

The Role of Waqf in Response to the Challenges of Peace and Youth Empowerment in Yobe State, Nigeria

Peranan Wakaf dalam Menangani Cabaran Keamanan dan Pemberdayaan Belia di Negeri Yobe, Nigeria

*IBRAHIM DAHIRU IDRIS, ADIBAH ABDUL RAHIM &
ISMAIL MAMAT

ABSTRACT

The study explores various causes of insecurity and unemployment among the youth in Yobe state and identifies the potential of waqf-based youth employment programs to provide peace in the state. Security challenges in the state are persistent but to ensure peace and empower the teeming youth in various capacities, various measures are put in place for the sustainable development in the state. The act of waqf endowment is a good deed commanded by Islam. Waqf has been established to provide social economic and community-based services in Muslim society. Waqf has diversified roles and benefits in the community. Waqf has been practice since the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) until today. The study applied a qualitative method of research which employs interview in which relevant information has been gathered from 15 selected participants in order to examine the role of waqf in addressing the designed objective and recommends the ways which waqf funds are used to efficiently empower the youth. The findings of the study show that waqf has the potential to address the menace of unemployment, insecurity, and other social vices among the youth in Yobe. The paper concludes that youth empowerment in the fields of education, health, entrepreneur, vocational skills bring positive and sustainable peace in Yobe state. The paper contributed to finding the potential of waqf institutions as perpetual charity in providing the basic societal needs that empowers the youth to attain the peaceful and prosperous Yobe society.

Keywords: Waqf, Youth Empowerment, Challenges, Peace, and Nigeria

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneroka pelbagai punca ketidakamanan dan pengangguran dalam kalangan belia di negeri Yobe dan mengenal pasti potensi program pekerjaan belia berasaskan wakaf untuk memberikan keamanan di negeri ini. Cabaran keselamatan

di negeri ini berterusan tetapi untuk memastikan keamanan dan memperkasakan golongan belia yang ramai dalam pelbagai kapasiti, pelbagai langkah diambil untuk pembangunan mampan di negeri ini. Amalan wakaf merupakan satu amal soleh yang diperintahkan oleh Islam. Wakaf telah ditubuhkan untuk menyediakan perkhidmatan ekonomi sosial dan berasaskan komuniti dalam masyarakat Islam. Wakaf mempunyai pelbagai peranan dan faedah dalam masyarakat. Wakaf telah diamalkan sejak zaman Nabi Muhammad (SAW) sehingga hari ini. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah penyelidikan kualitatif yang menggunakan temu bual di mana maklumat yang relevan telah dikumpulkan daripada 15 peserta terpilih untuk mengkaji peranan wakaf dalam menangani objektif yang direka dan mengesyorkan cara dana wakaf digunakan untuk memperkasakan belia dengan cekap. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa wakaf mempunyai potensi untuk menangani ancaman pengangguran, ketidakamanan, dan maksiat sosial lain dalam kalangan belia di Yobe. Kertas kerja tersebut merumuskan bahawa pemerksaan belia dalam bidang pendidikan, kesihatan, usahawan, kemahiran vokasional membawa keamanan yang positif dan mampan di negeri Yobe. Kertas kerja ini menyumbang untuk mencari potensi institusi wakaf sebagai amal yang berterusan dalam menyediakan keperluan asas masyarakat yang memperkasakan belia untuk mencapai masyarakat Yobe yang aman dan makmur.

Keywords: Wakaf, Pemerksaan Belia, Cabaran, Keamanan, dan Nigeria

Received: October 15, 2024
Accepted: December 20, 2024

Revised: November 17, 2024
Published: December 31, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment is a global challenge, leaving many youths without jobs or business opportunities. This often leads to social consequences, with some youth turning to various vices due to economic and social hardships. Peace and security are interconnected, and every nation must prioritize security holistically. This includes not only investing in defense systems but also ensuring equity, justice, youth empowerment, food security, quality healthcare, environmental sustainability, and the protection of fundamental rights for all citizens. Waqf institutions aim to address both economic and social objectives, serving to enhance societal well-being. By fostering entrepreneurship, waqf can play a pivotal role in reducing unemployment and improving the quality of life. The social challenges faced by Yobe State are not unique; other Muslim-majority countries have successfully tackled similar issues by establishing and maintaining functional waqf institutions. Yobe State can emulate these examples to develop sustainable solutions for employment and social welfare. The concept of waqf has its roots in Islamic

