

## Beyond Certification: Professional Identity And Practice Readiness Among Newly Certified Waqf *Nazhir* In Urban Indonesia

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### Abstract

Professional certification is increasingly promoted as a mechanism for strengthening the competence and professionalism of waqf managers (*nazhir*) in Indonesia. However, formal recognition of competence does not necessarily ensure that certified knowledge and skills are translated into sustained organisational practice. This study examines the post-certification experiences of eight *nazhir* who obtained professional competency certification in 2025 and operate in the urban context of Serang City, Banten, Indonesia. Using an interpretative qualitative design, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed to explore how participants understood certification, reconstructed professional identity, enacted certified competencies, and negotiated organisational constraints. Data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews, supported by relevant institutional documents, and analysed idiographically before cross-participant patterns were developed. The findings revealed six interrelated themes: certification as professional recognition and reassessment; strengthened professional identity through heightened accountability; gradual enactment of certified competencies; a competence–practice gap shaped by organisational conditions; certification as conditional professional credibility; and professionalisation as an ongoing post-certification process. The study further refines a Certification-to-Practice Conversion Framework linking credential recognition, professional identity, capability enactment, organisational enablement or constraint, institutionalisation of routines, and accountable waqf practice. The findings indicate that certification should be understood as an institutional threshold rather than the endpoint of professionalisation. Structured post-certification support, including mentoring, practitioner networks, continuing training, technical assistance, and organisational development, is therefore essential for converting certified competence into sustainable and credible waqf governance.

**Keywords:** *nazhir* certification; professional identity; training transfer; waqf governance; practice readiness

### Abstrak

Sertifikasi profesional semakin diposisikan sebagai instrumen strategis untuk memperkuat kompetensi dan profesionalisme pengelola wakaf (*nazhir*) di Indonesia. Namun, pengakuan formal atas kompetensi tidak serta-merta menjamin bahwa pengetahuan dan keterampilan yang tersertifikasi dapat diterjemahkan menjadi praktik organisasi yang berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menganalisis pengalaman pascasertifikasi delapan *nazhir* yang memperoleh sertifikasi kompetensi profesional pada tahun 2025 dan menjalankan aktivitas perwakafan di wilayah perkotaan Kota Serang, Banten, Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif interpretatif dengan *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis* (IPA) untuk

mengeksplorasi bagaimana peserta memaknai sertifikasi, membentuk identitas profesional, menerapkan kompetensi tersertifikasi, serta menghadapi kendala di organisasi. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam semi-terstruktur yang didukung oleh dokumen kelembagaan yang relevan, kemudian dianalisis secara idiografis sebelum dikembangkan menjadi pola lintas partisipan. Hasil penelitian mengidentifikasi enam tema utama: sertifikasi sebagai pengakuan dan evaluasi ulang profesional; penguatan identitas profesional melalui peningkatan akuntabilitas; penerapan kompetensi secara bertahap; kesenjangan kompetensi–praktik akibat kondisi organisasi; sertifikasi sebagai kredibilitas profesional yang bersifat kondisional; serta profesionalisasi sebagai proses pascasertifikasi yang berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini menyempurnakan *Certification-to-Practice Conversion Framework* yang menghubungkan pengakuan kredensial, identitas profesional, penerapan kapabilitas, kondisi organisasi, rutinitas pelemagaan, serta praktik wakaf yang akuntabel. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa sertifikasi merupakan titik awal, bukan titik akhir, dalam proses profesionalisasi *nazhir*.

**Kata kunci:** sertifikasi *nazhir*; identitas profesional; transfer kompetensi; tata kelola wakaf; kesiapan praktik

## A. Introduction

Waqf is a core instrument of Islamic social finance, preserving endowed assets while directing their benefits towards social and economic purposes. Its sustainability depends on competent stewardship; contemporary *nazhir* are therefore expected to combine religious responsibility with managerial competence, accountability, and institutional credibility.<sup>1,2</sup>

In Indonesia, waqf governance reform has strengthened expectations for legal, supervisory, risk management, Sharia compliance, and accountability. The Waqf Core Principles provide an institutional benchmark, yet implementation remains uneven and is constrained by weaknesses in capacity, documentation, internal control, and managerial systems.<sup>3,4,5</sup>

Professional competency certification is one mechanism for strengthening *nazhir* capacity. Indonesian evidence links certification to improved performance and participation in waqf development, while emphasising a balanced assessment of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The key issue, however, is what happens when certified individuals return to their organisations.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> D. Siswanto, H. Rosdiana, dan H. Fathurahman, "Reconstructing Accountability of the Cash Waqf (Endowment) Institution in Indonesia," dalam *Managerial Finance*, vol. 44, no. 5, 2018, h. 624–644.

<sup>2</sup> A. W. Ainol-Basirah dan A. K. Siti-Nabiha, "Accountability in waqf institutions: a meta-narrative review," dalam *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2023, h. 181–201.

<sup>3</sup> K. P. Aryana dan I. Yuliafitri, "Penerapan Good Nazhir Governance Berdasarkan Waqf Core Principle pada Wakaf Salman ITB," dalam *Jurnal Riset Akuntansi dan Keuangan*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2023, h. 87–96.

<sup>4</sup> G. I. Hendra, N. Asnawi, dan V. M. Ekowati, "Accountability of Cash Waqf Institutions Post the Implementation of Accounting Standard 412," dalam *Share: Jurnal Ekonomi dan Keuangan Islam*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2025, h. 802–815.

<sup>5</sup> Bank Indonesia dan Badan Wakaf Indonesia, *Indeks Implementasi Prinsip Waqf Core pada Nazhir* (Jakarta: Bank Indonesia, 2022).

<sup>6</sup> E. Hamidiyah, N. S. Buchori, A. R. Yulianto, N. Huda, H. Tanjung, dan I. S. Beik, "Pengaruh Sertifikasi Kompetensi terhadap Kinerja Nazhir dan Partisipasi dalam Gerakan Perwakafan," dalam *Al-Awqaf: Jurnal Wakaf dan Ekonomi Islam*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2022, h. 26–43.

