

# UNDERGRADUATES' AWARENESS OF WAQF (ENDOWMENT): AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS BASED ON STATE UNIVERSITIES IN SRI LANKA



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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article History:

Received: 14<sup>th</sup> April 2024  
Reviewed & Revised: 15<sup>th</sup> April  
to 28<sup>th</sup> July 2024  
Accepted: 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024  
Published: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024

### Keywords:

Awareness of Waqf, Waqf Charitable  
Endowment Muslim Undergraduate,  
Sustainable Development, State  
Universities in Sri Lanka.

### JEL Classification Codes:

G32, F65, L66, L25, M41

### Peer-Review Model:

External peer review was done through  
double-blind method

## ABSTRACT

The study aims to assess awareness of Islamic waqf among undergraduates pursuing primary degrees in Sri Lanka's state universities. The study adopted a descriptive approach, focusing on quantitative data analysis. The data were collected through questionnaire distribution among 300 participants from randomly selected state universities, which received 270 (90% response rate) usable questionnaires. The data analysis was conducted using SPSS software (Version 26), which used descriptive and inferential statistics. The results were organised into tables and graphs to help provide a better understanding. The findings reveal that although undergraduates acquire a superficial understanding of the concept of Islamic Waqf, they lack awareness regarding its procedures, conditions, purposes, appointment of trustees (Mutawalli), significant relation between waqf charitable enforcement and sustainable development in the economy, and the issue of waqf to non-Muslims. This knowledge gap can be attributed to inadequate knowledge provided by governmental and voluntary organisations for individuals to participate in and support the Islamic Waqf Institutions, which is essential for actively understanding the procedures and conditions. By educating individuals about Waqf procedures and conditions, individuals can obtain knowledge and contribute to ensuring that the resources are utilised effectively for sustainable economic growth. Implementing the Waqf Charitable endowment in areas such as Education Waqf, Medical Waqf, and Provident Fund Waqf will remain challenging without addressing this issue. Hence, policymakers and relevant authorities should prioritise improving awareness and understanding of Islamic waqf between the literary community and the public.

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## INTRODUCTION

Poverty is inadequate access to necessities like food, water, shelter, education and information (Echchabi & Babatunde, 2021). According to (Ihsan & Ayedh, 2015), most of the world's population has been experiencing poverty for many centuries. Although compared with other countries in the world, Muslim countries possess adequate natural resources and are economically developed, poverty persists within their borders (Echchabi & Babatunde, 2021). In the same vein, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) clearly mentioned that "Poverty can almost turn into disbelief," and the Prophet (PBUH) sought safety from the consequences of poverty in his every obligatory prayer. In Islam, every eligible wealthy Muslim must compulsorily dedicate a specific portion of his wealth to the eight groups of people as mentioned in the Qur'an chapter 9, verse 60, and the tradition of the Prophet (PBUH) emphasises the completion of a year (Lapse of a year) (مضي الحول) and *niṣāb* (نصاب) (Rifas et al., 2023).

Islam is more concerned with promoting economic circulation among individuals in a society (Ismail & Arshad, 2009). To achieve this goal, Islam has instituted various philanthropic or charitable ways of distribution, namely *sadaqah* (voluntary charity), *zakat* (compulsory charity), *Hibbah* (gift), *inheritance*, *wasiyyah* (bequest) and *waqf* (endowment). Moreover, the remedy *Kaffarah* (كفارة) for the crime has additionally paved the way for the eradication of poverty. Significantly, Islamic waqf endowment has played a vital role throughout the history of Islam, especially in reducing socioeconomic disparity poverty, and demystifying the problem of unemployment (Saujan & Mazahir, 2021a). *Waqf* (Arabic: وَقْف; plural أَوْقَاف) is a word derived from the root word *Wakaf* (وَكَّف). The word "*waqf*" means "detention (حَبْس)", "withhold" or "restriction" (Ismail & Arshad, 2009; Saujan & Mazahir, 2021b). Allamah Jamaluddin Ibn Mansur observed

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<https://doi.org/10.46281/ijswr.v5i2.2229>

that “the waqf is a process of dedicating a piece of land to the welfare of the needy in society” (Mohammad, 2018). Moreover, Imam Abu Hanifah defined waqf as “withholding a particular property or thing from a person’s ownership (ملكية), or protecting and maintaining it in its basic form and giving its outcome or profit to the needy in society” (Jaldeen, 1993). The word “waqf” is not explicitly mentioned anywhere in the Holy Qur’an. However, the Qur’an encourages the believers to spend in the ways of Allah (وأنفقوا في سبيل الله) in the verses of 2:280, 3:92, 3:134, and 8:19. In the same vein, given that waqf is a form of spending in the path of the Almighty, the verses mentioned above can be regarded as proof of waqf charitable endowment.