Sharia, as established by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and practiced by his companions. One of its primary purposes is to address the social problems of the Ummah. Waqf serves as a philanthropic tool that extends to various aspects of social welfare, encompassing areas often considered governmental responsibilities, such as healthcare, education, and even defense. Yobe State possesses unique opportunities to leverage waqf for economic development. The state has fertile land suitable for diverse agricultural activities, including farming, poultry, and the cultivation of food and cash crops. Additionally, it is home to the largest cattle market in West Africa, located in Potiskum. These resources provide a strong foundation for waqf-supported initiatives that can empower the youth, create jobs, and address socio-economic challenges in the region.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Youth Empowerment and its Obstacles in Nigeria

There was no articulated policy on unemployment situation in Nigeria due to lack of adequate and reliable statistics. The policy thrust in the plan document was to ensure the reduction in unemployment through programs to assist the unemployed to obtain gainful employment (Kahf, 2012). Reports from the International Labor Organization ascertain that unemployment can be understood as certain amount of people in the economy who does not have jobs and are willing to do it and consist of people of leave their jobs voluntarily (Skinner et al., 2023).

Nigerian governments at various levels and at different times have deployed various approaches and programs to curtail the menace of poverty and inequality among the people, yet insignificant impact was recorded. Various programs include: “The Operation Feed the Nation (1970s), Green Revolution (1980s), Family Economic Advancement Program (1990s) and National Poverty Eradication Program (2000s)”. All these were not successful as they suffered set back due to poor governance and corrupt practices. According to the report of National Bureau of Statistic, the estimated population in Nigeria lived in extreme poverty is 88.4 million. The number of men living on less than 2.0 U.S. dollars per day in the country stood at 44.7 million. While the total number of women living on the same ratio reached around 43.7 million (National Bureau of Statistic 2022 Report). Nigeria produced highest wealth from the natural resources available in the country, specifically crude oil, hitherto the youth suffer unemployment, frustrations segregations and poverty. Furthermore, Nigeria ranked “6th largest deposit of gas and the 8th largest oil-producer in the

world, with over 100 tertiary institutions that churn out 200,000 graduates of various disciplines annually”, most of these abundant natural resources remain untapped, the tapped once were mismanaged due to corruptions and non-political will. Youth’s unemployment contributed immensely to the increase of conflicts and insecurity in Nigeria (Uchechukwu et al., 2023).

The Experience of Yobe State

Yobe state being one of the northeastern states in the country, the issue of youth empowerment is similar with what is going on at the national level with respect to youth participation in employment and empowerment. Peace and security are synonymous with each other. Every country must take the security issues with utmost priority. The security of any nation is an indication for state development. Inequalities, corruption, mismanagement, autocracy, and unemployment always have negative affect on nation’s development. They are the basics breed of dissatisfaction, hindrances and excesses, cases of violence, outbursts which cause crisis and insecurity in a country (Adekunle et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the failure of nation leaders in addressing the developmental challenges, equitable distribution of the nation’s resources, youth empowerment, justice and equitable leadership became the causes of ethnic and religious conflict (Yagboyaju & Akinola, 2019).