Certification confirms demonstrated competence at a particular point in time but does not guarantee its sustained application in the workplace. Training-transfer research shows that maintenance and generalisation depend not only on individual capability and training design, but also on motivation, opportunities to perform, supervisory support, and the wider transfer climate.<sup>7,8,9</sup>

This distinction is especially relevant to newly certified *nazhir*, who may possess stronger administrative, financial, risk, communication, and governance knowledge while working in organisations with limited staff, weak procedures, fragmented systems, inadequate digital infrastructure, or restricted authority. Individual capability may therefore improve without equivalent organisational change.

Certification may also reshape professional identity by altering role expectations, standards of conduct, and claims to legitimacy. For *nazhir*, this may reinforce an integrated identity in which religious stewardship is combined with formally recognised professional accountability.<sup>10</sup>

Existing waqf scholarship has examined accountability, governance, institutional integrity, donor trust, productive waqf, and digitalisation. Although these studies clarify important institutional and behavioural conditions, the immediate post-certification experience of individual *nazhir* remains comparatively under-examined.<sup>11,12,13,14,15</sup>

This study addresses that gap by examining eight *Nazhir*-certified individuals in 2025 who are active in the urban area of Serang City, Banten, which was purposively selected as the urban setting for its distinct socio-religious and institutional dynamics in a rapidly developing second-tier city. As the historical core of the Banten Sultanate,

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<sup>7</sup> B. D. Blume, J. K. Ford, T. T. Baldwin, dan J. L. Huang, "Transfer of Training: A Meta-Analytic Review," dalam *Journal of Management*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2010, h. 1065–1105.

<sup>8</sup> R. Grossman dan E. Salas, "The transfer of training: what really matters," dalam *International Journal of Training and Development*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2011, h. 103–120.

<sup>9</sup> T. T. Baldwin dan J. K. Ford, "Transfer of Training: A Review and Directions for Future Research," dalam *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 41, no. 1, 1988, h. 63–105.

<sup>10</sup> M. G. Pratt, K. W. Rockmann, dan J. B. Kaufmann, "Constructing Professional Identity: The Role of Work and Identity Learning Cycles in the Customization of Identity Among Medical Residents," dalam *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2006, h. 235–262.

<sup>11</sup> B. Kasmon, S. S. Ibrahim, D. Daud, R. R. I. Raja Hisham, dan R. T. Ratnasari, "Future behavior in waqf digitalization: integrating UTAUT and DIT theories," dalam *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 16, no. 4, 2025, h. 1051–1072.

<sup>12</sup> L. Nofianti, M. Mukhlisin, dan A. Irfan, "Cash waqf innovation in Islamic financial institutions and its governance issues, case studies: Indonesia, Malaysia, Türkiye," dalam *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, vol. 17, no. 4, 2026, h. 819–837.

<sup>13</sup> S. Abdul Shukor, F. Johari, K. Abd Wahab, A. Kefeli, Z. Zulkefli, N. Ahmad, M. Haji Alias, A. Abdul Rahman, N. M. Mohd Orip, P. Ibrahim, dan M. F. Abu-Hussin, "Trust on awqaf institutions: evidence from Malaysia," dalam *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2019, h. 511–524.

<sup>14</sup> R. A. Kasri dan S. R. Chaerunnisa, "The role of knowledge, trust, and religiosity in explaining the online cash waqf amongst Muslim millennials," dalam *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 6, 2022, h. 1334–1350.

<sup>15</sup> N. Zulkifli, M. N. Ismail, G. Osman, dan Z. Yusoff, "A Systematic Literature Review on Waqf Governance," dalam *e-Bangi: Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, vol. 19, no. 4, 2022, h. 31–42.

Serang represents a unique urban landscape where deeply entrenched Islamic traditions and a strong *kiai-santri* culture coexist with modern urbanisation. Unlike highly corporate and institutionalised metropolises, Serang embodies a dynamic transitional phase in which newly certified *nazhirs* must navigate the implementation of formal post-2025 regulatory standards within an ecosystem constrained by underdeveloped infrastructure, informal customary practices, and unresolved urban land tenure issues.

The study treats certification as an institutional threshold rather than the completion of professionalisation. Its practical value depends on whether certified knowledge can be enacted and institutionally sustained. It therefore develops the competence-practice gap and the Certification-to-Practice Conversion Framework.

Four questions guide the study: how newly certified *nazhir* interpret certification; how it affects professional identity and responsibility; which conditions enable or constrain the enactment of competence; and how Serang City's urban institutional context shapes post-certification practice.

The study contributes by shifting attention from certification attainment to post-certification enactment, integrating professional-identity and training-transfer perspectives, and proposing a mechanism-based framework linking credential recognition, identity, capability enactment, organisational embedding, and accountable waqf practice.

## **B. Literature Review**

### **1. Professionalisation and *Nazhir* Governance**

Professionalisation in waqf management extends beyond religious knowledge to encompass legal, financial, asset management, risk, reporting, stakeholder, and digital competencies. Accordingly, sustainable professionalism depends on capable human resources, organisational knowledge, managerial routines, and the institutional capacity to convert these resources into performance.<sup>16,17</sup>

The National Waqf Index similarly treats regulation, institutions, processes, systems, outputs, and impacts as interdependent dimensions. Individual competence must therefore be assessed within organisational and regulatory settings that provide adequate reporting, governance, infrastructure, leadership, and accountability mechanisms.<sup>18</sup>

Waqf accountability combines managerial responsibility with religious and moral obligations. For newly certified *nazhir*, professional standards may intensify without

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<sup>16</sup> W. Munawar, "Profesionalitas Nazir Wakaf: Studi Manajemen Wakaf Produktif di Lembaga Wakaf Daarut Tauhiid," dalam *Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2021, h. 17–33.

<sup>17</sup> A. Laallam, S. Kassim, E. R. A. Engku Ali, dan B. Saiti, "Intellectual capital in non-profit organisations: lessons learnt for waqf institutions," dalam *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2020, h. 27–48.

