

# Philanthropic Commitment Traits for *Waqf* in Higher Education

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## Abstract

Philanthropic commitment in the form of waqf is important particularly among younger working adults in ensuring sustainable flow of funds for charitable purposes. One of the vital usages of such funds is funding for higher education. A question is raised on the commitment of younger adults in such giving. This study examines waqf commitment traits among waqif (waqf contributors) for higher education funding. The specific objective of this study is to measure the factors that influence the waqif to contribute their property or income into waqf for higher education fund. For the purpose of this study, 400 questionnaires have been distributed to working young adult respondents in the Klang Valley area. Waqf commitment attributes comprising of Religiosity, Trust, Altruism, Personal Characteristics, Self-Image, Psychological Benefits, Social Norms and Personal Satisfaction are examined. The findings reveal that Religiosity, Altruism, Personal Satisfaction and Commitment are significant attributes in explaining waqf commitment. However, Trust and Social Norm are not significant.

**Keywords:** Commitment attributes; Charity; Philanthropy; *Waqf*; *Waqif*

## Introduction

Islam is a complete and comprehensive *deen* (way of life) that has an in-built distributive mechanism in the form of philanthropic contribution like zakat and waqf. In fact, the act of giving away one's wealth for charitable purposes is a pious and religiously motivated spending of a Muslim. Waqf indeed, has a significant role in the development of Islamic economic principles with reference to the wealth redistribution and elimination of poverty in the society (Amirul Faiz, Sheila & Mustafa, 2012).

The term *waqf* originates from the Arabic word of *waqafa*, which means to hold or retain. In Islamic Law, the word *waqf* is defined as holding of a property and preserving it so that its fruit, revenue or usufruct could be used for the benefit of its beneficiaries. Waqf can be juristically defined as putting a hold on a property and keeping it for the state (Ibrahim, 2008). The benefit will be used exclusively for its objective of righteousness while prohibiting any other use or disposition of it outside its specified objectives (Kahf, 1998).

The study of *waqf* has caught the attention of many researchers today, a phenomenon that may be attributed to the increase in the awareness of Muslims on the significance of having *waqf*

in the society. In the past, studies have shown that *waqf* was merely individual donations to be used by the public with the objectives of improving their lives (Eikenberry, 2005). As *waqf* is philanthropic in nature, a person cannot be accused of being irresponsible if he opted not to contribute to *waqf*.

Perhaps, one of the main motivating factors that drive a person to contribute to *waqf* is the everlasting rewards promised to the contributor (*waqif*). In the Qur'an, God says, "They ask you (O Muhammad) what they should spend in charity. Say: 'Whatever you spend with a good heart, give it to parents, relatives, orphans, the helpless, and travellers in need. Whatever good you do, God is aware of it.'" (Al-Quran, 2: 215). The verse clearly states that helping other Muslims would obtain reward from God in this world and also in the Hereafter. The reward is mentioned clearly in the Qur'an in Surah al-Baqarah verse 261, "The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing".

In the same regard, a hadith of the Prophet mentions that: "When a human being dies, his good works come to an end except for three: a lasting charity, knowledge that benefits others, and his good child who continuously prays for his blessings," (Muslim). In this sense, *waqf* comes as a form of continuous and perpetual charity or *sadaqah jariyah* where the rewards from Allah S.W.T for the *waqif* will continue even after his death and for as long as the *waqf* asset could provide benefit for its consumer or beneficiaries.

As *waqf* contribution is voluntary in nature, a specific study on the attributes of *waqf* commitment is essential in order to examine the factors contributing to the generous attitude of the public. This is particularly essential owing to the importance of *waqf* as a sustainable tool

for the socio-economic development of the Muslim community.

## Literature Review

*Waqf* has been discussed extensively in many studies due to the increased awareness of Muslims on the importance of having the tool in the society. *Waqf* is a form of voluntary giving where the material benefit would not only return to the giver, but also and specifically to be enjoyed by the public as a whole. In Malaysia, *waqf* property is managed by the State Islamic Religious Council whereby any realized benefit would then be extended to the beneficiaries (Azman, Mohammad, & Syed Mohd Najib, 2012; Ahmad Faizul et al., 2015). Among the important benefits of *waqf* is its use in funding for higher education.

As giving *waqf* is voluntary in nature, previous studies have identified many motivating traits or factors of voluntary charitable giving. Among the identified factors of donating money and doing charity is religion. One particular study, for example, found that religiosity plays an important role in motivating young adults to contribute to charity (Opoku, 2013). Catherine and Grossman (2004) explain the religiosity concept by stating that spiritual value will place a greater emphasis on the spiritual rather than material matters. Apart from religion, Martin (1994) argues that the motivation for helping others may come from either egoism or altruism, or both. By enhancing the welfare of the needy, it will be an ultimate goal for altruistic motivation, even at the expense of a person's own interest.