In Yobe state, the level of involvement of thugs “Yandaba” in different disruptive actions and health compromising activities (particularly, the use of psychoactive materials) has generated a lasting societal problem which needs the authority’s attention and necessary actions. Even though no definition was ascribed to Yandaba, they are simply describing a gang of armed unemployed youth, illiterates, criminals, who roam on the streets in the cities to perpetuate the criminal activities such as theft, bag snatching, armed robbery, rape etc. These thugs usually found in most of the cities of northern Nigeria particularly (Matusitz & Repass, 2009). These young men mostly come from the poor family and families with lower economic status, broken homes among others (Salaam, 2011). The school dropout phenomenon in Yobe has been in existence over the decades. It was examined that dropping out of school has been a major challenge that is in persistence increase and continuous to bedevil country’s education system long before the advent of the British colonial masters. Prior to that, the menace of school dropout established the grasp in Nigerian educational structure. These Yandaba are mostly products of the school dropout.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative research approach, utilizing two main methods for data collection. Primary data was gathered through a comprehensive review of documented literature, including articles and books, while secondary data was collected using semi-structured interview questions. The researchers conducted interviews with 15 participants from the Yobe community, all of whom possess extensive knowledge of *waqf* and Islamic economics. The interviews were conducted both in person and online, recorded in the Hausa language (One of the Nigerian native languages), and subsequently transcribed and translated into English. The participants included expert scholars specializing in *waqf* and Islamic finance, philanthropists, and members of associations or foundations focused on zakat and waqf activities in Yobe State. To ensure confidentiality and systematic analysis, the participants were coded as Participants (PT.1 to PT.15). This diverse group provided valuable insights into the subject, enriching the study's findings. In a wider sense, the views of these participants were used to supplement what was already collected from the available primary and secondary sources to make the discussion quite understandable. Therefore. Taking separately, each discussion goes together with documentary and verbose data. It is on this note that the data and analysis of this article were conducted, and this is what finally showcased the methodology used to achieve the desired objectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In an attempt to examine and highlight various issues that hinder the successful implementation of the Waqf particularly, in Yobe State, Nigeria, this article goes deep into various aspects of human endeavours and itemise the issues in the following discussion. It should be noted that the results of this article will be presented in headings and subheadings as can be seen in the details below:

Issues and Challenges

Causes of Unemployment, Insecurity, and Other Social Vices Among the Youth in Yobe State. Several factors contribute to the widespread issues of unemployment, insecurity, and social vices among the youth in Yobe State. One of the key causes can be summarized as follows:

a) Lack of Incentives in the Agricultural Sector

The agricultural sector holds significant potential to absorb and employ a large number of youths in Yobe State. However, this potential remains largely untapped due to inadequate emphasis and support from the state government. The sector, which could serve as a critical driver for youth employment, has not received the necessary financial backing or strategic incentives to stimulate growth and attract young people. Without adequate funding, training programs, and infrastructural support, the agricultural sector fails to offer viable opportunities for youth, leaving them vulnerable to unemployment. This neglect not only limits economic productivity but also indirectly contributes to insecurity and social vices as idle youth may turn to crime, drug abuse, or other harmful behaviors in the absence of constructive engagement. Addressing this issue requires targeted investments in the agricultural sector, including access to credit, modern farming tools, and training initiatives tailored to the needs and interests of young people.

Governments inability to support the youth in modern agricultural practices such as horticulture, poultry, fish farming have been the major cause for concern as it increases the unemployment rate among the youth in the state (PT.15).

Yobe state makes the most contribution to the agriculture industry. According to a study, Nigeria's biggest issues are caused by their inability to access natural and human resources (Omorogiuwa et al., 2014). Yobe in particular, 40% of the state's land is being cultivated while 75% of it is suited for agriculture. This shows that the state has a lot of areas it can concentrate on, which will address both the challenges of unemployment, agriculture and food security of the area.

In Yobe state, the groundnut, millet and guinea corn farming were the major business in the state and the leading employment provider, thousands of youths are engaged in either farming, harvesting, processing, selling, milling the oil from groundnut, and others, that makes the youth employed. But with the advent of petroleum resources and many entrepreneurs and the governments investing less in the agricultural sector, the unemployment rate continues to grow, and it has become a threat to national security. The attitude of the people of not wanting to develop agricultural sectors also leads to unemployment among the youth, especially those without formal education. A participant stated that:

...In the past there were no problems of youth empowerment because there is agriculture which is the major observant of human resources but now that agriculture is neglected people have abandoned farming and, they are concentrating in the areas of governance or in public sector and the public sector is very narrow it cannot employ many people (PT.1).

b) Lack of Experience and Employable Skills

Many graduates lack the essential skills demanded by employers, as well as the entrepreneurial abilities necessary to pursue self-employment opportunities. Studies indicate that in Africa, there is a significant disparity between the skills job seekers possess and those required by employers (Kent & Mushi, 1995). According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the unemployment rate is disproportionately high among individuals with post-secondary certificates, including graduates, compared to those with no formal education. This trend is closely linked to the mismatch between the skills, education, and qualifications graduates have and the requirements of the available job opportunities (Aminu, 2019).