The institutionalised Waqf charitable endowment was utilised to promote socioeconomic security, which had played a vital role in uplifting the economic status of the Muslim community throughout the history of Islam (Dzuljastri et al., 2016). Despite that, the Waqf charitable institutions had been operated to uplift the people’s livelihoods and establish a sustainable economy during the lifetimes of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Rightly Guided Caliphs and later the Caliphs and successors until establishing colonial rule by Europe. Historical researchers have identified the proper utilisation of waqf endowments on several occasions. For instance, Uthman bin Affan (RA) had purchased a well Rumah (بئر رومة) located in the city of Medina from a Jew upon the request of the Prophet (PBUH) later period, it was known as “Well of Uthman ibn Affan (بئر عثمان بن عفان)”, The Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) also created waqf for the welfare of society which were seven date palm gardens and other forms of wealth inherited to him (PBUH) by a Jew named Rabbi Mukhayriq (Muqtedar, 2011). The Sahabahs who were most committed to Waqf were Uthman (RA), Ali (RA), Talha (RA), Zayd bin Thabit (RA), and Ibn’ Umar (RA).

Furthermore, regarding the waqf dedication of Sahabahs revealed by Jabir (RA) that “There was no one among the companions (Sahabah) who did not create waqf endowment. They had written about it and were forbidden to dispose of it or deliver gifts.” the late period of Abbasid and Umayyad dynasty, the waqf played a vital role in eradicating poverty in society by providing drinking-water to the needy, building mosques and libraries, opening free medical hospitals and establishing Arabic Colleges (Dzuljastri et al., 2016; Sadeq, 2024). Succeeded period, many movable properties were created as waqf for the benefit of society (Saujan & Mazahir, 2021a). It can be observed that the Waqf endowment system was implemented as an alternative economic tool to alleviate poverty in the Muslim community (Echhabi & Babatunde, 2021). A substantial portion of the *Bayt al-mal* (بيت المال) and *Khazanah* (treasure) was filled during the ruler's reign due to the establishment of waqfs. The creation of waqfs played a significant role in stimulating economic growth and providing social welfare. These charitable endowments not only helped to alleviate poverty and support education, healthcare, and infrastructure development, but they also served as a stable source of revenue for the ruler, ensuring financial stability for the kingdom (Thabith & Mohamad, 2021).

Apart from contributing to the eradication of poverty and fulfilment of the essential needs of society, various Waqf schemes were initiated to develop scholarships and higher educational institutions. The Abbasids established the Baitul Hikmah in 774 CE during the golden age of the Islamic Empire (Algeriani, 2017). Another remarkable example is Jamiul Azhar, a world-renowned Islamic historical university in Egypt, which remains a classic example of waqf (A. J. Omar et al., 2018). Waqf is widely distributed throughout the world today. Notable countries like Kuwait, Malaysia, India, and Nigeria secure a significant presence and effective implementation of waqf. Remarkably, the state empowered the Zakat and Waqf Institutions (ZWI) to manage Waqf properties in Nigeria. The zakat and waqf institution was established in 1817 by Osman Duck Pedio during the reign of the Tiffin Sukhoto Khilafah. During this period, poverty alleviation, free education, agricultural subsidies, mosques, and public shelters, such as some charitable activities, were carried out using Corporate Waqf (Abdu et al., 2023; Saujan & Mazahir, 2021b).

