Trust and Networking in Cross Sector Collaboration of Waqf Development and the Mediating Role of Sustainability Practices: Higher Order Models in PLS-SEM

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Cross-sector collaboration in waqf development is an innovative strategy that has received much industry attention. The government is also very supportive as it is in line with the national agenda to promote socioeconomic growth. However, not all collaborations have productive results. A successful collaboration is dependent upon the existence and utilisation of resources. Using a higher-model application in SEM-PLS, trust and networking in Resource-Based View (RBV) theory were assessed in this study. A set of questionnaires were distributed to a total number of 160 respondents. The findings of the study showed that trust plays a significant role in the performance of waqf project development in Malaysia between State Islamic Religious Councils (SIRCs) and partners, while networking showed contrastingly. Sustainable practices confirmed their role as mediating variables between trust, networking and performance in this study, thus making the findings more valuable. This study provides insight into the regulator as well as the industry on the critical resources that are needed to efficiently manage collaborative waqf projects with the intention of ensuring socioeconomic growth.

Key words: *Cross-Sector Collaboration, Waqf Development, Trust, Networking, Sustainability Practices.*

Introduction

Waqf has played a prominent role in the history of Islam, from the days of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) to the early 19th century (Ismail Abdel Mohsin, 2013). In modern times, waqf and its impressive ability to facilitate socioeconomic development has received great interest from the industry. The role played by waqf in establishing sustainable growth of financial resources and addressing social disparity should be supported with strong development of waqf assets and effective management and implementation. The management of waqf was granted to the State Islamic Religious Councils (SIRC) since1952 (Mohamad, Syed Abdul Kader, & Ali, 2012). To date, SIRC is the official sole trustee of waqf in Malaysia.

Given its contributions to the Muslim Ummah, there is a need to establish and sustain waqf in the world, specifically in Malaysia. However, prior research had highlighted the many issues and challenges in managing waqf property by SIRC. Among the issues and challenges in managing waqf property are; legal constraint of Malaysian land administration systems, insufficient funds, lack of marketability and unproductive waqf assets, misused waqf assets, the lack of resources, knowledge and management skills, outdated data and confiscation of ownership rights by heirs from SIRC… as well as the lack of awareness of waqf among Muslims (Abas & Raji, 2018; Mohd Puad, Jamlus Rafdi, & Shahar, 2014; Allah Pitchay, Mohd Thas Thaker, Mydin, Azhar, & Abdul Latiff, 2018; Baqutayan, Ariffin, Mohsin, & Mahdzir, 2018). Moreover, most of the waqf land is developed in a traditional way. It was estimated that less than 30% of the total acreage had been developed for other purposes – for example shop/ houses, rented houses, petrol stations, and agriculture (Abdul Hamid & Mohammad, 2014). Another report presented by Omar (2016) confirmed that there are 30,000 hectares of waqf land, but only 12% (3,600 hectares) has been developed, whilst the remaining 88% (26,400 hectares) remains idle. YWM (2016) and Zakaria, Hassan, and Abdul Latiff (2014) have also published similar concerns specifying only less than 10% of the total waqf land in Malaysia has been developed.

Such underperformance of waqf properties' development will cause a substantial loss to the national socioeconomic growth. Future research is needed in this significant area since the development of waqf is not sustained due to lack of waqf development growth. Responding to this issue, the cooperation among various sectors can bring forth solutions to the underperformance of waqf development in Malaysia which contributes to socioeconomic development.

Collaborative efforts require expertise from a wide range of sectors in order to find solutions for issues which on their own organisations may struggle to solve. This method is increasingly popular due to the shortage of resources. Furthermore, all sectors involved stand to reap the benefit garnered from the multiplier effect of the collaborative process. The collaborative

relationships between the State Islamic Religious Council (SIRC) and firms are becoming more widespread and are vital to all parties involved. An amalgamation of social, economic and environmental demands are the driving force behind these collaborations (Austin, 2010). This is consistent with the government's aim to reach socioeconomic sustainability through collaborative relationships between the social sector, private firms and the government. It is to be carried out by providing social services which contribute towards sustainability while tackling social issues and inequalities. This is also known as "Social Private and Public Partnership" or SPPP, which was initiated by The National Blue Ocean Strategy (NBOS) and incorporated in the 11th Malaysia Plan (RMK-11).