Among the university graduates there are some who are deficient in interpersonal skills, decision making, critical thinking and computer literacy due to the poor system of the education, therefore, they may not be found worthy of employment in various ICT or computer based related jobs such as Banks and other private companies (PT.3).

c) Defective Nigerian Education System

The youth unemployment rate in Nigeria reached 29.7%, reflecting a 4.2% increase compared to 2017, according to the National Bureau of Statistics. One of the participants interviewed during the study expressed deep concern over the poor quality of education in the country, lamenting that:

"The education system in Nigeria does not equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the demands of the modern job market. Many graduates leave school without the competencies required by employers, leaving them ill-prepared for the workforce."

This sentiment underscores the critical need for reforms in the education sector to align curriculum and training with the realities of the labor market, thereby addressing the root causes of youth unemployment.

Poor quality of education, there is poor quality of education right from primary schools to secondary schools, tertiary institutions and even up to university level, because of the poor funding from the government and poor management of the educational sector. There is no conducive environment for better teaching and learning in most of our schools, no modern facilities, and no incentives and regular training for the teachers (PT.4).

Poor funding of the educational sector by the government of the federation is an indicator of defective and substandard quality of the nation's education. However, the federal government is spending below 20% of its budget on education and largely 70-80% of the expenditure is recurrent (Dumbuya, 2019). Etor, lamented that 7.04% was allocated to the educational sector in the 2017 budget, and this includes both capital and recurrent expenditures (Etor et al., 2020). "While UNESCO's benchmark for funding of education was 26% of the national budget and 6% of the gross domestic products (GDP), Nigeria has been allocating 6% of the national budget to the funding of its education" (Nduche et al., 2022).

The study shows that some of the developed countries are funding their educational sector sufficiently such as Lesotho 35.33 % of the GDP, Cuba 32.21%, Saudi Arabia 30.0, Oman 27.44% while Nigeria 5.94% of the GDP (World Bank). The phenomenon of allocating below 5 percent of the GDP to the educational sector will create a danger to the development and the quality of the nation's educational system (Dumbuya, 2019). A participant further reiterated that:

There is poor funding of the education sector from the government, the buildings are not up to standard, the quality of the staff, the quality of the teachers right from the primary and secondary and higher institutions is poor (PT.4).

Lack of funding in the state educational sector makes the schools inadequate, resulting in accommodating more than 100 pupils per teacher as against the standard UNESCO benchmark of 35 pupils per teacher (Ngware et al., 2011). The deterioration of educational sector of the country, the higher institutions are producing half-baked graduates, that makes the university graduate no longer a guarantee, as most of the graduates lacks technical expertise or communication skills (Adesugba & Mavrotas, 2016). Yearly, the nation's higher institutions of learning are producing hundreds of graduates who are not in demand in the labor market (Gbosi, 2005). In line with the above, one of the participants stated that:

Even the curriculum of university graduates, at times what they learnt in the university is not quite relevant in the field of their work. Many organizations must train and retrain them, which is additional cost so organizations such as banks for instance, want to employ readymade kinds of human resources if they don't find them you will see many people idle even though they have studied they have graduated (PT.1).

The Nigerian Universities have not satisfactorily improved the contents of their curricula to meet up with modern-day requirements of the labor market in terms of the skills needed by graduates to perform and be productive in their jobs (Pitan, 2017). It was in the year 1989, the National Universities Commission developed the Minimum Academic Standard for all the programs thought in the Nigerian Universities. After a decade in 2001, the commission initiated the process to revise the curriculum to suit the challenges of the labor market. Therefore, the curriculum needs to be up to date. The expected knowledge to be imparted to the undergraduates in the Universities is not only theoretical but they need practical knowledge that will make the students get the practical skills and experience relevant in the labor market (Pitan, 2017). It is believed that the skills acquired by the graduates in school were not adequate in meeting the skills requirements of their jobs. Therefore, the employers have to train and retrain the graduates to meet up with the requirements of the job, and this is the additional cost on the site of the employers (Pitan, 2017).