Although Waqf contributed immensely to advancing society's livelihood and eradicating the world's poverty, only a few notable institutions exist that contribute to enhancing educational sectors. Specifically, the Sri Lanka Baithulmal Fund (SBF) has been paying a certain amount monthly to poor students pursuing higher education for 64 years under certain conditions. In addition, the FEED (forum for Education in Ethical Development) Institution in Gintota, Galle, has been offering scholarships for a fixed monthly amount to students pursuing Bachelor’s Degrees in Southern Province from those who are eligible to receive zakat. Overall, only one or two such waqf institutions are in operation to contribute to the educational sector. Furthermore, Saujan and Mazahir (2021a), and Bushra et al. (2022) have concluded that lack of awareness of waqf among the public and wealthy is a primary reason for the lack of Waqf processing in Sri Lankan Muslim society. As a result of this background, this study aims to determine the extent of undergraduate students’ knowledge about waqf.

Islam religion regulates the whole life of human beings. Among its guidance, utilising economics is a prime to consider. Islam introduces various techniques to promote economic equilibrium and circulation within societies. The important of them are Zakat, Sadaqah, Gifts, Waqfs, and Wasiyyat. Notably, Islam has given clear directives concerning waqf. Nevertheless, the current Waqf dedications only cover certain welfare sections, such as funding for the infrastructure development of Mosques, Arabic Colleges, and Cemeteries.

Conversely, in Islamic history, waqf was not confined solely to these aspects but extended to encompass health, education, establishing higher educational institutions, and providing student scholarships. In general, only a few Waqf institutions in Sri Lanka operate for educational development, as mentioned above. However, waqf has developed to a level that is applied in various sectors of the world today. In the case of Sri Lanka, The lack of awareness about Waqfs between the general public and the literary community has been significantly hindering the implementation of effective waqf operations, particularly in higher educational institutions. It has been aware of the researchers' attention that the number of families experiencing poverty in society is negatively impacting the students dropping out because of the lack of adequate assistance to study; this phenomenon has given space for increasing numbers of child labourers in the county. Therefore,

the present study attempts to determine the awareness level of waqf among undergraduate Muslim students. The objectives of the study is to explore the waqf awareness among Muslim undergraduates pursuing their basic degree at state universities in Sri Lanka and samples' perceptions about Islamic waqf endowment.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research was carried out using a sociological approach. The necessary data for the study were collected through the distribution of self-administered questionnaires designed by researchers.

#### Population and Sampling

The study samples were selected using the random sampling method. Muslim undergraduates who entered state universities of Sri Lanka in the academic years of 2022/2021, 2021/2020, 2020/2019 and 2019/2018 voluntarily participated in this study. Accordingly, the study's findings were generalised to general and special Muslim undergraduates who pursued their studies during the above four academic years at the state universities in Sri Lanka. As mentioned above, 300 questionnaires were distributed among the participants. The manner of samples selected for the study is displayed in the following table:

Table 1. Samples Selection for the study

No	Universities' Name	Frequency (Research Samples)
01.	University of Colombo	08
02.	University of Sri Jayawardenepura	06
03.	University of Ruhuna	13
04.	Universiy of Moratuwa	10
05.	South Eastern University of Sri Lanka	210
06.	Sabaragamuwa University	05
07.	University of Peradeniya	08
08.	University of Kelaniya	02
09.	University of Jaffna	12
10.	Eastern University, Sri Lanka	23
11.	Rajarata University	03
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>

#### Questionnaire

Researchers used the questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. The study samples' Waqf awareness and perceptions were probed in the questionnaire, which was divided into five sub-sections with 16 questions. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of questions to assess the perception of waqf among undergraduates. The second section covered the media through which the study sample gained awareness about waqf. Accordingly, the third section of the questionnaire covered the question that asses the knowledge of the practical implication of Islamic waqf endowments, and the fourth section, the participation of the study sample, were examined. Finally, the personal details of the study sample were obtained. The questionnaire was designed to allow individuals to answer it themselves (self-administered). Model questions required for constructing questionnaires retrieved from Abdu et al. (2023). "Assessing the awareness and perception of waqf among business owners in Gombe State, Nigeria", Echchabi and Babatunde (2021). "Waqf Awareness among university students in Malaysia: An Empirical Study", A. N. Omar et al. (2022). Awareness of Waqf among Students: The case of Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Besides this, the researcher also handled self-prepared questions too.