However, these initiatives are not spared from controversy. Earlier cases indicate that not all collaborations were successful or easy to navigate, no matter how thorough the process was. There is also insufficient foresight and planning as to the strategic division of resources and expenses (Liket & Maas, 2016; Porter & Kramer, 2006; Ricks & Peters, 2013). Therefore, the capacities of the intangible resources utilised within the waqf cross-sector collaboration are vital for its success and impact on sustainable socioeconomic growth (J. B. Barney, 1991). The collective resources of a firm and its partners are crucial in guaranteeing a successful collaborative project on the basis of strong performance and a competitive edge. The favourable outcome of a collaboration is also contingent upon the available intangible resources, namely connection, trust, urgency and commitment (J. B. Barney, 1991; J. B. Barney, Ketchen, & Wright, 2011; J. Barney, Wright, & Ketchen, 2001; Delai & Takahashi, 2011; Putnam, 1993). Subsequently, this study hopes to clarify the concept of organising intangible resources and their relationship with performance in project collaboration.

Therefore, the objective of this study was to assess the availability of resources between the SIRC and its partner in a waqf development project. A set of questionnaires was distributed among SIRCs and partners who had participated in any waqf project development in Malaysia through a cross-sector collaboration strategy. The current study aims to find the significant variable which most contributes to the performance of collaborative projects in order to provide a deeper perspective regarding the function of waqf project collaboration, in view of achieving the goal of sustainable socioeconomic development. The addition of the mediating variable to the research framework is considered a novelty in this study.

Thus, the variables within the conceptual framework of this study were established as follows; intangible resources (trust and networking) in cross-sector collaboration as the independent variable, with project performance as a dependent variable. Then, sustainability practices were determined to be the mediating variable of the study. The remainder of this paper was organised as follows: the second section discussed the cross-sector collaboration strategy in waqf development using Resource-Based View (RBV) theory as the independent variable that influenced the performance of the collaborative project. The third section explains the research

methodology employed in this study. Research findings are reviewed and discussed in section four, and the final section highlights the conclusion and gap for future research.

Cross Sector Collaboration in Waqf Development from the Perspective of Resource Based View Theory

Waqf is an endowment established to form socioeconomic justice that can bring empowerment to the Muslim community. The goals of waqf are to provide the donor with the chance of obtaining perpetual rewards, meet the requirements of those in need, and offer socioeconomic advantages to the community while guaranteeing the perpetuity of waqf assets. In Malaysia, the management and development of waqf are basically under the jurisdiction of the State Islamic Religious Council (SIRC) of each state. All fourteen states in Malaysia have an SIRC and their own enactment to be followed. The SIRC of each state will determine the available strategies, resources and approaches with regards to waqf development in Malaysia. Examples of these approaches include the use of internal funding to develop waqf assets (Abdul Latif, Syahiran & Bahrom, 2008; Omar & Rahman, 2015), obtaining funding from the state government, combined funds from waqf donors and the SIRC or collaboration between corporate organisations, SIRCs and Government-linked companies (GLCs) (Mujani & Yaakub, 2017). Finally, there are strategies such as leasing land and allowing the leaseholder to develop the property (Noor, Ghazali, & Rani, 2016) or establishing Istibdal over the land (Omar & Rahman, 2015), whereby capital is liquidated for development purposes.

Despite this, nuances exist in how agreement regarding objectives can be established among the parties participating in strategic collaboration. Examples of collaborative waqf projects include UDA Holdings with the Penang Islamic Religious Council (MAINPP) for the Wakaf Setee Aisyah project, Universiti Islam Malaysia with the Selangor Wakaf Corporation, Sultan Zainal University Abidin (UNISZA) with the Terengganu Religious and Customs Council (MAIDAM) for the purpose of waqf development in higher education, and finally Bank Islam Malaysia Berhad (BIMB and its partnership with Wilayah Persekutuan Islamic Religious Council (MAIWP). These undertakings proved collaboration within a polycentric governance context is possible. The following sub-section will highlight some successful efforts to develop waqf assets through cross-sector collaboration.

