

A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC INHERITANCE INSTRUMENTS: *WASIYYAH*, *HIBAH* AND *FARAID*

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ABSTRACT

This bibliometric study examines the academic landscape related to Islamic inheritance instruments—*wasiyyah*, *hibah*, and *faraid*—which play a key role in estate distribution under Islamic law. Although these instruments are vital for ensuring justice and religious compliance, scholarly attention remains fragmented across disciplines and regions. The study aims to explore publication trends, research themes, key contributors, and collaboration patterns. The data was retrieved from the Scopus database using a comprehensive search query incorporating a range of synonyms and related terms. After refining the data using OpenRefine and analyzing it with VOSviewer, a total of 809 relevant documents were identified. The analysis shows a steady increase in publications over the past decade, particularly from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the United States. Common keywords such as “inheritance,” “Islamic law,” “gender,” and “human rights” highlight the interdisciplinary nature of the topic. Co-authorship networks reveal moderate international collaboration, especially within Southeast Asia and the Middle East. While *faraid* continues to dominate scholarly focus, *wasiyyah* and *hibah* are gaining interest, especially in contexts involving gender and estate planning. The study finds that although research on these instruments is growing, there are still gaps in integrating legal, financial, and gender-based perspectives. This research provides a foundational overview of the field and serves as a useful reference for academics and policymakers concerned with Islamic inheritance matters.

JEL classification: D63, G18, K36, Z12

Keywords: *bibliometric analysis; hibah; faraaid; islamic bequest; islamic estate distribution; islamic estate planning; islamic inheritance.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Islamic inheritance system, encompassing *wasiyyah* (will), *hibah* (gift), and *faraid* (compulsory inheritance), is a critical aspect of estate planning for Muslims. The traditional methods of inheritance distribution often face challenges, such as delays in claiming inheritance rights, leading to unclaimed estates and frozen assets (Mokhsin et al., 2023). Efficient estate planning is essential to mitigate these issues, and instruments like *Trust Hibah* are gaining popularity among Islamic financial institutions in Malaysia (Arif et al., 2024). *Trust Hibah* enables the voluntary transfer of property during the donor's lifetime, effectively bypassing the rigid constraints imposed by *faraid* (Zulkepli & Bustami, 2019). However, the practice of *Trust Hibah* must adhere to Islamic inheritance laws to ensure fairness and compliance with Shari'ah principles (Noordin et al., 2016).

Research on Islamic estate planning highlights the importance of systematic property management to ensure the rights of heirs and the proper distribution of assets (Abd. Wahab et al., 2021). Best practices in Islamic estate planning involve intergenerational transfer and earning a good share in the hereafter, emphasizing the significance of *wasiyyah*, *hibah*, and *faraid* (Abd. Wahab et al., 2021). The *Hibah Amanah Model*, which allows donors to control their property during their lifetime while benefiting the beneficiaries after their death, is a notable alternative to traditional *faraid* (Zulkepli & Bustami, 2019). However, legal complications and the need for clear regulatory mechanisms are critical to address issues related to *Hibah Amanah* (Zulkepli & Bustami, 2019). The comparison between *Trust Hibah* and conventional living trust reveals that *Trust Hibah* can expedite inheritance procedures and reduce administrative costs, provided it aligns with Islamic principles (Noordin et al., 2016).