The respondents' answers were determined using a five-point Likert Scale, where answering options indicated as Strongly Agree - 5, Agree - 4, Neither Agree Nor Disagree - 3, Disagree - 2, and Strongly Disagree - 1. Using a five-point Likert Scale made the sample responses more explicit to reach a clear cut in the findings. The manner of questionnaire distribution among the participants remains as follows:

Table 2. The manner of questionnaire distributed among the study samples

No	Name of Universities	Distributed Questionnaire	Received Questionnaire
01.	University of Colombo	08	01
02.	University of Sri Jayawardenepura	06	06
03.	University of Ruhuna	13	13
04.	University of Moratuwa	10	08
05.	South Eastern University of Sri Lanka	210	203
06.	Sabaragamuwa University	05	01
07.	University of Peradeniya	08	08
08.	University of Kelaniya	02	02
09.	University of Jaffna	12	12
10.	Eastern University, Sri Lanka	23	15
11.	Rajarata University	03	02
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>270</b>

According to Table 2, the self-administrated questionnaires were distributed among 300 Muslim undergraduates selected based on the Random Sampling Method (RSM), and 270 usable questionnaires were received, which could be used entirely. The response rate between the distributed and received questionnaires was determined based on the following formula:

$$\text{Response rate} = \frac{\text{The number of responses returned} = 270}{\text{Number of questionnaires sent out} = 300} \times 100 = 90\%$$

Considering the above formula, the ratio between the total distributed and received questionnaires is 90%. The ratio of 90% is an excellent response rate (60% - 100%). Therefore, the response rate obtained for the present study was more efficient and accurate. It also affected the results of the study.

**Data Analysis**

All the received data were subjected to descriptive analysis with the help of SPSS (Version – 26), and the results were obtained in terms of numbers, percentages, mean, median, mode and standard deviation. The results were presented using tables and graphs.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The section results and discussion are categorised into three major titles. The first title focuses on understanding the concept of waqf among undergraduate students; under the second title, a discussion is constricted to media for acquiring knowledge about waqf and participants’ perceptions of Islamic charitable endowments. It is more appropriate here to look at these separately in some detail.

**Awareness of waqf among undergraduates**

Generally, the word awareness is used to acquire knowledge about a subject or something (Gafoor, 2012). As per this definition, the awareness of waqf means having a thorough knowledge of the principles, fundamentals and conditions of Islamic waqf endowment. These things are essential for understanding and effective execution (Abbasi, 2012). Accordingly, in order to find out whether the study samples well acquired the awareness of waqf, the following three questions were raised:

**Knowledge of the concept of Islamic charitable endowment (Waqf)**

In order to examine the samples’ understanding of the meaning of the word "waqf", the following question was posed.

Table 3. Question: Are you aware of the concept of Islamic waqf?

		Frequency	Per cent	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
<b>Valid</b>	No	17	6.3	0.94	1.00	0.245
	Yes	248	91.9			
	Total	265	98.1			
<b>Missing</b>	System	5	1.9			
<b>Total</b>		<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>			

According to Table 3 above, most of the study samples (91.9%) were familiar with “waqf”. Even though waqf is an Arabic-originated word, Sri Lankan Muslims blend some Arabic words with their mother language, Tamil, during their day-to-day conversations (Zubair, 2016). A separate study also developed on this topic, known as “Arabu-Tamil”, which is worth mentioning here. Eventually, Muslims in Sri Lanka are generally familiar with the term waqf. This leads us to conclude that the specimens also know this reason.

**Knowledge of the difference between waqf and other gifts, Zakat, Sadaqa and Hibat**

Besides the discussion of the term waqf, how the term has been interpreted from other forms of charities was also examined in this section.

Table 4. Question: Do you agree that the term waqf is similar to Zakat, Sadaqah and Hibah?