<sup>18</sup> Y. D. Lestari, R. Sukmana, I. S. Beik, dan M. Sholihin, "The development of national waqf index in Indonesia: A fuzzy AHP approach," dalam *Heliyon*, vol. 9, no. 5, 2023, h. e15783.

displacing the religious character of trusteeship; the analytical issue is how both dimensions are integrated in practice.<sup>19,20</sup>

Cash waqf and digital platforms further increase managerial demands. Digital innovation can improve accessibility, transparency, communication, and mobilisation only when supported by governance, reporting, internal controls, and institutional capacity; individual and organisational capability must develop together.<sup>21,22</sup>

## 2. *Nazhir* Certification and Competency Development

Indonesian research increasingly recognises *nazhir* certification as a professional-development instrument associated with performance, waqf literacy, and professional awareness. Yet it offers only a limited explanation of how certified competence is enacted in the early post-certification period.<sup>23,24</sup> Professionalisation also requires the standardisation of competencies and institutional recognition across waqf-managing organisations. Certification is thus both technical and institutional: it validates competence while signalling expectations of professional practice.<sup>25,26</sup>

*Nazhir* competence is multidimensional, extending beyond technical delivery to religious, communicative, social, moral, interpersonal, and organisational domains. Newly certified practitioners may therefore differ substantially in practice readiness across these areas.<sup>27</sup> Overall, the literature supports certification while leaving a clear gap concerning the transition into practice: which competencies are immediately usable, how practitioners experience that transition, and where organisational conditions inhibit implementation.

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<sup>19</sup> D. Siswantoro, H. Rosdiana, dan H. Fathurahman, "Reconstructing Accountability of the Cash Waqf (Endowment) Institution in Indonesia," dalam *Managerial Finance*, vol. 44, no. 5, 2018, h. 624–644.

<sup>20</sup> A. W. Ainol-Basirah dan A. K. Siti-Nabiha, "Accountability in waqf institutions: a meta-narrative review," dalam *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2023, h. 181–201.

<sup>21</sup> B. Kasmon, S. S. Ibrahim, D. Daud, R. R. I. Raja Hisham, dan R. T. Ratnasari, "Future behavior in waqf digitalization: integrating UTAUT and DIT theories," dalam *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 16, no. 4, 2025, h. 1051–1072.

<sup>22</sup> L. Nofianti, M. Mukhlisin, dan A. Irfan, "Cash waqf innovation in Islamic financial institutions and its governance issues, case studies: Indonesia, Malaysia, Türkiye," dalam *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, vol. 17, no. 4, 2026, h. 819–837.

<sup>23</sup> E. Hamidiyah, N. S. Buchori, A. R. Yulianto, N. Huda, H. Tanjung, dan I. S. Beik, "Pengaruh Sertifikasi Kompetensi terhadap Kinerja Nazhir dan Partisipasi dalam Gerakan Perwakafan," dalam *Al-Awqaf: Jurnal Wakaf dan Ekonomi Islam*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2022, h. 26–43.

<sup>24</sup> A. Faujiah dan J. W. Wicaksono, "Efisiensi Pelaksanaan Sertifikasi Nazir Wakaf dalam Rangka Meningkatkan Literasi Wakaf," dalam *Dinar: Jurnal Prodi Ekonomi Syariah*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2024, h. 51–66.

<sup>25</sup> A. Faujiah dan J. W. Wicaksono, "Efisiensi Pelaksanaan Sertifikasi Nazir Wakaf dalam Rangka Meningkatkan Literasi Wakaf," dalam *Dinar: Jurnal Prodi Ekonomi Syariah*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2024, h. 51–66.

<sup>26</sup> S. F. Ibrahim, "Certification of Pondok Pesantren as Professional Nazhir to Develop Productive Waqf," dalam *Journal of Middle East and Islamic Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2023, h. Artikel 2.

<sup>27</sup> R. K. Rusli, D. Hafidhuddin, E. Bahrudin, dan A. M. Tamam, "Existing Curriculum Management in Enhancing Nazhir's Professionalism; Analysis Network Process," dalam *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2023, h. 678–692.

### 3. Certification and Competence Transfer

Certification recognises demonstrated competence but does not ensure its maintenance. Training-transfer theory conceptualises transfer as the generalisation and sustained use of learned knowledge and skills in the workplace.<sup>28,29,30</sup> Applied to waqf management, transfer depends on opportunity, authority, organisational support, technology, and reinforcement. A *nazhir* may understand appropriate reporting, fund segregation, digital records, risk control, or stakeholder communication, yet lack the conditions to implement them. This distance between recognised competence and feasible practice is termed the competence-practice gap.

The competence-practice gap is not treated as personal failure but as possible misalignment between individual capability and organisational readiness. Distinguishing capability acquisition, enactment, and organisational embedding allows barriers to be located at individual, role, organisational, or institutional levels.

### 4. Certification and Professional Identity

Professional practice is also shaped by identity: how individuals understand their roles, obligations, and standards of legitimacy. Professional-identity research shows that these understandings are negotiated through experience, role expectations, and feedback.<sup>31, 32</sup> For *nazhir*, certification may reinforce professional stewardship, documented accountability, confidence, ethical responsibility, and willingness to adopt formal procedures. Tension can nevertheless arise where organisational routines remain informal or certified practitioners lack authority. Professional identity is therefore treated as a conversion mechanism: certification may reshape interpretations of responsibility, but those expectations become stable practice only when enacted and institutionally recognised or supported.

### 5. Proposed Certification-to-Practice Conversion Framework

The proposed framework integrates training-transfer and professional-identity perspectives across five stages: certification, professional identity, capability enactment, organisational embedding, and accountable waqf practice. It traces how formal recognition becomes internalised expectations, enacted competence, institutional routines, and sustained improvements in transparency, consistency, asset protection, stakeholder communication, and professional responsibility.

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<sup>28</sup> T. T. Baldwin dan J. K. Ford, "Transfer of Training: A Review and Directions for Future Research," dalam *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 41, no. 1, 1988, h. 63–105.

<sup>29</sup> B. D. Blume, J. K. Ford, T. T. Baldwin, dan J. L. Huang, "Transfer of Training: A Meta-Analytic Review," dalam *Journal of Management*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2010, h. 1065–1105.

<sup>30</sup> R. Grossman dan E. Salas, "The transfer of training: what really matters," dalam *International Journal of Training and Development*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2011, h. 103–120.

<sup>31</sup> H. Ibarra, "Provisional Selves: Experimenting with Image and Identity in Professional Adaptation," dalam *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 4, 1999, h. 764–791.

<sup>32</sup> M. G. Pratt, K. W. Rockmann, dan J. B. Kaufmann, "Constructing Professional Identity: The Role of Work and Identity Learning Cycles in the Customization of Identity Among Medical Residents," dalam *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2006, h. 235–262.