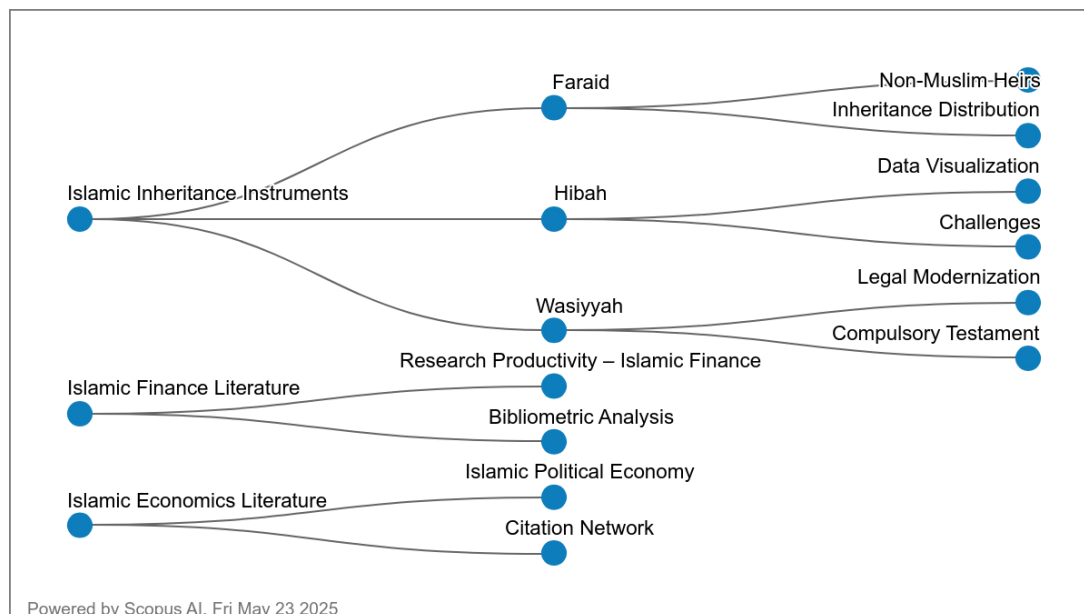


Figure 1: The conceptual mapping of key research themes in Islamic inheritance instruments

Bibliometric analyses of Islamic inheritance instruments reveal a growing interest in the field, with significant contributions from countries like Malaysia and institutions such as the International Islamic University Malaysia (Mokhsin et al.,

2024; Tijjani et al., 2020). These studies provide valuable insights into the trends and research output in Islamic estate planning, highlighting the need for further exploration and development of best practices (Mokhsin et al., 2024) (Tijjani et al., 2020). The integration of bibliometric techniques and content analysis helps identify gaps and opportunities for future research, ensuring the continuous improvement of Islamic inheritance systems (Johara et al., 2023) (Mi'raj & Ulev, 2024). Overall, the effective implementation of *wasiyyah*, *hibah*, and *faraid* is crucial for the equitable distribution of assets and the protection of heirs' rights in accordance with Islamic law.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This paper aims to address five research questions:

- RQ1 - What are the research trends in Islamic inheritance instruments according to the year of publication?
- RQ2 - Which articles are the most frequently cited?
- RQ3 - Which are the top ten countries based on the number of publications?
- RQ4 - What are the prevalent keywords associated with the study?
- RQ5 - What is the nature of co-authorship in terms of international collaboration?

3. METHODOLOGY

Bibliometrics entails the collection, organization, and analysis of bibliographic data from scientific publications (Alves et al., 2021; Assyakur & Rosa, 2022; Verbeek et al., 2002). In addition to basic metrics, such as identifying publishing journals, publication years, and prominent authors (Wu & Wu, 2017), bibliometric analysis also incorporates advanced methods like document co-citation analysis. A successful literature review involves a careful, iterative process of selecting appropriate keywords, conducting comprehensive literature searches, and performing detailed analysis. This systematic approach supports the development of an extensive bibliography and ensures reliable outcomes (Fahimnia et al., 2015). With this foundation, the study concentrated on high-impact publications, as they offer valuable insights into the theoretical frameworks shaping the research field. To ensure data accuracy, Scopus served as the primary source for data collection (Al-Khoury et al., 2022; di Stefano et al., 2010; Khiste & Paithankar, 2017). Additionally, to maintain quality, the study only considered articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals, deliberately excluding books and lecture notes (Gu et al., 2019). Using Elsevier's Scopus, known for its broad coverage, publications were collected from 2020 through December 2023 for further analysis."