To ensure a successful collaboration between the strategic practice of waqf, the resources between the SIRC and firms play a role in attaining a sustainable competitive advantage from the collaboration and society (J. Barney et al., 2001). The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory has indicated that the resources in RBV will rely on the classification of whether they are tangible or intangible resources (Abu Bakar & Ahmad, 2010; Branco & Rodrigues, 2006). For the tangible resources, J. Barney et al., (2001) had categorised the resources as a physical or financial capital including cost savings and improved efficiency due to partnership

involvement, while intangible resources had been categorised as human capital, including knowledge gained due to engagement in the partnership. Intangible resources, trust and networking play an important role in the success of the cross-sector collaboration process in the relationship context (J. B. Barney, 2018; Freeman, 2015; Putnam, 1993; Putnam1, 2001; Ray, Barney, & Muhanna, 2004). In order to ensure that collaboration is sustainable over the long term, it is vital to prepare for efficient resource management, while taking into account the various stages of collaboration, transformation and any potential obstacles or disagreements that may arise in the course of the collaborative activities.

This section discusses the variables in this study: performance as a dependent variable focussed on the performance of the waqf project collaboration. This study chose to look at both the perspective of financial as well as non-financial performance in the measurement. Financial performance focussed on the revenue, profit and growth. However, the non-financial performance aspect focussed on member's satisfaction as well as loyalty. The study done by Ngah, Zainuddin, & Thurasamy (2014) and Neill & Rose (2006) and the Collaboration Performance Index was incorporated in this study.

Trust is another variable that looks at the trust that the organisation has towards its partner in the collaboration which focussed on two dimensions; the credibility of the partners trusted (organisational trust) and the emotional trust towards the partner (cognition-based trust). The data for the variable trust was obtained using an established questionnaire from McAllister (1995). Networking in this study denotes how well an organisation managed its relationship with other parties, including collaborations with organisations that helped to reduce cost and duplication of efforts (Roshayani, Norzaihan, Sharina, & Ahmed, 2018). In this study, networking was measured from the perspective of tradition and innovation which are: "offline networking" as well as "online networking". This was adapted from the studies by Palacios-Marqués, Merigó, & Soto-Acosta (2015) and Acquaah (2012). The sustainability portion looks at organisational sustainability, which was adopted from Elkington theory (Wijethilake (2017); Chow & Chen (2012), focussing on three dimensions; environmental, economic and society. A total of twelve questions were chosen in this study that represented organisational sustainability.

Methodology

In an effort to tackle the objectives stated, this study employed a quantitative study in order to determine the positive relationship between intangible resources (commitment, trust, networking and urgency) and the performance of waqf project development through cross-sector collaboration in Malaysia. Data was gathered through a questionnaire which was distributed to an expert with knowledge and experience related to all waqf development projects in Malaysia, with collaboration with other sectors. The partners of the project (firm)

were also counted to be respondents of the study. The questionnaire was distributed through mail or personally by hand with a short briefing on the study.

The non-probability sampling method was used in selecting respondents as a unit of analysis to make up the sample since there is no exact number of population of sampling frame in this study. Purposive sampling was used in this study to decide on the unit of analysis where the respondent was selected based on expertise and knowledge in the area being researched. The key players of cross-sector collaboration – the State Islamic Religious Councils (SIRCs) in fourteen states in Malaysia and their partners in the waqf development project in Malaysia – were selected as a respondent of the study. The beneficiaries in the said project were excluded from the study. This is because the main objective of this study is to understand how the intangible resources owned by the SIRCs and their partners can significantly affect the performance of project collaboration and thus in turn effect organisational sustainability. Hence, only respondents who could provide the required information were selected as respondents.

Then, the research model was assessed using partial least square technique (PLS) as the primary approach. The Smart-PLS software version 3.0 was employed to test the proposed hypotheses in this study. The PLS analysis was displayed within a measurement model and structural model. The measurement model was tested in terms of the reliability of internal consistency, which involved item reliability, composite reliability, convergence validity and discriminatory instruments. Hypotheses and structural models were assessed by testing the value of R^2 (the variant described), the impact of the F^2 size, the significant path coefficients, and the Q^2 value test (the relevant prediction of the study model). Since trust was tested as a higher-model approach in PLS-SEM, two-stage through repeated indicator approach is tested to measure significant relationship between the two dimensions in trust. After that, the intermediary relationship was investigated on the basis of the T-value to ascertain the indirect significant impact (Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010).