**Table 1.**  
**Initial Conceptual Framework**

| Stage                     | Analytical question                                                    | Indicative evidence                                                                         |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Certification             | What competence has been formally recognised?                          | Certificate, competency scheme, learning and assessment experience                          |
| Professional identity     | How do participants understand the role of a certified <i>nazhir</i> ? | Responsibility, confidence, ethical commitment, and role expectations                       |
| Capability enactment      | Which certified competencies are used in actual work?                  | Administration, reporting, planning, communication, asset management, and digital practices |
| Organisational embedding  | Do individual practices become institutional routines?                 | SOPs, records, digital systems, authority, leadership support, recurring procedures         |
| Accountable waqf practice | Does professionalisation become sustainable and visible?               | Transparency, consistency, asset protection, stakeholder trust, professional conduct        |

## C. Method

### 1. Research Approach and Design

This study employs an interpretative qualitative design using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which is appropriate for examining how a relatively homogeneous group makes sense of a significant lived experience. Its idiographic orientation prioritises detailed individual analysis before cross-case patterning.<sup>33</sup> Follows a rigorous, iterative six-stage framework that prioritises an idiographic orientation through case-by-case analysis:

- a. Reading and re-reading: The researcher achieves deep immersion by repeatedly reading the transcript and listening to the audio recording. The goal is to place the participant at the centre of the analysis and ensure complete familiarity with their personal narrative before any formal coding begins.
- b. Initial notes: This highly intensive phase involves generating line-by-line exploratory comments on the transcript. These annotations are categorised into three distinct levels: descriptive notes (literal meaning and key objects), linguistic notes (use of language, metaphors, and pauses), and conceptual notes (deeper psychological interpretation and abstract reflection).
- c. Developing emergent themes: The researcher shifts from working directly with the dense transcript text to focusing on the exploratory comments. By grouping and conceptualising these initial notes, the researcher formulates concise experiential statements that capture the essence of the participant's psychological reality while remaining firmly grounded in the raw data.
- d. Searching for connections across emergent themes: The generated experiential themes are mapped and clustered to establish relationships. This is achieved through formal analytic techniques such as abstraction (grouping similar

<sup>33</sup> J. A. Smith, P. Flowers, dan M. Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*, ed. 2 (London: SAGE, 2022).

themes under a new title), subsumption (elevating a core theme to a superordinate status), and polarisation (examining oppositional relationships between themes).

- e. Moving to the next case: Honouring IPA's strict idiographic commitment, the researcher puts the previous analysis aside and approaches the next transcript completely independently. Pre-existing ideas from prior cases are consciously bracketed to allow new, distinct insights to emerge without bias.
- f. Looking for patterns across cases: Once all transcripts have been individually analysed, the researcher conducts a cross-case synthesis. This involves identifying structural convergences (shared experiences) and divergences (idiosyncratic nuances) across the entire group, resulting in a comprehensive master framework of superordinate group experiential themes.

The shared phenomenon is the transition from professional certification in 2025 to everyday *nazhir* practice. Analytical attention is therefore directed to the professional experiences and meanings of eight individuals rather than to institutions as separate cases.

## 2. Participants and Sampling

Eight newly certified *nazhir* were purposively selected using homogeneous criteria. Participants were aged 31-39, had five to eleven years of waqf-management experience, obtained their first professional competency certification in 2025, and undertook waqf-related responsibilities in urban Serang City, Banten. This small sample is consistent with IPA's emphasis on interpretative depth.<sup>34</sup>

Inclusion required first-time *nazhir* certification in 2025, age 30-40, at least five years of active waqf-management experience, current involvement in relevant management or governance activities in Serang City, and willingness to participate in an in-depth interview. Participants were coded N1-N8.

**Table 2.**  
**Participant Characteristics**

| Participant (age) | Waqf experience | Institution                          | First certification | Primary responsibility                                            |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| N1 (34)           | 7 years         | Tazkiyatul Islamiyah Banten          | 2025                | <i>Nazhir</i> - administration and documentation                  |
| N2 (32)           | 6 years         | Masjid Agung Ats-Tsauroh Kota Serang | 2025                | <i>Nazhir</i> - programme administration and beneficiary services |
| N3 (37)           | 9 years         | Masjid Banten Lama                   | 2025                | <i>Nazhir</i> - reporting and stakeholder communication           |
| N4 (39)           | 11 years        | LAZ Harfa                            | 2025                | <i>Nazhir</i> - asset and institutional administration            |

<sup>34</sup> J. A. Smith, P. Flowers, dan M. Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*, ed. 2 (London: SAGE, 2022).

| Participant (age) | Waqf experience | Institution                   | First certification | Primary responsibility                                            |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| N5 (38)           | 10 years        | Rumah Sakit Mata Achmad Wardi | 2025                | <i>Nazhir</i> - productive waqf and asset management              |
| N6 (35)           | 6 years         | Safiinatunnajah               | 2025                | <i>Nazhir</i> - programme implementation and community engagement |
| N7 (33)           | 8 years         | LazisMu Kota Serang           | 2025                | <i>Nazhir</i> - programme planning and stakeholder engagement     |
| N8 (31)           | 5 years         | Masjid Jami Nurul Yaqin       | 2025                | <i>Nazhir</i> - digital records and administration                |

### 3. Data Collection

Primary data were generated through semi-structured, in-depth interviews covering pre-certification experience, the meaning of certification, professional identity, competency enactment, organisational enablers and constraints, stakeholder recognition, and post-certification development needs. The format ensured common coverage while preserving idiographic depth.

Where available, interviews were supplemented by non-confidential contextual documents, including competency certificates, reporting formats, organisational procedures, programme documents, and administrative records. These materials clarified institutional context and supported, rather than replaced, experiential evidence.