3.1 Data search strategy

To ensure comprehensive coverage of scholarly literature on Islamic inheritance instruments—*wasiyyah*, *hibah*, and *faraid*—a detailed and inclusive data strategy was employed using the Scopus database. The search was conducted using an extensive Boolean search string as illustrated in Table 1. This query was designed to incorporate a broad range of synonyms and related terms associated with Islamic inheritance, estate planning, and wealth distribution to maximize the retrieval of relevant academic publications. By strategically combining variations of key terms—including classical Arabic terms (*wasiyyah*, *hibah*, *faraid*) and legal expressions involving *testament*,

will, and *bequest*—the search successfully captured multidisciplinary and regionally diverse literature. As a result of this thorough search approach, a total of 809 relevant documents were identified. This curated dataset formed the foundation for subsequent bibliometric analysis, offering a robust representation of global academic engagement with Islamic inheritance topics.

Table 1: The search string

Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY ((islamic AND estate AND inheritance) OR (islamic AND property AND inheritance) OR (islamic AND estate AND distribution) OR (muslim AND estate AND inheritance) OR (muslim AND property AND inheritance) OR (islamic AND inheritance AND law) OR (muslim AND inheritance AND law) OR (shariah AND inheritance AND law) OR (sharia AND inheritance AND law) OR (muslim AND succession AND law) OR (muslim AND estate AND distribution) OR (muslim AND property AND succession) OR (islamic AND property AND succession) OR (islamic AND estate AND planning) OR faraid OR (islamic AND estate AND bequest) OR (islamic AND property AND bequest) OR (islamic AND estate AND will) OR (muslim AND estate AND will) OR (islamic AND will AND testament) OR (muslim AND will AND testament) OR (muslim AND property AND testament) OR (muslim AND estate AND testament) OR wasiat OR wasiyyah OR hibah OR (islamic AND estate AND gift))
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3.2 Data analysis

VOSviewer is an accessible bibliometric software developed by Nees Jan van Eck and Ludo Waltman at Leiden University in the Netherlands (van Eck & Waltman, 2010, 2017). It is widely used for the visualization and analysis of scientific literature, with a particular focus on generating intuitive network visualizations, clustering related items, and producing density maps. The software's flexibility enables the exploration of co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence networks, offering researchers a thorough understanding of research landscapes. The interactive interface, coupled with continuous updates, ensures efficient and dynamic exploration of large datasets. VOSviewer's ability to compute metrics, customize visualizations, and its compatibility with various bibliometric data sources make it a valuable resource for scholars seeking insights into complex research domains.

One of the standout features of VOSviewer is its capacity to transform intricate bibliometric datasets into visually interpretable maps and charts. Emphasizing network visualization, the software excels at clustering related items, analyzing keyword co-occurrence patterns, and producing density maps. Its intuitive interface supports both novice and experienced researchers in efficiently navigating research landscapes. Ongoing development ensures that VOSviewer remains at the cutting edge of bibliometric analysis, providing valuable insights through metric calculations and customizable visualizations. Its flexibility in handling various types of bibliometric data, such as co-authorship and citation networks, makes VOSviewer a highly versatile and essential tool for scholars aiming to gain deeper insights and understanding within their research fields.

Datasets containing information on publication year, title, author name, journal, citations, and keywords in PlainText format were obtained from the Scopus database,

covering the period from 2004 to December 2024. These datasets were analyzed using VOSviewer software version 1.6.19. By employing VOS clustering and mapping techniques, the software enabled the generation and interpretation of visual maps. As an alternative to the MDS method, VOSviewer arranges items in a low-dimensional space, where the distance between any two items accurately represents their level of relatedness and similarity (van Eck & Waltman, 2010). In this regard, VOSviewer shares conceptual similarities with the MDS approach (Appio et al., 2014). However, unlike MDS, which typically relies on similarity metrics such as the cosine and Jaccard indices, VOS adopts a more suitable method for normalizing co-occurrence frequencies, specifically the Association Strength (AS_{ij}), which is calculated as (van Eck & Waltman, 2007):

$$AS_{ij} = \frac{C_{ij}}{w_i w_j},$$

which is “proportional to the ratio between on the one hand the observed number of co-occurrences of i and j and on the other hand the expected number of co-occurrences of i and j under the assumption that co-occurrences of i and j are statistically independent” (van Eck & Waltman, 2007).