		Frequency	Per cent	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
<b>Valid</b>	No	36	13.3	0.86	1.00	0.343
	Yes	229	84.8			
	Total	265	98.1			
<b>Missing</b>	System	5	1.9			
<b>Total</b>		<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>			

As per Table 4 above, more than half of the study sample (84.8%) agreed that the waqf is similar to *zakat*, *sadaqah* and *hibah*. Although waqf is a method of spending on the path of Almighty Allah, it is similar to Zakat, Sadaqah, and Gift. In terms of an Islamic waqf, endowment differs from other modes of donation in terms of transferring actual property and considering its permanent and temporary keeping period. The possessory right (*Milqiyah*) of *zakat*, *sadaqah*, and *hibah* is immediately transferred from the person dedicated to the beneficiaries' side without delay. In contrast, during the waqf charitable endowment process, property ownership (*Milqiyah*) is retained from its actual owner’s possession and not

transferred to the beneficiaries; merely benefits generated from it are given to people in need. It is worth mentioning here that according to the classifications of Ghazali et al. (2019) and Saujan and Mazahir (2021b), waqf is a type of *sadaqa* that is partially performed in a non-compulsory way. Moreover, it is also crucial that waqf can be granted temporarily for a fixed period, but other modes of donations cannot be made for a limited period. Although Islamic scholars such as Imam Abu Hanifa and Muhammad support this kind of temporary offering, other Imams such as Imam Shafi, Imam Hambali and Imam Malik were disagree with it (Saujan & Mazahir, 2021a).

**Understanding the complete definition of waqf**

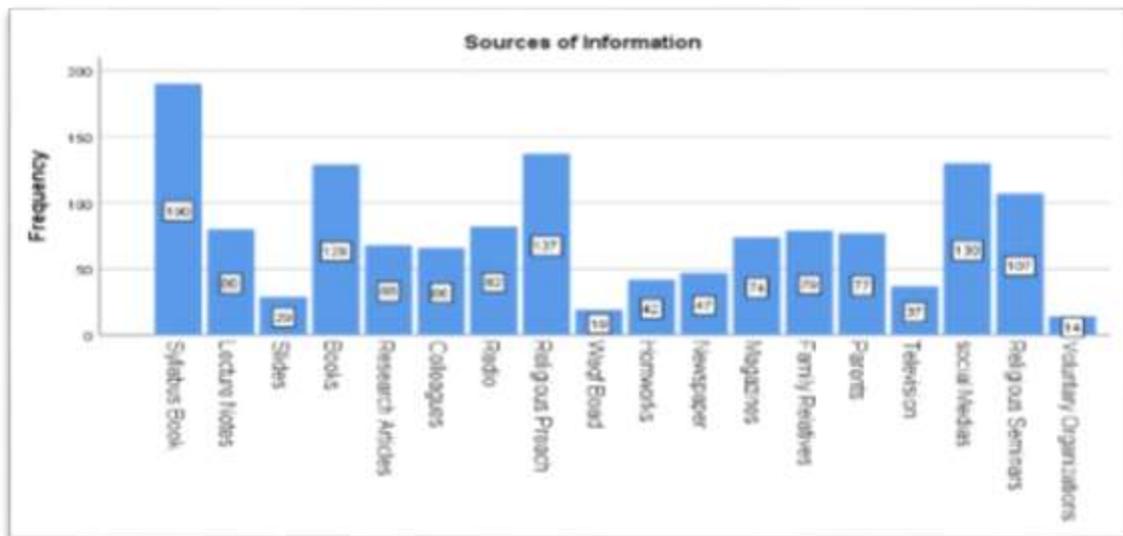
This section examines understanding the complete definition of waqf among the study samples.

Table 5. Question: Do you agree that waqf is a charity performed only by mosques, burial grounds and Arabic colleges to seek satisfaction from the Almighty?

		Frequency	Per cent	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Valid	No	25	9.3	0.91	1.00	0.293
	Yes	240	88.9			
	Total	265	98.1			
Missing	System	5	1.9			
<b>Total</b>		270	100			

From the tabulate 5 mentioned above, it is quite clear that about 88%. These findings revealed that the majority of the study samples agreed with the above posed question. As well as in some depth while the sample responses are correct when looked at in terms of simple mechanics. Commonly, in Sri Lanka, people with normal and general education and educated peoples/communities define the waqf donations as the charity for the mosques, burial grounds, and Arabic colleges, as mentioned in various research under Saujan and Mazahir (2021b), Bushra et al. (2022). Many of the quantitative samples studied presented approximately similar results concerning university students’ understanding of the general population, as stated by the researchers. It is not the charitable activity for some institutions; it is the charitable process that needs to be charitably used in Education, Health, Medicine, Self-Agriculture Business, Orphan Care, etc., The lack of understanding regarding this still prevails among the common public and educated society which ultimately would not extend the use of the Waqf process in Sri Lanka in a practical manner.

