance principles, robust financial management, and integration of digital technologies. Additionally, it suggests linking mosque waqf with the agromaritime sector to promote sustainable farming, aquaculture, and fisheries. By adopting a strategic and systematic approach to mosque waqf management, focused on enhancing governance, diversifying asset portfolios, aligning initiatives with the SDGs, strengthening partnerships, and engaging the community, mosques can unlock the full transformative power of waqf in driving sustainable development. This holistic approach not only supports the global

development agenda but also reinforces the core principles of Islamic teachings, which emphasize the interconnectedness of spiritual, social, and environmental well-being.

For future research, this research recommends conducting empirical case studies or comparative analyses of mosque waqf implementation across different regions to further validate and refine the proposed framework. Future studies could also explore the integration of digital technologies and smart waqf systems in mosque management to enhance transparency, operational efficiency, and community participation.

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