**Table 3.**  
**Semi-Structured Interview Domains**

| Domain                         | Purpose                                                               | Example prompt                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre-certification experience   | Establish prior role understanding and motivation                     | How did you understand your responsibilities as a <i>nazhir</i> before certification?                  |
| Meaning of certification       | Explore the perceived significance of the credential                  | What does being a certified <i>nazhir</i> mean to you, personally and professionally?                  |
| Professional identity          | Identify changes in responsibility, confidence, and role expectations | Did certification change how you see yourself as a <i>nazhir</i> ?                                     |
| Capability enactment           | Identify competencies translated into practice                        | Which competencies have been easiest or most difficult to implement?                                   |
| Organisational environment     | Examine support and barriers.                                         | What organisational conditions help or hinder you in applying what you learned?                        |
| Stakeholder recognition        | Explore external legitimacy and trust.                                | Has certification affected your interactions with waqif, colleagues, regulators, or community members? |
| Urban context                  | Identify place-specific opportunity structures                        | What opportunities or challenges arise from operating in Serang City?                                  |
| Post-certification development | Identify continuing professional-development needs                    | What support do newly certified <i>nazhir</i> need after certification?                                |

#### 4. Data Analysis

Analysis followed IPA's iterative and idiographic logic. Each transcript was repeatedly read and annotated for descriptive content, language, tensions, contextual meanings, and experiential claims; emergent themes were then developed within each case before relationships among them were examined.<sup>35</sup>

Cross-participant analysis subsequently identified convergence and divergence in certification, identity, confidence, competency enactment, organisational support, barriers, stakeholder recognition, and development needs. Negative or divergent cases were retained to avoid imposing a single linear pathway. Empirically supported themes were finally mapped onto the proposed Certification-to-Practice Conversion Framework, which remained open to revision, extension, or rejection where unsupported by the data.

#### 5. Research Quality and Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was strengthened through contextual sensitivity, analytical transparency, reflexivity, and coherence between participant accounts and interpretation. An audit trail documented interview, coding, theme-development, framework, and documentary decisions, while reflexive notes distinguished participant meanings from researcher assumptions. Credibility was further supported through rich contextual evidence and attention to divergent accounts. A detailed description of participants and the Serang City setting was used to support judgments of transferability.

#### 6. Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary and based on informed consent. Participants were informed about the study, academic use of data, confidentiality, and withdrawal rights. Identifiers were removed, codes N1-N8 were used throughout, and recordings, transcripts, and supporting documents were stored securely for research purposes only.

### D. Results and Discussion

The eight participant profiles summarised in Table 2 show between five and eleven years of experience, indicating that certification was obtained after sustained involvement in waqf administration, asset management, reporting, programme implementation, and stakeholder communication. An IPA-oriented reading of the accounts generated six interrelated themes: (1) certification as professional recognition and reassessment; (2) professional identity strengthened through heightened accountability; (3) gradual enactment of certified competencies; (4) a competence-practice gap shaped by organisational conditions; (5) certification as conditional professional and institutional credibility; and (6) professionalisation as an ongoing post-certification process.

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<sup>35</sup> J. A. Smith, P. Flowers, dan M. Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*, ed. 2 (London: SAGE, 2022).

## 1. Participant Context and the Meaning of Certification

Across the eight accounts, certification was understood simultaneously as a formal credential, a learning experience, and a potential source of legitimacy. Seven participants described certification in strongly positive terms, although they did not attribute the same meaning to it. N1, N3, N5, and N7 emphasised formal recognition of competencies developed through practice; N2 and N8 emphasised the opportunity to organise previously fragmented knowledge; and N6 was more cautious, arguing that a certificate had little value if it did not produce visible improvements in institutional practice.

*"I had been managing waqf for several years, but before certification, I relied mainly on experience and on what senior nazhir had taught me. The certificate made me realise that there are professional standards underlying many of the things we do."* (N1)

*"The certificate did not suddenly make me a nazhir, because I had already been doing the work for years. What changed was that my competence had now been assessed and formally recognised."* (N3)

*"For me, the piece of paper is not the most important thing. If our administration and management remain unchanged after certification, then the certification itself no longer means very much."* (N6)

These accounts show that certification was valued less as a document than as formal recognition and reassessment of established practice. This aligns with Indonesian evidence linking *nazhir* certification to competence, performance, and professional literacy, while adding an experiential distinction: participants did not necessarily regard certification as the source of competence. N6's divergent account therefore supports the distinction between credential recognition and competency enactment; certification recognises capability, but its practical value depends on subsequent organisational use.<sup>36,37,38</sup>

## 2. Professional Identity after Certification

The second theme concerns how certification influenced professional self-understanding. Seven participants described heightened professional responsibility,

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<sup>36</sup> E. Hamidiyah, N. S. Buchori, A. R. Yulianto, N. Huda, H. Tanjung, dan I. S. Beik, "Pengaruh Sertifikasi Kompetensi terhadap Kinerja Nazhir dan Partisipasi dalam Gerakan Perwakafan," dalam *Al-Awqaf: Jurnal Wakaf dan Ekonomi Islam*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2022, h. 26–43.

<sup>37</sup> A. Faujiah dan J. W. Wicaksono, "Efisiensi Pelaksanaan Sertifikasi Nazir Wakaf dalam Rangka Meningkatkan Literasi Wakaf," dalam *Dinar: Jurnal Prodi Ekonomi Syariah*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2024, h. 51–66.

<sup>38</sup> W. Munawar, "Profesionalitas Nazir Wakaf: Studi Manajemen Wakaf Produktif di Lembaga Wakaf Daarut Tauhiid," dalam *Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2021, h. 17–33.

confidence, or accountability. However, these changes were generally expressed as a strengthening of an existing identity rather than the creation of an entirely new one. N2, for example, linked certification to a broader understanding of accountability, while N5 associated it with greater confidence in explaining administrative requirements. N7 described heightened ethical expectations to practise what had been learned and formally assessed.

*"Previously, if waqf activities were running and beneficiaries were receiving the benefits, I thought we had fulfilled our responsibilities. After certification, I became more aware that every process also needs to be documented and accounted for." (N2)*

*"Once you are certified, people may expect more from you. I also expect more from myself. If I already know the correct procedure but ignore it, I feel that my responsibility is even greater." (N7)*

*"I do not think my identity changed significantly. I already considered myself responsible for the waqf before certification. Certification gave me additional knowledge, but the commitment was already there." (N4)*

The pattern is best interpreted as identity reinforcement rather than uniform transformation. Professional identity is negotiated through experience, role expectations, and feedback, and certification provides a new reference point for evaluating responsibility and conduct. N4's account shows that experienced *nazhir* may integrate certification into an established identity without substantial redefinition. Thus, certification can strengthen professional self-awareness and ethical expectations without producing an abrupt shift in occupational identity.<sup>39,40</sup>

### 3. Enacting Certified Competencies in Everyday Waqf Practice

Seven participants described at least one concrete practice they had changed or attempted to change following certification. The most common changes concerned administration, document tracking, reporting, programme planning, communication, and basic digital record-keeping. These changes were largely incremental and occurred in areas under participants' direct control. N1 reorganised documentation and introduced more systematic record checking; N3 described clearer separation and reporting of programme information; and N8 began transferring selected records into shared digital files.