d) Corruption

Corruption refers to the unlawful actions of public and private sector employees who exploit their positions for personal gain and encourage others to do the same. It involves the abuse of entrusted power for self-enrichment. Systemic corruption, often referred to as entrenched corruption, occurs when bribery, whether monetary or otherwise, becomes a normalized aspect of dishonest relationships (Dike, 2005). Bureaucratic corruption, on the other hand, is prevalent in public administration and manifests in daily interactions in institutions such as schools, hospitals, police stations, and other public or private establishments. This form of corruption, often termed petty corruption, aligns with the concept of "corruption of need," where individuals secure benefits from public or private domains through inappropriate or unethical means (Holmes, 2015).

Several factors contribute to the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria, including the state of the political economy, weak governmental institutions,

and widespread poverty. The failure to enforce rules, uphold codes of ethics, and ensure fair judgments has further entrenched corrupt practices among many Nigerians. Corruption remains a significant barrier, particularly for the youth, limiting their access to employment and empowerment opportunities (Uddin, 2013). In line with the above, some of the interview participants stated that:

Due to the lack of secondary schools and universities that will accommodate the large number of applicants in the state, parents and guardians are using unorthodox ways to influence the admission of their children in to federal government secondary schools even obtaining admission to study in higher schools the children of well to do people get upper hand in securing the admissions especially in the competitive courses such as medicine, law, engineering leaving the children of poor with no option (PT.4).

Youth cannot get employment based on merit and competency, idea of merit does not count to place someone but religious background, sectional/regional place of origin, as well as tribal/ethnic affiliation.: youth with high social status or those from the family with good economic background tend to get opportunity of getting employed than those with the poor family background (PT.14).

e) Youth Engagement in Political Thuggery in Yobe State

Youth's involvement in thuggery activities in the country for sometimes was ascribed to the political class. Ruffians give definite meaning of thuggery as bad behavior or an act of violence. thuggery is synonymous with violence as their activities go hand in hand with each other. An act of killing, stealing, harassment, robbery, touting was classified as thuggery (Baldick, 1996). Political thuggery is an unlawful and forceful way of getting or remaining in a political office, in whatever means using armed youth to destroy election materials or to intimidate and harass voters (Howell, 2004). Some of the participants reiterated the effects of youth engagement in political thuggery among Yobe society and said thus:

Youth were recruited by the politicians vying for the political offices in desperation, resorting to use violent means to get to power or to remain in office at all costs. Therefore, they will recruit some youth, give them little money and intoxicating substances to destabilize the peace of the state (PT.10).

The increase in the number of unemployed youths, illiterates and drug addicts in the state, the increase in poverty rate, many people have little or nothing to take care of themselves, can easily be used and get paid by bad politicians to cause mayhem, harassed the voters, destabilized the state peace, and manipulate the election outcomes (PT.13).

Youth's socio- economic situations can made the politicians take the advantage of social status and weakness of these youth by giving them a meager amount of money to perpetuate violence, killed and destroy properties with the sole aim of achieving their political ambitions. The activities of violence and thuggery in Yobe state are mostly "carried out by youth whose members are openly recruited, financed, and sometimes armed by public officials, politicians, party officials, and their representatives" (PT.8).

f) Youth Inability to Continue with their Studies (School Dropout)

The significance of education to human development and the nation will not be over emphasized. Education was a great venture for any nation which aided technological development, human capital and economic growth. A persistent increase in violence, criminality and insecurity are perpetrated by those youth who are withdrawn from school untimely (Fafunwa, 1983). The respondent from the interview expresses their views as follows:

Persistent increases in violence, criminality and insecurity are perpetrated by those youth who are withdrawn from school untimely (PT.13).

A certificate from higher Institutions of learning in Nigeria which includes, bachelor's degree, Diploma and National School Certificate is considered to be minimum requirement for employment as various positions. Therefore, this has become a challenge for those who are withdrawn from the schools without obtaining any relevant certificate; the social wellbeing of such youth is at stake (PT.14).