**Media outlets that have received knowledge about Waqfs**



When the study samples were analysed in the media to acquire knowledge about waqf, the following results were obtained. From the above bar chart, it was evident that out of all the sources, 190 students learnt about waqf through syllabus books, religious teachings 137, social media 130 and books 129. On the other hand, it may be noted that the knowledge acquired on waqf through voluntary Waqf organisations (14) and the Sri Lanka Waqf Board (19) is low. On the other hand, a bank operating in Malaysia is, Bank Muamalat Malaysia Berhad (BMMB) has been doing a tremendous job in sensitising the public on the Cash Waqf. Furthermore, private organisations and government agents in countries such as Kuwait and Indonesia are continually educating the public about waqf. Therefore, the contemporary uses of both waqfs and public involvement in charity organisations have improved in those nations.

**The perception of the concept of waqf**

The first of these subsections analyses the perceptions of the study samples on waqf, which is presented in this section. The categories include what the respondents know about the practice of waqf, whether they are involved in waqf endowment activities and respondents’ awareness that the act of giving or establishing a waqf, benefits the society as beneficiaries

among their families or society. Thus, it is possible to discuss them as separate entities that should be analysed.

**Knowledge about waqf**

In this section, six questions were posed before the samples to ascertain the knowledge level of the samples. The following table illustrates the responses to the samples.

Variables (Questions)	Valid										Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree					
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%				
1. Waqf can be considered a waqf to withhold the originality of an individual's property (property rights) and spend only its benefit in the path of God.	19	7.2%	70	26.4%	78	29.4%	55	20.8%	43	16.2%	2.88	3.00	3	1.182
2. I am fully aware that waqf has been playing a significant role in poverty alleviation in the society	151	57%	79	29.8%	25	9.4%	9	3.4%	1	0.4%	4.40	5.00	5	0.824
3. The participation of Muslims in Waqf activities is an engaged deed in Islam.	167	63%	76	28.7%	16	6%	6	2.3%	0	0%	4.52	5.00	5	0.713
4. Since the waqf is a permanent charity, the waqf (who makes waqf) receives perpetual (continuous) rewards.	216	81.5%	34	12.8%	5	1.9%	7	2.6%	3	11%	4.71	5.00	5	0.735
5. There is no relationship between the sustainable economic development of the community and the continuous Waqf charitable endowments.	14	5.3%	29	10.9%	105	39.6%	58	21.9%	59	22.3%	2.55	1.00	1	1.110
6. I am aware that a Waqf Board has been established in Sri Lanka to manage the properties created as Waqfs with the support of the Government.	85	32.1%	125	47.2%	43	16.2%	6	2.3%	6	2.3%	4.05	4.00	4	0.882

As it is evident from the above table, the first question is about the definition of Islamic Waqf in detail. With regards to this, the study sample showed that most of the respondents were in a state of ignorance. Besides, they are in one accord that poverty eradication in society is connected to the institutional functioning of waqf and that poverty can be done away with if the process of the Waqf Tendu is done appropriately. They have also agreed to the fact that Muslims' involvement in the Waqf activities is a charitable act that has been encouraged in Islam.

Because the waqf is an ongoing charity, the participants asserted that the waqf (who established the waqf) deserves eternal blessings from the Almighty in this world and the hereafter. Likewise, there is a strong link between sustainable economic growth in the community and the ongoing charity of Waqf. The samples were also familiar with the case of Vesting the Waqf Board of Sri Lanka, which has full power to manage the Waqf operation in Sri Lanka.

In total, despite their insufficient knowledge of the definition of waqf, they comprehended the functioning of waqf properly.

**Waqf involvement**

In this section, the research samples were examined about their future intention to participate in the activities of waqf, the family of the research samples, and the existence of waqfs in the community to which they belong.