The current study will tackle the knowledge gap by presenting an analytical framework and empirical illustrations for a stronger comprehension of the collaboration process. In particular, the resources and components which determine the performance of project collaboration from the perspective of waqf. Figure 1 illustrates how the study was conducted through a research framework. Thus, the variables within the conceptual framework of this study were established as follows; project performance was assigned as a dependent variable, trust and networking in cross-sector collaboration as the independent variable and finally, sustainability practices as the mediating variable of the study.

Figure 1. Research Framework
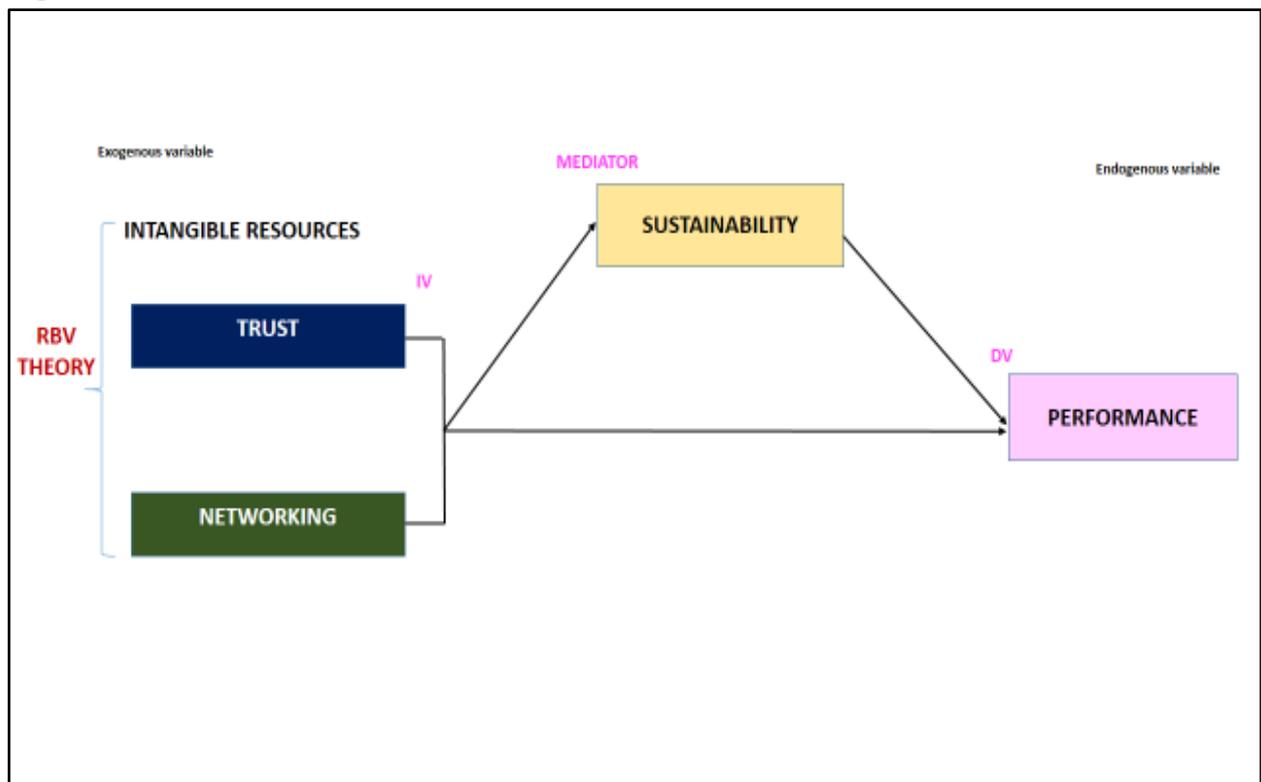
Results and Analysis

Out of the 160 sets of questionnaires distributed, only 153 samples could be used after performing data cleaning using ZScore for detecting outliers. A single-common-method factor was applied. The possibility of a common influence across all responses was first assessed by applying Harman's one-factor test. Using a factor analysis, no single factor that explained the variance across all the items was identified. This suggested that a monomethod bias was unlikely. Then in this section, descriptive analysis adhered for reporting. Next, the reliability and validity of the measurement model PLS were reported.