The survey conducted by the UNICEF in 2015 revealed that about 13.2 million children in Nigeria are out of school. According to UNICEF 69% of these children come from the northern part of the country (Yobe inclusive). Even though some of these youth attended the Tsangaya Qur'anic schools,

but the government considered such youth as out of school. On the same vein a participant mentioned that:

In Yobe, a substantive number of children drop out of school every year, for various reasons which include financial incapability, health challenges, broken families, teachers' attitudes, and societal influence among others. The drop-out of school children has become a threat to peace and stability in the community. However, these children engage in criminal activities like theft, robbery, thuggery, and other social vices in society; eventually most of them end up in prisons for one crime or the other (PT.11).

DISCUSSION

This section highlights the findings of the study, presenting them alongside supporting evidence to address the issues identified in the results section of the article. The discussion is structured to ensure clarity and coherence, with the findings introduced first, followed by an in-depth analysis to enhance understanding for readers and researchers. The facts presented are systematically supplemented with explanations to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues and their potential solutions. Moreover, the discussion aligns closely with the results, ensuring consistency throughout the narrative. The subsequent recommendations are directly tied to the findings and discussions, offering practical and actionable solutions to the challenges outlined earlier in the study.

The Potential Role of Waqf to Youth Empowerment, Peace and Security in Yobe State

In view of the above-mentioned issues and challenges, it is therefore recommended the application of waqf mechanism as a solution to youth empowerment problems, insecurity and other social vices among the youth in Yobe state.

a) Youth Empowerment in Education

Higher education's emphasis on empowerment serves as a tool for personal development (Burton & Kagan, 1996). It fosters a person's potential for empowerment, prosperity, and intellectual growth (Tambak & Sukenti, 2024). The absolute and most important tool for bringing about sociopolitical and economic change was thought to be education.

Empowerments won't be possible without providing all children, particularly young women, with appropriate training (Gokaru & Nor, 2023).

The government policy stated that each state of the federation is entitled to at least one Federal University, Polytechnics and College of Education. Furthermore, the state governments of the whole nation established, and funds state owned University, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. Yobe has a population of about 3.5 million people as an estimate (Census, 2006) therefore, the two Universities cannot cater for the needs of the people, the facilities of the institutions are over stretched considering the teacher student ratio of 1:25 and the admission is highly competitive.

The Yobe state government established one primary school in each ward across all the local governments in the state. Due to the high number of people in a particular ward, one primary or secondary school is not enough for the number of people in the area which makes the schools overcrowded and subsequently resulted in the low quality of the education, and against the policy of student teacher ratio. Based on the interview, participants further illustrate that:

Yobe State is home to several waqf-based primary and secondary schools that play a vital role in providing education to youth and children across various communities. These institutions also create employment opportunities for youth as teachers and support staff. Among the notable waqf-based schools in the state are Chiroma Ibrahim Memorial Tahfeez School Potiskum, Ya Zahra Orphanage Foundation Potiskum, Maina Yusuf Qur'anic School Potiskum, Al-Istiqamah Foundation Damaturu, Yetim Care Foundation Damaturu, and Nurul Awlad Model School Nguru, alongside many others (PT.4).

Additionally, higher institutions of learning supported by waqf foundations contribute significantly to post-secondary education in specialized fields. For example, the Arabic and Islamic College of Education in Potiskum offers advanced learning opportunities through waqf initiatives (PT.11).

Philanthropists in the state have also played an essential role in supporting education. Some devote their wealth to assisting less-privileged youth who gain admission into higher institutions but cannot afford tuition or related expenses. Notable figures include Senator Ibrahim Mohammed Bomo, the late Alhaji Barau Potiskum, and others (PT.14).

One distinguished philanthropist, Alhaji Muhammad Umar Baradan Potiskum, has made substantial contributions to educational development in Yobe State, particularly in Yobe South. He established a waqf-based school that currently enrolls over 1,000 students, significantly enhancing access to education in the region (PT.12). These efforts demonstrate the transformative role of waqf and philanthropy in fostering educational growth and community development in Yobe State.

b) Youth Empowerment in the Health Care Sector

Health is a critical indicator of societal development and well-being, as the prosperity of any society is closely tied to its ability to provide effective healthcare services. In Yobe State, however, a significant challenge lies in financing the healthcare sector. According to the World Health Organization (2013), the rising cost of healthcare services disproportionately affects the uninsured, poor, and low-income groups, forcing many to either bear the high costs of treatment or forego necessary medical care, risking further health complications and potential loss of livelihood. One measure of healthcare service quality is the availability of hospital beds for inpatient care, which serves as a core indicator. This is calculated by dividing the total population by the number of inpatient hospital beds and multiplying the result to provide an actionable ratio (Zainol & Elsawa, 2018).