When engaging in volunteering activities, a person will inevitably increase his life satisfaction as it reflects from brain to notion analysis. Charity work is a form of volunteering deed which gives life and personal satisfaction to the individuals involved. Consistent with other correlational studies of volunteering and well-being, it has been found that higher levels of volunteer work are associated with higher levels of overall life satisfaction. Research

indicates that personal satisfaction gain is intrinsic to the donating behaviour, whereas extrinsically, donation enhances one's social standing (Mayo & Tinsley, 2009).

Trust is another important factor in charity. Trustworthiness can be acquired through various ways, including establishing the organization through the government as a registered charity, securing board members whose reputations might indicate trust, and seeking relationships and associations with other trusted organizations (Handy, 2000). In gaining donors' trust, an organization has to maintain confidence in each donor's future behaviour with them through cultivated good relationships. Hence, trust and satisfaction has been the strongest predictors of donors influencing their involvement with charitable organization (Water, 2010).

Personal character may reflect individual behaviour. Moral norms are the main driver behind donation intentions, where personal or moral norms are broadly defined as an individual's internalized code of conduct. Stern et al. (1999) propose that feelings of personal obligation and moral responsibility lead to the formation of pro-social behaviour that includes charitable giving. Social norms will give an impact by telling a donor of contributions made by another person influencing their belief about the descriptive norm, which in turn influences their giving behaviour (Croson, Handy & Shang, 2009). The findings suggest that social norms influence donating intentions due to an individual's identity as it relates to their own personal community.

Psychological benefit has little effect if potential donors face psychological costs when confronted with the need. In an early study, a picture of a needy, handicapped child was found to depress giving in a door-to-door fundraising campaign presumably because it depressed the mood of potential donors (Isen & Noonberg, 1979).

Another factor that would drive a person to give is commitment. Commitment is defined

as an enduring desire or intention to develop and maintain a stable relationship (Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2007). In line with the context of this study, it can be considered as a form of psychological attachment to the charitable organization.

One other factor is the concern with self-image, a concern that could promote pro-social behaviour because observing or remembering their good actions reassures people that they are indeed pro-social. Dana, Weber and Kuang (2007) demonstrate that individuals behave more selfishly in situations in which it is possible to dilute self-signals of altruism. On the contrary, research done by Weele and Siemens (2014) found that self-image concerns have no effect on charitable giving.

### Methodology

This study is quantitative in nature. The primary data are obtained from the structured questionnaires to examine the waqf commitment attributes of the public. The collected data were analysed using reliability test, descriptive analysis t-test and multiple regressions. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to adult Muslims working in Malaysia's Klang Valley area. The respondents were aged between 20 to 60 years old with experience and knowledge on *waqf*. Multiple regression was used to determine the relationship between the attributes of *waqf* commitment and *waqf* contribution. Apart from demographic profile, the descriptive statistics and the validity test are being analysed. Nine independent variables comprising of religiosity, altruism, personal satisfaction, trust, personal character, social norm, psychological benefits, commitment and self-image were commitment attributes analysed in this study. All the variables are measured using Lickert Scale of 1 = totally disagree, to 6 = totally agree.

Reliability test is conducted to check the reliability of the instrument. Reliability test is important to ensure that there exists internal consistency of the measures, thereby the

“items hang together as a set and be capable of independently measuring the same concept” (Sekaran, 2003). In this study, the Cronbach’s Alpha for every element is greater than 0.6.

Table 1: Reliability Test of Determinant of Waqf Commitment

Dimension	No. of Item	Cronbach’s Alpha
Trust	3	0.744
Altruism	3	0.901
Personal Characteristics	3	0.784
Self-Image	3	0.721
Religiosity	3	0.705
Psychological Benefits	3	0.725
Social Norms	3	0.885
Personal Satisfaction	3	0.881
Commitment	2	0.752
Waqf Contribution	9	0.861

The reliability outcome that is above 0.8 is considered good, 0.7 is considered acceptable, while a value less than 0.6 is considered poor (Sekaran, 2003). As shown in Table 2, all the variables in this study have Cronbach alpha values of more than 0.7. We can thus conclude that the internal consistency of each variable is considered good. The instrument is therefore

reliable for the study.

## Results & Discussion

The demographic profile of the respondents is shown in Table 2. More than half of the respondents (66%) are female. This might indicate the fact that a significant number of females is at the workplace apart from them having a more approachable attitude. The majority of them (85.8%) are aged 21 to 40 years old and of course this is important as the main target of the study is younger adults.

Many of them possessed an academic degree (73.5%) or even higher education, and only a handful of them had lower education background. This indicates that they are mainly educated as they managed to pursue their study at a higher level. Many of the respondents (64%) work at private sectors, quite a number of them are civil servants (22.8%) and few (6.8%) are self-employed. There are also those who commit themselves to doing voluntary works at Non-government Organization or NGO (6.5%).

Table 2: Demographic Profile (n = 400).