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<sup>39</sup> H. Ibarra, "Provisional Selves: Experimenting with Image and Identity in Professional Adaptation," dalam *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 4, 1999, h. 764–791.

<sup>40</sup> M. G. Pratt, K. W. Rockmann, dan J. B. Kaufmann, "Constructing Professional Identity: The Role of Work and Identity Learning Cycles in the Customization of Identity Among Medical Residents," dalam *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 49, no. 2, 2006, h. 235–262.

*"After certification, I began checking our waqf files more systematically. Previously, some documents were stored separately. I now try to ensure that legal documents, asset information, and activity records can be traced more easily." (N1)*

*"One thing I proposed quite quickly was to separate programme records more clearly. We began producing reports that showed not only which activities had been undertaken, but also how waqf resources had been used." (N3)*

*"We are not yet using a sophisticated system, but I have started transferring some records into shared digital files. At least the information is no longer kept only in a notebook or on one person's computer." (N8)*

The findings distinguish knowledge acquisition from workplace enactment. Although all participants identified knowledge clarified or reinforced through certification, only seven reported concrete practice changes. Consistent with training-transfer theory, the earliest transfer took the form of manageable adjustments to records, reporting, communication, and digital practices rather than organisational redesign. This suggests that certification-to-practice conversion may begin in individual routines and become sustainable only when shared procedures and institutional capacity support wider embedding.<sup>41,42,43</sup>

#### 4. The Competence-Practice Gap

Six participants described situations in which they understood what professional practice required but were unable to implement it fully. The constraints were not identical across cases. Staffing limitations affected the regularity of administrative updates; uneven digital capabilities impeded the shared use of new record systems; and limited authority constrained changes to asset management or risk procedures. N2 emphasised workload and staffing, N8 highlighted collective technology adoption, and N5 described limits on individual decision-making authority. N4 represented a partly divergent case because a more structured organisational environment reduced these implementation barriers.

*"We understand that administration needs to be updated regularly, but the same people are also handling programmes, communication, and other organisational activities. Sometimes we know the standard, but we do not have enough people to maintain it consistently." (N2)*

*"I can create digital records, but it becomes difficult if only one or two people use them. The system works only when the team agrees to follow the same process." (N8)*

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<sup>41</sup> T. T. Baldwin dan J. K. Ford, "Transfer of Training: A Review and Directions for Future Research," dalam *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 41, no. 1, 1988, h. 63–105.

<sup>42</sup> B. D. Blume, J. K. Ford, T. T. Baldwin, dan J. L. Huang, "Transfer of Training: A Meta-Analytic Review," dalam *Journal of Management*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2010, h. 1065–1105.

<sup>43</sup> R. Grossman dan E. Salas, "The transfer of training: what really matters," dalam *International Journal of Training and Development*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2011, h. 103–120.

*"Certification taught me to consider risk more systematically, but decisions about productive waqf assets are not mine alone. I can recommend changes, but implementation depends on the leadership and other decision-makers." (N5)*

This theme provides the clearest evidence of the competence-practice gap. Participants generally understood professional standards, but implementation was constrained by insufficient opportunity, authority, resources, or reinforcement. This is consistent with transfer research on work-environment support and with waqf-governance literature emphasising systems, documentation, institutional capacity, and internal controls. The analytical implication is that recognised individual competence cannot be institutionalised unless the surrounding organisation can absorb and sustain new practices.<sup>44,45,46,47,48</sup>

This theme shifts attention from individual development to the combined development of individuals and institutions, particularly within the distinct urban landscape of Serang City, where a pronounced competence-practice gap manifests as certified knowledge meets practical organisational constraints. While post-2025 certification equips *nazhirs* with formal regulatory frameworks, training-transfer theory indicates that learning requires structural reinforcement and immediate opportunities to perform. In Serang, a rapidly developing second-tier city, these opportunities are heavily restricted by unique institutional barriers, such as fragmented municipal land governance, a lack of professional digital tracking infrastructure, and an entrenched culture of informal, family-led waqf administration. Because these systemic barriers are institutional rather than merely informational, providing additional individual training alone is insufficient to build credibility; post-certification policy must therefore strategically intertwine continuing professional development with localised mentoring, peer learning, targeted technical assistance, and institutional capacity-building tailored to Serang's transitional urban ecosystem.

#### 5. Certification as Professional and Institutional Credibility

Six participants felt that certification enhanced their credibility to some extent when communicating with colleagues, waqif, community members, or organisational leaders. The effect, however, was neither automatic nor uniform. N3 regarded certification as an initial signal that waqf management values professional competence,

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<sup>44</sup> K. P. Aryana dan I. Yuliafitri, "Penerapan Good Nazhir Governance Berdasarkan Waqf Core Principle pada Wakaf Salman ITB," dalam *Jurnal Riset Akuntansi dan Keuangan*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2023, h. 87–96.

<sup>45</sup> G. I. Hendra, N. Asnawi, dan V. M. Ekowati, "Accountability of Cash Waqf Institutions Post the Implementation of Accounting Standard 412," dalam *Share: Jurnal Ekonomi dan Keuangan Islam*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2025, h. 802–815.

<sup>46</sup> Y. D. Lestari, R. Sukmana, I. S. Beik, dan M. Sholihin, "The development of national waqf index in Indonesia: A fuzzy AHP approach," dalam *Heliyon*, vol. 9, no. 5, 2023, h. e15783.

<sup>47</sup> A. Laallam, S. Kassim, E. R. A. Engku Ali, dan B. Saiti, "Intellectual capital in non-profit organisations: lessons learnt for waqf institutions," dalam *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance*, vol. 12, no. 1, 2020, h. 27–48.

<sup>48</sup> Y. D. Lestari, R. Sukmana, I. S. Beik, dan M. Sholihin, "The development of national waqf index in Indonesia: A fuzzy AHP approach," dalam *Heliyon*, vol. 9, no. 5, 2023, h. e15783.

while N7 found that certification strengthened the justification for proposing more formal procedures. By contrast, N6 emphasised that formal recognition did not guarantee acceptance of recommendations and that trust continued to depend on observable behaviour.