Variables (Questions)	Valid										Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree					
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%				
1. I am ready to help the needy in society by funding Waqf institutions.	129	48.7%	100	37.7%	30	11.3%	3	1.1%	3	1.1%	4.32	4.00	4	0.806
2. Most people in my community are interested in creating waqf.	24	9.1%	76	28.7%	130	49.1%	29	10.9%	6	2.3%	3.31	3.00	3	0.868

3. My family members have given specific properties as waqfs.	56	21.1%	119	44.9%	43	16.2%	34	12.8%	13	4.9%	3.65	4.00	4	1.099
4. In future, I am keen to provide waqf to mosques and Arabic colleges from my own income.	161	60.8%	83	31.3%	12	4.5%	8	3.0%	1	0.4%	4.49	5.00	5	0.754
5. I have encouraged my parents to donate to Waqf charities.	53	20%	111	41.9%	73	27.5%	17	6.4%	11	4.2%	3.67	4.00	4	1.001
6. I know that wealthy people in my community have donated their properties as waqf.	128	48.3%	93	35.1%	23	8.7%	16	6%	5	1.9%	4.22	4.00	4	0.968

The study samples are willing to contribute to the needy in society in the future through the waqf charity process. The study samples also showed that the affluent members of the community were indifferent toward the process of charitable giving through the Waqf. The knowledge of the waqf is available in the family members of the study sample.

The study sample wanted to make waqf to institutions like mosques, religious colleges, and burial grounds. Additionally, the survey samples agreed that their parents have some experience motivating them to engage in Waqf activities. It is also participant known that some wealthy persons were created waqf in their society.

**Knowledge of the application of the Waqf Charity Procedure**

This section has been analysed to determine whether the samples have adequate knowledge to enable them to practice the Waqf charity process.

Variables (Questions)	Valid										Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree					
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%				
1. The Waqf charitable endowment cannot be undertaken in the interest of individuals or families.	61	23%	46	17.4%	84	31.7%	38	14.3%	36	13.6%	3.22	3.00	3	1.319
2. I believe that waqf assets can be used with priority to public welfare in contrast to the intention or conditions of the waqf decedent.	60	22.6%	111	41.9%	50	18.9%	31	11.7%	13	4.9%	3.66	4.00	4	1.101
3. Islam permits the Wakif to appoint a person in charge (mudawalli) to administer the Waqf properties.	74	27.9%	105	39.6%	49	18.5%	24	9.1%	13	4.9%	3.77	4.00	4	1.104
4. The heirs of the deceased have the right to reclaim a property created as a Waqf when it fails to be appropriately maintained.	20	7.5%	74	27.9%	97	36.6%	40	15.1%	34	12.8%	3.02	3.00	3	1.118
5. Waqfs cannot be undertaken for public purposes such as education, medicine, care of the elderly etc.	19	7.2%	18	6.8%	23	8.7%	103	38.9%	102	38.5%	2.05	2.00	2	1.179
6. A Muslim cannot create a Waqf for the benefit of non-Muslims.	35	13.2%	29	10.9%	100	37.7%	56	21.1%	45	17%	2.82	3.00	3	1.226

In response to the question of whether the Waqf Tender process can be used for the purpose of benefiting individuals or families, the majority of the research samples received are not comprehensible. Generally, the Islamic Waqf process is done in two ways. The *Waqf Ahli* – Ahli Waqf is carried out by a person who intends to safeguard the interest of his family. The advantage of the waqf is determined by the type of the waqf as per the choice of the waqf. A relative can be a person or a certain category of persons. The best example is that Abu Talha (RA) gifted a garden called “Bairuha” to his father’s brothers on the advice of the Prophet. The second type of waqf al-Khairi is a waqf that is done for the benefit of the general population. For instance, Grant land for mosque construction or waqf of land for establishing educational institution. Today, there is a tendency that the practice of Waqf al-Hairi is more common than Waqf al-Ahli among the Muslims.

When the knowledge level of the samples was assessed about the use of Waqf property against the purpose of Waqf, it was seen that the samples did not have adequate knowledge in this regard. It is important to point out here that when a thing is given as a waqf, the property of the waqf cannot be employed in a manner that is inconsistent with the purpose of the waqf, and the Islamic shari’ah has permitted the creation of waqf on condition that it is not done in a way that violates the Islamic shari’ah of waqf.