Descriptive Analysis

Demographically, the majority of respondents involved in this study were from the Islamic Religious Councils (SIRCs), with a total of 82 from total respondents of 153 which can be translated to 53.5% of total respondents. It was followed by the public and private sectors, and finally from foundations and regulators. Most of the 45 respondents also held positions of middle management, which was equivalent to 29.4% of total respondents. The majority of respondents, 64 in total (41.8% of total respondents), were involved in cross-sector collaboration projects for about 1-3 years.

Assessment of Reflective Measurement Model

The values of the indicator loadings, reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability were obtained in the measurement model assessment. Figure 2 shows the main constructs of the study as well as the dimensions of each. The PLS route model was formed in this stage to examine the level of reliability and validity of the study. Subsequent subsections showed the findings for each level of analysis used to evaluate the validity of the measurement model of this study.

Figure 2. Measurement model of the Study
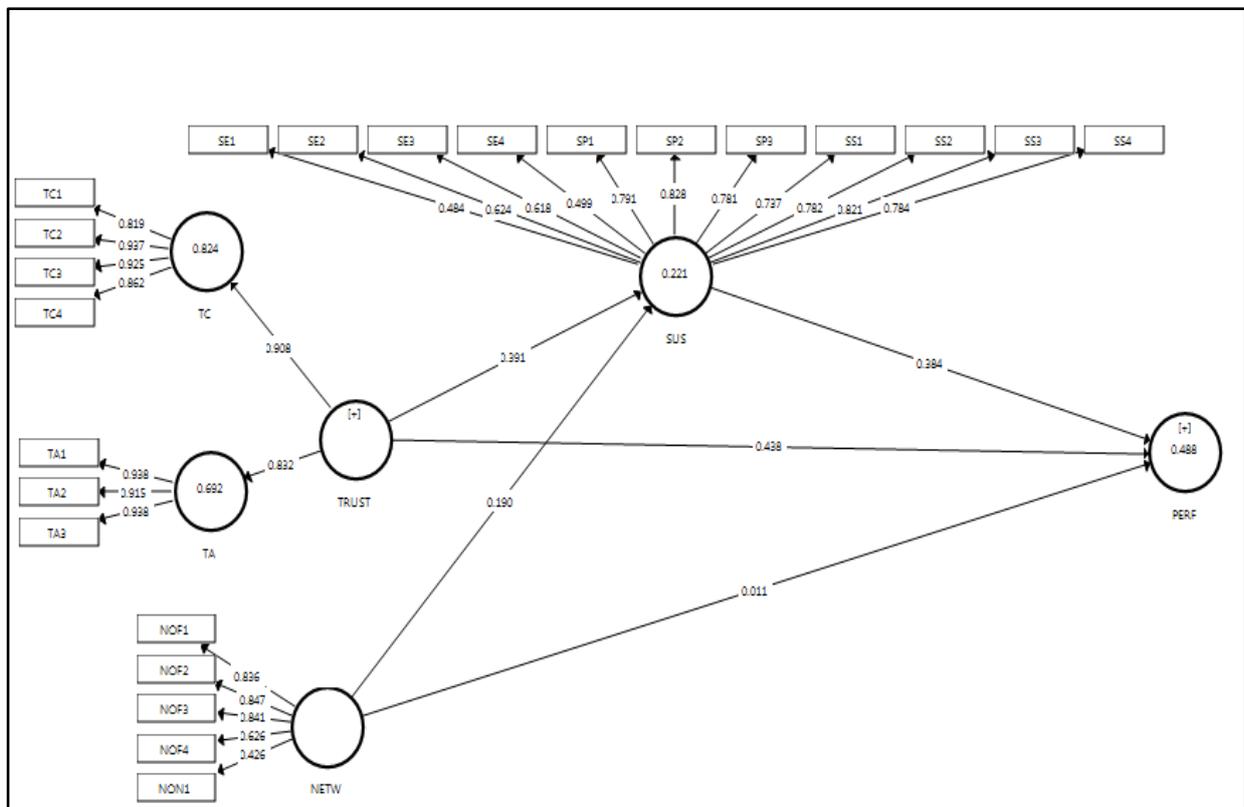
a) *Analysis of Internal Consistency Reliability*

Composite reliability is used as the measurement of internal consistency reliability in PLS-SEM due to its ability to measure the reliability of indicators differently, which therefore follows the PLS-SEM algorithm that emphasises individual indicator reliability. CR value for each construct exceeds the value minimum set, ie above 0.70 (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012; Jorg Henseler, 2009) Table 1 confirms that the constructs of this study have a high degree of reliability (refer to figure 2), indicating adequate convergence or internal consistency were satisfactory in this study.