4. FINDINGS

4.1 What are the research trends in Islamic inheritance instruments according to the year of publication?

The publication trend from 2005 and earlier through 2025 illustrates a clear evolution in academic interest surrounding Islamic inheritance instruments such as *wasiyyah*, *hibah*, and *faraid*. In the early years, particularly from 2005 to 2010, research output remained modest, with annual percentages ranging from 0.62% to 5.69%, indicating limited but foundational interest in this area. The low output during this period may reflect a narrower scope of research dissemination or limited academic engagement with Islamic estate planning concepts at the time. However, the gradual increase post-2010 signals a growing recognition of the importance of these instruments in legal, social, and economic discourse.

From 2011 to 2020, there was a noticeable growth in publication activity, particularly during 2019 (8.65%), 2021 (9.89%), and 2023 (11.25%), suggesting a steady rise in scholarly attention. The consistent presence of publications over this decade reflects ongoing academic dialogue and the development of Islamic inheritance as a relevant research field, possibly driven by the intersection of Islamic law with modern legal systems, wealth management, and societal transformation in Muslim communities. The increase during these years likely coincides with the proliferation of open-access platforms, interdisciplinary collaboration, and global interest in comparative legal studies.

The most recent years, 2023 and 2024, mark the peak of academic output with 91 and 87 publications respectively, together accounting for nearly 22% of the total. This peak indicates that Islamic inheritance instruments have become a prominent subject of scholarly exploration. The continued rise in 2025 (2.72%)—despite it being an incomplete publication year—further reinforces the trajectory of growing academic engagement. Overall, the data shows a long-term upward trend, confirming that

Islamic inheritance studies are gaining substantial traction and establishing their significance in both regional and international research landscapes.