This score is determined by dividing the total population by the number of inpatient hospital beds, which is then multiplied (Zainol & Elsawa, 2018). Historically, during the Islamic era, healthcare facilities were often funded through waqf (endowments). These waqf earnings were used to finance comprehensive social services, including healthcare, covering patient expenses, providing salaries for doctors and trainees, and constructing medical facilities (Khan, 2013). In Yobe State, the government has established a network of healthcare facilities, including primary healthcare units or dispensaries in every ward, hospitals in each local government area, and general and specialist hospitals at the state level. Despite these efforts, the current healthcare infrastructure remains insufficient to meet the demands of the growing population, leaving gaps in service delivery and accessibility. In the same way, participants strongly expressed that:

Empowerment in the health care services will allow the increase of the health care service's recipients to participate, understand and impact on their health status (PT.13).

Sunnah Clinic Fika is one of the waqf-based clinics in Yobe, located at Fika town the clinic has provided health care services to uncountable people in the area as almost every day 10 to 15 people received treatment in that clinic, and the clinic has about 7 staff and are receiving salary every month (PT.11).

Jamaatu Izalatul Bid'ah Wa Iqamatissunna Potiskum branch has launched a clinic at Rugar Fulani Potiskum and dedicated to communities for the benefit of the youth, poor, women, and less privilege people in the society. This clinic is providing health care services to any people especially youth, children, and women. It was gathered that the clinic attends at least 20 to 30 patients daily and has about 9 staff (PT.12).

Islamic Medical Association of Nigeria (IMAN) Yobe chapter are giving financial assistance to the less privilege patients in some hospital of the state, also presently the association is planning of build and equip a theater and diagnostic complex at the specialist hospital in Damaturu. This will help the Yobe people and reduce the rate of mortality and the cost of going to the neighboring state for medical services (PT.15).

Some foundations in Yobe state are giving financial assistance to the poor people who cannot afford hospital charges, some of these philanthropists deposit a huge amount of money in the different hospitals such as Sadaqat al-Jariya for the benefits of the patients that cannot afford their hospital bills (PT.7).

c) Youth Empowerment in Vocational Skills

Skills acquisition and vocational skills are prime ingredient for jobs creations, wealth generation, satisfying the market demands and improving the economy “Skills-acquisition is a scientific knowledge that gives a man the ability to use hand and or machine for the purpose of production, maintenance and self-reliant” (Fakae, 2005). Some of the participants have articulated that:

Apart from the income and financial support, needy and poor people need skills, capacity building, training, and skills enhancement that will help them to be self- reliant, achieve social security and get out of poverty (PT.4).

There are a number of illiterate and out-of-school young adults in Yobe. Therefore, more emphasis should be given to vocational and technical skills for youth by the waqf institutions, such as furniture making, soap making, leather work, tailoring and many more. This will assist the youth to be self-employed, develop a peaceful and prosperous Yobe state (PT.2).

Some philanthropists in Yobe state have established various centers that are taking the responsibilities of educating and training the youth in different vocational skills, in which they learnt a skill and upon graduation they will be given some amount of money to set up their own businesses. These vocational training include carpentry, welding, tailoring among others (PT.8).

Business and Engineering Skill Acquisition Centers across Yobe own by the state government have taken the responsibility of training the youth in various skills so as to be independent and provide peace in the state. Every year they used to train the youth as follows: Carpentry, bag making, plumbing, tailoring and other lather works (PT.10).