Profiles	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Profiles	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender Male Female	136 264	34 66	Profession Public Private Self-employed NGO Others	91 256 27 26 23	22.8 64 6.8 6.5 6.6
Total	400	100	Total	400	100
Age 21 – 30 31 – 40 41 – 50 51 – 60	284 59 32 25	71 14.8 8 6.3	Marital Status Single Married	263 137	65.8 34.3
Total	400	100	Total	400	100
Education Secondary School Certificate Diploma Degree Masters PhD	9 20 43 294 28 6	2.3 5 10.8 73.5 7 1.5			
Total	400	100			

As far as marital status is concerned, it is not surprising that the number of unmarried respondents (263 or 65.8%) surpassed the number of those who are already married (137 or 34.3%) as the majority of the respondents are still young.

Table 3: Descriptive analysis for waqf commitment variable

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trust	3.94	1.039
Altruism	5.13	0.804
Personal character	3.44	1.297
Self-image	2.1	1.066
Religiosity	4.98	0.933
Psychological benefits	4.2	1.133
Social norm	4.1	1.324
Personal satisfaction	4.95	0.915
Commitment	3.24	1.103
Contribution commitment	4.55	0.859

As for Table 3, the Descriptive Statistics show that altruism is the most that the donors considered as the dimension to measure their waqf contribution. It has the highest mean of

5.13 with low standard deviation 0.804, which is good. Religiosity is considered as the second trait to indicate waqf contribution, with its mean value of 4.98 and its standard deviation of 0.93. These two traits are indeed reflecting a religiously-driven trait of the respondents in giving for charity. They placed personally-driven traits as secondary as the mean for personal satisfaction is lower (mean value of 4.95 and its standard deviation of 0.915). The

same goes to Psychological benefit (a mean value of 4.2 and standard deviation of 1.13). Social norm mean value is slightly above 4 and the other elements are less than 4. Self-image is found to have the lowest mean among the traits (mean = 2.1; standard deviation = 1.066). This may imply the sincerity and honesty of the respondents in giving for charity as the main aim is to seek the pleasure of the Almighty, and not for boosting one's self-image.

### Multiple Regression Output

The multiple regression output is shown in Table 4. The output is important to look at the significance of the relationship between independent and dependent variables, thereby determining the significant traits of philanthropic commitment. The output shows that the value of adjusted R-square is 0.594. It indicates that the independent variables are able to explain 59.40% of the dependent variable. The F test indicates that the model is significant at 1 percent.

Findings of this study indicate that Altruism, Religiosity, Personal satisfaction and Commitment are significant at 1%. Meanwhile, Psychological Benefits and Personal Characteristic are significant at 10%. However, Trust and Social Norm are not significant.

Religiosity has the highest coefficient value. Every increase of 1% in religiosity increases waqf contribution up to 29.5%. Next is Altruism, where a 1% increases in its value increases the waqf contribution by 18.5%.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Result

Variable	Trust	Altruism	Personal	Self-image	Religiosity	Psychology	Social-norm	Satisfaction	Commitment
Co-Efficient (P-Value)	0.020 (0.581)	0.185 (0.000)***	0.068 (0.090)*	0.051 (0.205)	0.295 (0.000)***	0.077 (0.066)*	0.017 (0.672)***	0.267 (0.000)***	0.175 (0.000)***

Similarly, an increase of 1% in personal satisfaction increases the *waqf* contribution by 26.7%. The last variable that has positive relationship with *waqf* contribution, which is commitment, indicates that 1% of its increase potentially increases the *waqf* contribution by 17.5%. Psychological Benefits and Personal Characteristic have negligible effect.

This study finds that religiosity has positive effect on cash *waqf* giving, which means that it has the intrinsic motivation to the *waqif*. After all, Islam views religion as consisting of the triple mandate of faith (*iman*), action (*amal*), and worship (*ibadah*). The findings of this study confirm previous studies that religion is the key element that will lead to a positive impact on contribution (Mokhlis, 2009; Amin et al., 2014). As *waqf* contribution is commendable by God, it is no surprise that this study finds religiosity a significant factor for *waqf* contribution among working adult.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

Nine independent variables have been tested for this study to identify the factors that motivate *waqif* to contribute for *waqf*. They are Trust, Altruism, Personal Characteristics, Self-Image, Religiosity, Psychological Benefits, Social Norms, Personal Satisfaction and Commitment. The dependent variable is *Waqf* Contribution. This study found that only four attributes were significant to *waqf* commitment, and they are, Religiosity, Altruism, Personal Satisfaction and Commitment. The four attributes are, to our best judgment, symbols of piousness of the *waqif*. These attributes nevertheless, could not be quantified and measured to identify one's commitment. Perhaps, it would be very useful for future researchers on *waqf* to measure the *waqf* index for the determinants of *waqf* commitment among Muslims or *waqif*. In addition, as *waqf* is one of the tools for distributive justice as it provides socio-economic stability, a study on its role in achieving the *Maqasid Shariah* (the objectives of *shariah*) is recommendable in order to empirically demonstrate its importance.

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