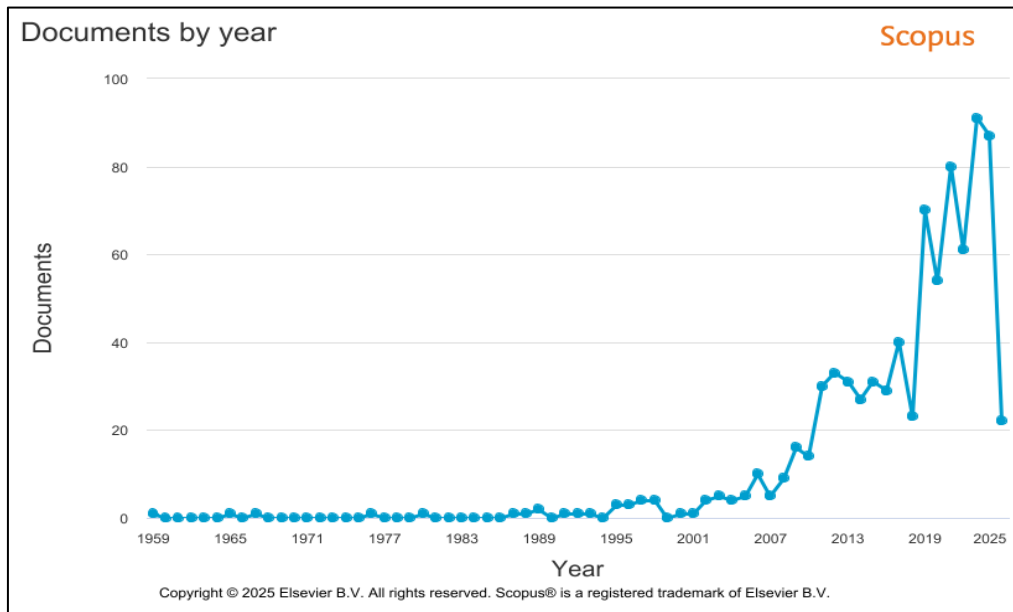


Figure 2: Research trends in Islamic inheritance instruments

Table 2: Number of publications and their percentage

Year	No. of Publication	Percentage (%)
2025	22	2.72
2024	87	10.75
2023	91	11.25
2022	61	7.54
2021	80	9.89
2020	54	6.67
2019	70	8.65
2018	23	2.84
2017	40	4.94
2016	29	3.58
2015	31	3.83
2014	27	3.34
2013	31	3.83
2012	33	4.08
2011	30	3.71
2010	14	1.73
2009	16	1.98
2008	9	1.11
2007	5	0.62
2006	10	1.24
2005 and below	46	5.69

4.2 Which articles are the most frequently cited?

The citation analysis indicates that the most influential author in this dataset is Davies J.R., with the publication “*Islam, Law, and Equality in Indonesia: An Anthropology of Public Reasoning*” (2003), which has been cited 143 times. This suggests a significant impact within the fields of Islamic law, anthropology, and Southeast Asian studies. The prominence of this work reflects scholarly interest in legal pluralism and public reasoning in Muslim-majority societies, particularly Indonesia. The top-cited titles tend to intersect law, society, and religion, indicating that socio-legal themes are highly influential within Islamic inheritance and related research topics.

Other notable contributions include Peter's P.E.'s article on *matriliny, land, and gender* (1997), cited 99 times, and Murray M.J.'s exploration of urban privatization in Johannesburg (2015), cited 72 times. Though these works are not directly focused on Islamic inheritance, their relevance lies in how they engage with themes of gender, property, and socio-political structures—issues central to inheritance discourse. Additionally, Kuran T.'s article on financial westernization in the Middle East (69 citations) indicates sustained interest in how Islamic principles intersect with modern economic systems. These highly cited works serve as foundational references, shaping how scholars understand the application and evolution of Islamic norms in contemporary settings.

Several other authors, such as Abbasi M.Z., Salim A., and Zainuddin A.A., contribute directly to Islamic legal studies, including Waqf, gender perspectives, and Sharia pluralism. Their citation counts range from 46 to 58, suggesting a moderate but focused impact. These publications enrich the discourse by addressing doctrinal aspects of Islamic law and its application in modern health, legal, and societal contexts. The diversity in topics and citation levels demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of Islamic inheritance studies, drawing from law, sociology, anthropology, and gender studies to construct a holistic academic narrative.

Table 3: List of most cited articles relating to the study

Rank	Authors	Title	Source Title	No of Citation
1	Davies J.R.	Islam, law, and equality in Indonesia: An anthropology of public reasoning (Davies, 2003)	Islam, Law, and Equality in Indonesia: An Anthropology of Public Reasoning	143
2	Peters P.E.	Against the Odds: Matriliny, land and gender in the Shire Highlands of Malawi (Peters, 1997)	Critique of Anthropology	99
3	Murray M.J.	Waterfall City (Johannesburg): Privatized urbanism in extremis (Murray, 2015)	Environment and Planning A	72
4	Kuran T.	The logic of financial westernization in the Middle East (Kuran, 2005)	Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization	69
5	Gribetz J.M.	Defining neighbors: Religion, race, and the early Zionist-Arab encounter (Gribetz, 2014)	Defining Neighbors: Religion, Race, and the Early Zionist-Arab Encounter	66
6	Salim A.	Contemporary Islamic law in Indonesia: Sharia and legal pluralism (Salim, 2015)	Contemporary Islamic Law in	58