Table 1: Analysis of Internal Consistency Reliability

Construct	Composite Reliability
Trust	0.921
Networking	0.847
Performance	0.931
Sustainability	0.918

b) Analysis of Convergent Validity

The validity of the construct was tested on the basis of convergence and discrimination validity (Hair et al., 2012; Jorg Henseler, 2009). Table 2 indicated the AVE value in which to confirm adequate convergent validity of the study using a value ranging from 0 and 1. AVE should exceed 0.5 to suggest adequate convergent validity (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Larcker, 1981). All items in the constructs explain more of the 50% of the construction variants. On average, each construct relates more strongly to its own measures than to others. Three items had been deleted from a networking construct (NOF4, NON3, and NON4) to achieve a satisfactory AVE level.

Table 2: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) For Convergent Validity

Construct	AVE
Trust	0.627
Networking	0.540
Performance	0.553
Sustainability	0.511

c) Analysis of Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity in the measurement model was tested based on Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) criteria (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). Table 3 shows the discrimination validity test results. Based on the results, assuming the value of HTMT <0.90, it showed that the constructs of the study attained discriminant legitimacy. It also explained that each construct was different from the other. Based on this, researchers moved forward to structuring a model for hypothesis testing.

Table 3: Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) criteria

	NETW	PERF	SUS	TRUST
NETW				
PERF	0.21			
SUS	0.282	0.575		
TRUST	0.255	0.717	0.521	

d) Analysis of Indicator Validity for Higher-Order Constructs

The Indicator Validity Test was conducted to obtain the path coefficients between the second order reflective and first-order reflective constructs that served as indicators. The bootstrapping procedure was carried out by drawing a large number of subsamples with replacements where the drawn sample is returned to the sampling population before the next sample is picked (Henseler et al., 2015). The significance of path coefficient was conducted by applying the bootstrapping procedure with 5000 subsamples. Table 4 below presents the results of indicator validity for the second-order reflective reconstructs.

**Table 4:** Indicator Validity: Second-Order Reflective Measurement Model

Second-Order	Paths Constructs	Beta	t-Statistics	p-Values	Significance
Trust	TRUST > TA	0.832	33.013	0.000	Significant
	TRUST > TC	0.908	78.197	0.000	Significant

As shown in the table above, all items in the second-order reflective model identified are significant for the relationships between commitment, trust and performance as a construct with a p-value of 0.0000. Hence, the significant first-order reflective constructs in this model were maintained and established for further analysis in the structural model.

Assessment of Reflective Structural Model - Two-stage Approach

This study applied a hierarchical latent variable model consisting of first-order reflective and second-order reflective constructs in which the indicators of the first-order constructs are also used as the indicators for the second-order constructs. Therefore, a two-stage approach was conducted to determine the relationships between the constructs in the structural model (Hair et al., 2012). Figure 3 summarises the latent variable codes of the first-order constructs that served as variables for the second-order constructs.