Islamic law allows the waqf holder to appoint a *mudawalli* to manage the property of the waqf after him. *Mudhavalli* is usually one of the Wahif’s heirs. If Wahif passes on without a *Mudhavalli* appointment, Quazi has been vested

with the responsibility of managing the property and appointing a *Mudhavalli*. In relation to Sri Lanka, the Waqf Board has full powers to govern if the Muthawalli is not appointed. The research samples do not comprehend how the Waqf Board administers the property through the Mosque Board of Trustees.

Majority of the surveys also state that it is possible to engage in waqf for purposes other than religious such as in medicine, health, and elderly care. Today, in many countries, there are more industrial Waqf than in the past. For instance, Medical Sector dependent waqf is performed. The money is spent on the treatment of diseases of the poor and needy people in the society. The Waqf in its general sense, covers Education Waqf, Bank Waqf, Old Age Allowance Waqf, and Provident Fund Waqf.

Research samples do not have sufficient appreciation of whether Waqf can be provided for the benefit of non-Muslims. However, there is no legal evidence that indicates that Muslims should dedicate waqf only to Muslims. Found. There are also differences of opinion regarding this issue among Islamic jurists. However, a non-Muslim's waqf is valid for other public purposes other than the help given for the construction of religious buildings, including mosques. Likewise, non-Muslims can also benefit from the Waqf Fund (Sulistiani, 2021).

## CONCLUSIONS

This research was carried out on the level of knowledge that the students have on the Islamic Waqf concept. While the participants have a general idea of what Islamic Waqf is, they are not fully informed of the process and requirements of waqf, the role of Wahif, appointment of Mudawalli, and the matter of waqf for non-Muslims. Moreover, the level of knowledge was almost equal in the educated and literate communities as well. If this situation continues, the Islamic Waqf doctrine and the Muslim community of Sri Lanka will have no relationship. Moreover, if the process of charity in the form of Waqf is properly implemented in Sri Lanka, then it will be possible to eliminate poverty. First of all, the Waqf Board should take initiatives to create awareness about the concept of waqf among the people and especially the educational institutions. For instance, the findings of several studies reveal that the Sri Lankan public is not actively involved in the Waqf activities.

Moreover, let us assume that more emphasis is given to the contemporary charitable activities like Educational Waqf, Medical Waqf, Provident Fund Waqf, Old Age Relief Waqf, etc., in preference to the conventional Waqf activities. In that case, the Waqf activities can be increased in a manner similar to the Waqf activities that are being carried out in other countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Kuwait. The construction of the Waqf institution will be possible to come out of the economic crisis and poverty of Sri Lanka. This should prompt policymakers and other responsible entities to address this more keenly.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualisation, I.S. and S.M.M.N.; Methodology, I.S.; Software, I.S.; Validation, Z.F.Z.F., I.S. and S.M.M.N.; Formal Analysis, I.S.; Investigation, Z.F.Z.F.; Resources, Z.F.Z.F.; Data Curation, I.S.; Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Z.F.Z.F. and I.S.; Writing – Review & Editing, S.M.M.N.; Visualization, I.S.; Supervision, S.M.M.N.; Project Administration, I.S.; Funding Acquisition, Z.F.Z.F. and I.S. Authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** This study aims to investigate the level of awareness of Waqf among Muslim undergraduates in state universities across Sri Lanka. The research will involve a survey administered to students from various faculties to assess their knowledge, perceptions, and attitudes towards Waqf. The findings are expected to contribute to a better understanding of the current state of awareness and suggest ways to enhance education on Waqf in the university curriculum.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Acknowledgments:** We are deeply appreciative of the editorial team and reviewers for their constructive feedback and guidance throughout the publication process, which have significantly enhanced the quality of our research. Our heartfelt thanks go to the Muslim undergraduates from various state universities in Sri Lanka for their participation and willingness to share their knowledge and perspectives. We also acknowledge the contributions of our colleagues and advisors who provided support and encouragement during the research and writing phases. Finally, we extend our gratitude to our respective institutions for their support and resources, which have been essential in conducting this research.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to restrictions.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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