A non- governmental organization has empowered hundreds of youths in various vocational skills, such as: welding and fabrication, tailoring, motor mechanic, tricycle machine repairs, air condition and refrigerator repairs, carpentry/joinery, masonry, leather works, GSM repairs, electrical installation, satellite installation. This gesture is making an important impact on the youth and peace of the Yobe society (PT.14).

d) Youth Empowerment in the Agricultural Sector

The agricultural sector in Nigeria has contributed to the Nations GDP as it contributed more than half among the other sectors, export earnings of about 70% and more than 70% of nations population lives in rural areas and mostly are farmers (Lawal, 2019). It was found that Islamic Micro Finance has the ability through collective actions to empower the youth through human capital by adopting and benefiting from the agricultural innovations to generate more income for peace and sustainable development through IWS (Khan, 2015). Modern Agriculture has provided almost 30% of the employment to the Nigerian youth as of 2010 which includes, poultry, horticulture, cash crop and food crop farming among others. "Labour Force Statistics, 2010". Agricultural sector has been the major observant of human labor, in 1960s to 1970s the sector provided more than 60% of the Nigerian

workforce (Adesina, 2013). Based on the above, two of the participants stated that:

In Yobe state, farming was the major business in the state and the leading employment provider. Thousands of youths are engaged in either farming, harvesting, processing, selling, milling the ground nut oil, and others, that makes the youth employed. But with the advent of petroleum resources and subsequent neglect of the agricultural sector, the unemployment rate continues to grow, and it has become a threat to national security (PT.9).

Many people give out lands as waqf, these lands are utilized for farming, and crops cultivations, and a portion of these agricultural products are shared between the farmers and waqf institutions, this gesture is providing employment opportunities to any youth as well as improving the state economy (PT.14).

CONCLUSION

The importance of waqf institutions in a Muslim society, particularly in Yobe State, cannot be overstated. Historically, waqf institutions have played a pivotal role in the socioeconomic development of communities, offering essential services to people free of charge. In the context of Yobe State, the establishment of such institutions is vital to address pressing societal needs, including youth empowerment, and to promote peace within the state. The lack of effective youth empowerment programs in areas such as education, healthcare, entrepreneurship, and vocational training—primarily due to the inaction of both the government and affluent individuals—has led to various social challenges. These include high rates of unemployment, drug addiction, school dropouts, street hawking, and prostitution. Despite these challenges, the existing waqf institutions and philanthropic efforts in Yobe State have positively impacted youth by providing empowerment opportunities in diverse ways. This highlights the need to expand and strengthen such initiatives. To maximize the benefits of waqf institutions, individuals should be encouraged to recognize the societal and spiritual value of contributing to waqf. Acts of generosity towards waqf are not only beneficial for the community but are also rewarded by Allah. Modern waqf financing methods, such as cash waqf, can be utilized to support youth empowerment programs. These funds can be channelled through Islamic financial tools like Mudharaba (profit-sharing), Musharaka (partnership), and Qard al-Hassan (benevolent loans). To mobilize resources effectively,

innovative methods such as share waqf, the mobile recharge card model, and direct contributions should be adopted. These approaches can ensure a sustainable flow of funds, enabling waqf institutions to empower youth and foster the overall development of the community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No acknowledgment

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The researchers hereby declare that there are no conflicts of interest in relation to this research or the writing of this article. All data, findings, and interpretations presented are free from any external influence, including financial, personal, or professional, that could compromise the integrity and objectivity of the research outcomes.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Ibrahim Dahiru Idriss wrote the original research idea and drafted the manuscript for this article. Ismail Mamat and Adibah Abdul Rahim completed the literature review, edited the content, and supervised the overall writing of the article. All authors have reviewed and approved the final version of this article.

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LIST OF AUTHORS:

Dr. Ibrahim Dahiru Idriss (Corresponding author)*
Senior Lecturer
Department of Usul al-Din and Comparative Religion
International Islamic University Malaysia
53100 Gombak,
Selangor Malaysia
E-mail: ibrahimdahiruidriss@gmail.com

Assistant Prof. Dr. Adibah Abdul Rahim
Senior Lecturer
Department of Usul al-Din and Comparative Religion
International Islamic University Malaysia
53100 Gombak,
Selangor Malaysia
E-mail: adibahar@iium.edu.my

Assistant Prof. Dr. Ismail Mamat
Senior Lecturer
Department of Usul al-Din and Comparative Religion
International Islamic University Malaysia
53100 Gombak,
Selangor Malaysia
E-mail: ismail.m@iium.edu.my