Figure 3. Structural model of the Study
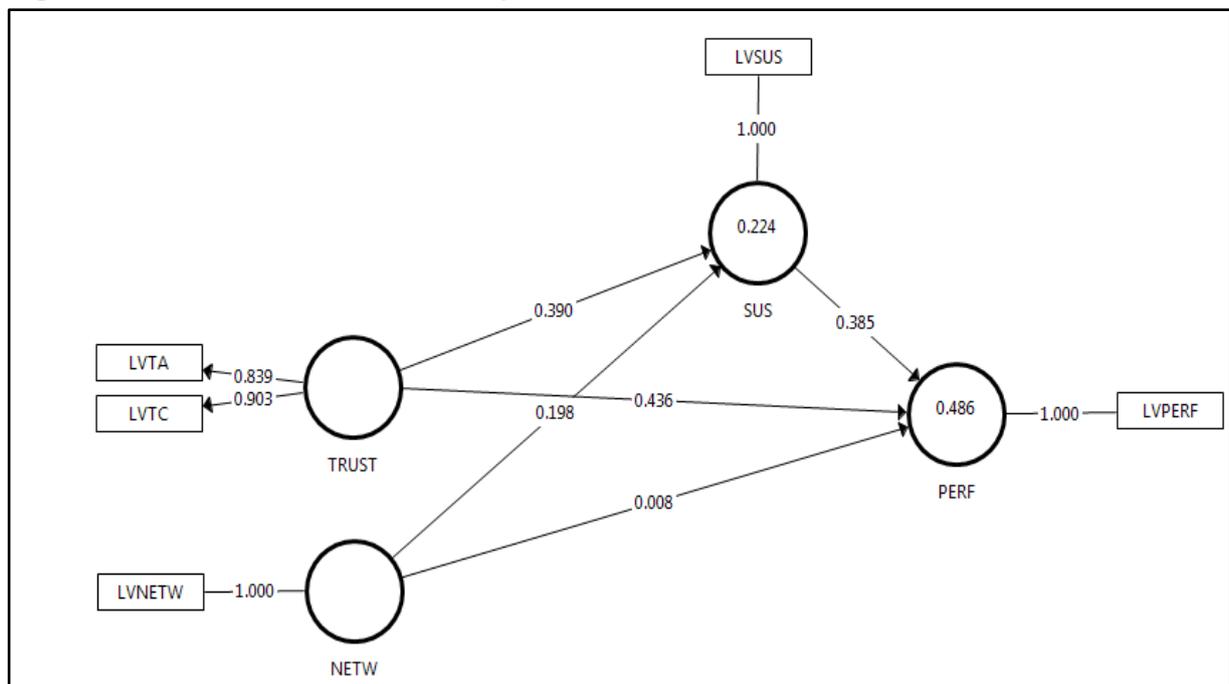
Next, to assess a structural model in this study, the collinearity, significance and relevance, the accuracy of forecast R2, significant effect of path coefficient, the effect of f2 size, and prediction relevant Q2 commenced via the bootstrap test. The assessment of the structural model was conducted once the reliability and validity of the indicators in the measurement model assessment were confirmed. Hair et al. (2012) suggested the five-step procedure below for assessing the structural model:

i.   Assessing collinearity issues
ii.   Assessing the significance and relevance of the structural model relationships
iii. Assessing the level of R2
iv.   Assessing the effect sizes (f2)
v.   Assessing the predictive relevance Q2.

a) Assessing the Structural Model for Collinearity Issues

The results in Table 5 below indicate the values of collinearity for trust, networking and sustainability as predictors of performance ranging from 1.088 to 1.284, which are less than the threshold values of 5. Therefore, the collinearity between the constructs is not an issue in the structural model (Hair et al., 2012).

Table 5: Analysis of Multicollinearity construct

Construct	VIF
Trust	1.233
Networking	1.088
Sustainability	1.284

b) Assessing the Significance and Relevance of the Structural Model Relationships

In the structural model, each route connects two variables and represents one hypothesis. The following procedure is the assessment of the significance and relevance of the structural model relationships by determining the significance of the path coefficients of the hypothesised relationships in the structural model. Table 6 below shows the estimation of the path coefficient in the model structures rated on beta (β) and t-statistic as well as p value through a bootstrapping procedure (Hair et al., 2012; Henseler et al., 2014). The findings of the coefficient path indicate that only one hypothesis of trust toward performance was significant, while hypothesis H2 is not.

Table 6: Results of the Significance in Structural Model Relationships

	Hypotheses	β	t-Statistics	p-Values	95% Confidence Intervals	Results
H1	TRUST-HC > PERF	0.436	7.087	0.0000	0.440	Supported
H2	NETW > PERF	0.008	0.12	0.452	0.098	Not Supported

Note:

β: path coefficient

*P<0.05 (one-tailed t>1.645)

c) Accuracy of Forecast (R2)

The value of R2 refers to the amount of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variable. The greater the R2 value, the higher the ability of independent variables to predict dependent variables. This value is categorised as large based on the guide R2 = 0.75 (large), 0.50 (moderate), and 0.25 (weak) (Hair et al., 2012; Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014). Table 5 shows that trust and networking attempt to explain 50% variance in performance and 22% variance in sustainability practices. Thus, it indicated that there are other constructs of independent variables that can explain the performance and sustainability in this study.