*"When people know that we have undergone certification, it creates a higher level of trust. It shows that waqf management is not based solely on personal willingness, but also on recognised competence." (N3)*

*"When I proposed a more formal reporting process, I could explain that it was not simply my personal preference. The procedure was connected to the professional standards we had learned during certification." (N7)*

*"People may respect the certificate, but that does not mean they will automatically accept every recommendation. Trust still depends on what we actually do." (N6)*

The distinction between symbolic recognition and substantive influence is therefore critical. Certification can signal expertise and strengthen initial credibility, but it does not itself confer decision-making authority or sustained stakeholder trust. The findings suggest a two-stage process in which credentials provide an initial professional signal, while durable legitimacy depends on documented, consistent, and accountable practice. Certification is thus a resource for negotiating legitimacy rather than its equivalent.<sup>49,50,51</sup>

## 6. Post-Certification Support and Continuing Professional Development

All eight participants regarded certification as insufficient as a stand-alone endpoint of professional development. Seven expressed a preference for mentoring or practitioner networks through which real implementation problems could be discussed. Other needs included refresher training, further development in productive waqf and risk management, support for financial reporting, practical digital tools, and updates on regulatory or governance requirements. Participants differed primarily in the forms of support they prioritised, rather than in whether post-certification support was needed.

*"After certification, the questions become more practical. When we return to our institutions, we encounter situations that are not always exactly like the examples given in training. It would be very helpful to have a mentor or a forum where we could discuss these cases." (N1)*

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<sup>49</sup> A. Asyari, M. E. Hoque, P. Susanto, H. Begum, A. Awaluddin, M. Marwan, dan A. Al Mamun, "Online Cash Waqf Behavioral Intention: The Role of Knowledge of Cash Waqf and Trust," dalam *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 11, 2024, h. 2864–2890.

<sup>50</sup> S. Abdul Shukor, F. Johari, K. Abd Wahab, A. Kefeli, Z. Zulkefli, N. Ahmad, M. Haji Alias, A. Abdul Rahman, N. M. Mohd Orip, P. Ibrahim, dan M. F. Abu-Hussin, "Trust on awqaf institutions: evidence from Malaysia," dalam *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2019, h. 511–524.

<sup>51</sup> R. A. Kasri dan S. R. Chaerunnisa, "The role of knowledge, trust, and religiosity in explaining the online cash waqf amongst Muslim millennials," dalam *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 6, 2022, h. 1334–1350.

*"Training on digital systems should not only explain why digitalisation is important. We need practical examples of affordable systems that small waqf organisations can actually operate." (N8)*

*"Sometimes the issue is not whether the nazhir understands. The institution also needs to understand. If only the certified person receives training while management and staff continue using the old system, change becomes difficult." (N5)*

This theme shifts attention from individual development to the combined development of individuals and institutions. Participants viewed professionalisation as continuing beyond assessment, particularly when certified knowledge met practical organisational constraints. Training-transfer theory likewise indicates that learning requires reinforcement and opportunities to perform. Where barriers are organisational rather than informational, additional individual training alone is insufficient; post-certification policy should therefore combine continuing professional development with mentoring, peer learning, technical assistance, and institutional training.<sup>52,53,54</sup>

**Table 4. Refined Empirical Framework**

| Final theme                                                           | Experiential meaning                                                                                                                                                         | Supporting/divergent participants                                                       | Evidence                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Certification as professional recognition and reassessment            | Certification formalises and reassesses competence developed through prior waqf experience; its value lies in learning and recognition rather than in the certificate alone. | Supporting: N1-N5, N7-N8 (N=7); divergent emphasis: N6 (N=1)                            | N3: "The certificate did not suddenly make me a <i>nazhir</i> ... My competence has now been assessed and formally recognised." |
| Professional identity strengthened through heightened accountability. | Certification generally strengthens awareness of professional responsibility, documentation, and ethical accountability rather than creating an entirely new identity.       | Supporting: N1-N3, N5-N8 (N=7); divergent: N4 (N=1)                                     | N7: "Once you are certified, people may expect more from you. I also expect more from myself."                                  |
| Gradual enactment of certified competencies                           | Certified learning is initially translated into manageable changes in administration, reporting, communication, planning, and digital record-keeping.                        | Concrete practice change: N1-N5, N7-N8 (N=7); mainly knowledge/limited change: N6 (N=1) | N1: "After certification, I began checking our waqf files more systematically."                                                 |

<sup>52</sup> W. Munawar, "Profesionalitas Nazir Wakaf: Studi Manajemen Wakaf Produktif di Lembaga Wakaf Daarut Tauhiid," dalam *Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2021, h. 17–33.

<sup>53</sup> R. K. Rusli, D. Hafidhuddin, E. Bahrudin, dan A. M. Tamam, "Existing Curriculum Management in Enhancing Nazhir's Professionalism; Analysis Network Process," dalam *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2023, h. 678–692.

<sup>54</sup> S. F. Ibrahim, "Certification of Pondok Pesantren as Professional Nazhir to Develop Productive Waqf," dalam *Journal of Middle East and Islamic Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2023, h. Artikel 2.

| Final theme                               | Experiential meaning                                                                                                                                                             | Supporting/divergent participants                                                                                    | Evidence                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Competence-practice gap                   | Participants understand professional requirements but face staffing, technological, authority, and routine-related constraints that limit full implementation.                   | Supporting: N1-N3, N5, N7-N8 (N=6); fewer barriers/divergent: N4 and N6 (N=2)                                        | N5: "I can recommend changes, but implementation depends on the leadership and other decision-makers." |
| Certification as conditional credibility  | Certification signals professional competence and may strengthen credibility, but substantive trust and influence continue to depend on practice and organisational performance. | Supporting: N1-N3, N5, N7-N8 (N=6); limited/conditional effects: N4 and N6 (N=2)                                     | N6: "People may respect the certificate... Trust still depends on what we actually do."                |
| Professionalisation as an ongoing process | Participants regard certification as a milestone requiring mentoring, peer networks, refresher training, technical support, digital tools, and institutional training.           | Supporting: N1-N8 (N=8); differences concern the form of support prioritised, rather than whether support is needed. | N1: "It would be very helpful to have a mentor or a forum where we could discuss these cases."         |

While the empirical framework demonstrates strong convergence across most *nazhirs*, a rigorous interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) requires a deep idiographic examination of divergence, specifically regarding Participants 6 (N6) and 4 (N4). N6 serves as a critical case of divergence across the themes of Professional Recognition, Gradual Enactment, and Conditional Credibility. Managing a centuries-old mosque waqf deeply embedded in an ancestral, family-led administration and in Serang's traditional *kiai-santri* network, N6 viewed the 2025 certification as merely a bureaucratic formality rather than a transformative milestone. Because his institution relies heavily on informal customary practices and spiritual legitimacy, N6 demonstrated limited concrete changes in practice post-certification. For N6, formal regulatory knowledge remains secondary to traditional relational dynamics, and community trust is entirely anchored to ancestral lineage and localised religious performance rather than a government-issued certificate.