Table 7: Analysis of Accuracy (R2)

Construct	R2
Performance	0.486
Sustainability	0.224

d) Effect Size (f2)

The effect of f2 size was evaluated when a construct was removed from the structural model to observe the effect on the dependent variable. Table 8 below shows the effect of the size of the structural model. Networking had a large effect while sustainability and trust showed a small effect level as stated by Hair et al., (2011) and Henseler et al., (2014) on guidelines f2 = 0.02 (small), 0.15 (moderate), and 0.35 (large).

Table 8: Analysis of Path Coefficient and Effect Size

Construct	F2
Networking - Performance	0.000
Networking - Sustainability	0.048
Sustainability - Performance	0.223
Trust - Performance	0.297
Trust - Sustainability	0.187

e) Prediction Relevant (Q2)

The Q2 forecast tests to see the model's ability to forecast dependent variables from the assessment of R2 forecast accuracy. According to Hair et al., (2011), if the value of Q2 on the dependent variable is greater than zero, then the independent variables have relevant predictions on the dependent variable (Henseler et al., 2014). Table 9 below shows results of all values exceeding standard ie., greater than zero. Therefore, this finding is generally supportive of the projection of the PLS route model used in this study (Hair et al., 2012; Henseler et al., 2014).

Table 9: Analysis of Predictive Relevant (Q2)

Construct	Q2
Performance	0.466
Sustainability	0.201

Mediating Effect Analysis of Sustainability Practices to Performance

Mediating analysis in this post-hoc analysis has been used to validate the role of mediating variables as an intermediary between the relationships of the independent and dependent variables.

Henseler et al., (2009) stated that in the structural model, among the most important measurements in studying the direct and indirect relationships is the intermediate analysis or mediating analysis. With the aim of testing the mediation hypotheses, the study applied the analytical approach described by Hayes & Rockwood (2016). Table 10 shows the mediating effect of sustainability practices through a confidence interval of between 2.5% to 97.5% not including 1 – indicating that the effect of sustainability practices as a moderating variable in this study is significant.

Table 10: Specific Indirect Mediating Analysis

	β	t-Statistics	p-Values	2.5%	95%	Results
NETW -> SUS -> PERF	0.076	2.641	0.004	0.017	0.129	Supported
TRUST -> SUS -> PERF	0.15	4.431	0	0.085	0.219	Supported

Note:
β: path coefficient
*P<0.05 (one-tailed t>1.645)

Conclusion and Recommendation

The research findings have revealed the significant effect of the intangible resources, namely trust and networking, on the performance of waqf project collaborations between the SIRCs and their partners. A positive significant direct effect of trust as intangible resources on the performance of waqf project collaborations has been reflected in the results. Contrastingly, networking as an intangible resource has demonstrated a negative significant direct effect in this study, suggesting that this resource is yet to be established in the relationship between the SIRCs and their partners in the waqf properties' development in Malaysia. It can be deduced that hypotheses H1 is supported by the research findings, while hypothesis H2 is not supported.

Then, a significant mediating effect has been discovered such that sustainability as a mediating variable in this study significantly mediates the relationship between trust and networking and the performance of waqf project collaborations. It has also been discovered that hypotheses H3 and H4 show a partial mediation effect; hence supporting the findings of this study. Accordingly, these results support the initial objectives of this study.

Meanwhile, having concluded the findings based on the hypothesis mentioned previously, the study highlights the contribution of this study based on four categories to show the significance of the study. First, the contribution to the industry highlighting the practical contribution to the SIRCs as well as the government or national policy. Second, the academic contribution to the body of literature, i.e. filling the gap of knowledge regarding the topic of cross-sector collaborations specifically concerning the waqf properties development in terms of resource management. Third, the theoretical contribution which focusses on the integration of existing theories. Finally, the methodological contribution which entails the proposal of a comprehensive model of cross-sector collaboration for developing waqf properties in Malaysia in achieving sustainable socioeconomic growth as a whole.

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