In sharp contrast, N4 is a technocratic outlier on Professional Identity, Competence-Practice Gap, and Conditional Credibility. Operating within a well-funded corporate waqf foundation backed by a regional financial institution, N4 experienced a profound transformation in professional identity, adopting a corporate persona that stood apart from the baseline. Due to this sophisticated structural backing, N4 reported significantly fewer organisational barriers and competence-practice gaps post-certification. Equipped with advanced digital infrastructure, specialised legal support, and autonomous executive authority, N4 possessed the leverage to easily navigate the municipal land governance bottlenecks that constrained other participants.

Furthermore, N4 uniquely perceived the certificate as a substantive tool for institutional and market credibility to attract corporate donors, in contrast to the relational, community-level trust prioritised by the rest of the cohort.

#### 7. Cross-Theme Synthesis and Refinement of the Certification-to-Practice Framework

Taken together, the six themes position certification as a conversion process rather than a static credential. Because participants entered certification with substantial prior experience, certification primarily formalised and reassessed existing competence, then encouraged greater professional awareness, accountability, and incremental changes in administration, reporting, communication, planning, and record-keeping.

The process is non-linear. The competence-practice gap reflects a misalignment between individual and organisational readiness: knowledge may exist, yet authority, staffing, shared routines, technology, or reinforcement may remain insufficient. Professional identity can motivate standards-compliant behaviour, but transfer becomes sustainable only when organisations enable repetition and institutionalisation.

Certification also contributes to legitimacy, but conditionally. It strengthens the basis for communicating expertise and proposing formal procedures without automatically conferring organisational authority or stakeholder trust. Sustained credibility depends on consistent, accountable practice, a distinction that is especially important in waqf management, where moral stewardship, transparency, accountability, and institutional trust intersect.

Accordingly, the refined Certification-to-Practice Conversion Framework is as follows: certification and credential recognition -> professional reassessment and identity reinforcement -> capability enactment -> organisational enablement or constraint -> institutionalisation of routines -> sustainable waqf practice, accountability, and credibility. These links are conditional rather than deterministic, as divergent cases show that identity change, legitimating effects, and institutionalisation can remain limited.

Certification policy should therefore extend beyond assessment through structured post-certification support at individual and organisational levels. Mentoring, practitioner networks, advanced training, technical assistance, and institutional training can help translate individual knowledge into standard operating procedures, shared digital systems, reporting routines, and decision-making structures. Professionalisation is thus an ongoing institutional process, particularly in digitalisation, whose governance value depends on integration with reporting, internal controls, and organisational capacity.<sup>55,56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> B. Kasmon, S. S. Ibrahim, D. Daud, R. R. I. Raja Hisham, dan R. T. Ratnasari, "Future behavior in waqf digitalization: integrating UTAUT and DIT theories," dalam *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 16, no. 4, 2025, h. 1051–1072.

<sup>56</sup> L. Nofianti, M. Mukhlisin, dan A. Irfan, "Cash waqf innovation in Islamic financial institutions and its governance issues, case studies: Indonesia, Malaysia, Türkiye," dalam *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, vol. 17, no. 4, 2026, h. 819–837.

Overall, the findings support the central proposition with two qualifications: certification more often reinforces than transforms professional identity, and competence transfer is incremental and may remain individual unless organisational conditions support routinisation. Certification's substantive value, therefore, lies not only in recognising competence but in enabling its conversion into sustainable, accountable, and credible waqf practice.

## **E. Conclusion**

The integrated analysis positions professional certification as an important mechanism for recognising *nazhir* competence, but not as the final indicator of professionalisation. Across the N1–N8 cohort, certification was generally understood as formal recognition and professional reassessment following several years of waqf practice. For most participants, it strengthened accountability and professional self-awareness and was followed by incremental changes in administration, reporting, documentation, communication, planning, and digital record-keeping. However, the analysis demonstrates that certified competence does not automatically translate into sustainable organisational practice. Staffing, technological readiness, decision-making authority, and institutional routines shape whether knowledge can be implemented and embedded. Certification functions as a signal of conditional credibility rather than an automatic source of stakeholder trust or organisational authority. These patterns refine the Certification-to-Practice Conversion Framework into a conditional sequence linking credential recognition, professional reassessment, capability enactment, organisational enablement or constraint, institutionalisation of routines, and accountable waqf practice.

To bridge this competence-practice gap, concrete policy adjustments are required across multiple regulatory tiers. The Indonesian Waqf Board (BWI) must move beyond a 'certification-centric' model by introducing a compulsory post-certification mentoring scheme that pairs newly certified *nazhirs* with experienced practitioners and by adapting regulatory frameworks to better accommodate traditional, community-based institutions. Simultaneously, the Professional Certification Body (LSP) should establish modular refresher training focused on urban land tenure and digital asset management, tying recertification cycles to evidence of practical implementation. At the institutional level, waqf management boards must actively enable professionalisation by allocating dedicated budgets for digital infrastructure and granting certified *nazhirs* the executive authority needed to transition antiquated, family-led administrative routines to transparent, accountable workflows.

While these findings offer vital insights, the study is bound by distinct limitations that open avenues for future research. Due to the idiographic commitment of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), this study relies on a small, purposively selected sample (N=8), which prioritises psychological depth over statistical generalisability. Furthermore, the geographical scope is restricted to Serang

City, thereby uniquely reflecting the transitional dynamics of an Indonesian second-tier city rather than those of deep rural areas or fully mature metropolitan markets. Consequently, future research should employ large-scale quantitative designs to test the generalisability of the Certification-to-Practice Conversion Framework across diverse regions, alongside longitudinal studies to track the long-term sustainability of certified competencies and evaluate the true efficacy of structured post-certification support systems over time.

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