			Indonesia: Sharia and Legal Pluralism	
7	Takim L.N.	Shi'ism in America (Takim, 2009)	Shi'ism in America	56
8	Abbasi M.Z.	The classical Islamic law of Waqf: A concise introduction (Abbasi, 2012)	Arab Law Quarterly	46
9	Zainuddin A.A.; Mahdy Z.A.	The Islamic Perspectives of Gender-Related Issues in the Management of Patients With Disorders of Sex Development (Zainuddin & Mahdy, 2017)	Archives of Sexual Behavior	46
10	Berger M.S.	Apostasy and public policy in contemporary Egypt: An evaluation of recent cases from Egypt's highest courts (Berger, 2003)	Human Rights Quarterly	43

4.3 Which are the top ten countries based on the number of publications?

The publication data by country highlights Indonesia as the leading contributor to research on Islamic inheritance instruments, with 218 publications. This strong presence is likely due to the integration of Islamic law within the Indonesian legal system and its relevance to the country’s large Muslim population. Malaysia, with 156 publications, also demonstrates substantial academic interest in this field, supported by its dual legal system where Islamic law operates alongside civil law, particularly in matters of inheritance and family law. The prominence of both countries underscores Southeast Asia's central role in advancing scholarly discussions on *wasiyyah*, *hibah*, and *faraid*.

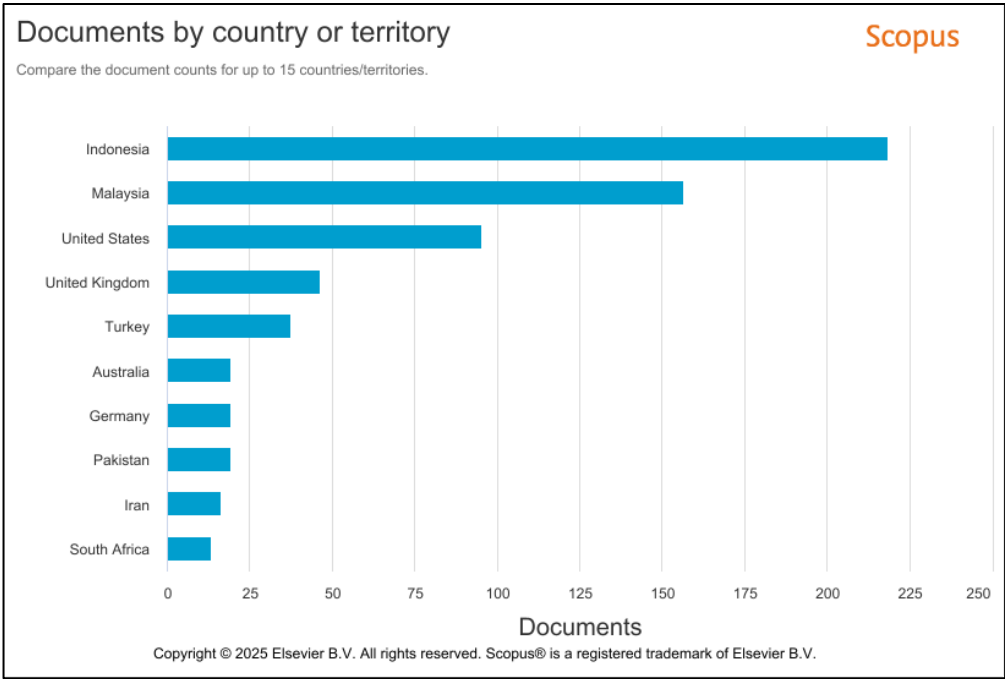


Figure 3: Number of publications by countries

The United States follows with 95 publications, reflecting significant academic engagement despite being a non-Muslim-majority country. This suggests active research in areas such as Islamic law, comparative legal systems, and migration

studies within U.S. institutions. The United Kingdom, with 46 publications, also contributes notably, possibly due to its colonial legacy, its diverse Muslim population, and longstanding academic interest in Islamic jurisprudence. Turkey ranks next with 37 publications, which can be attributed to its unique legal history that blends secular and Islamic traditions.

The remaining countries—Australia, Germany, Pakistan, Iran, and South Africa—each contribute between 13 and 19 publications. While these numbers are lower, they reflect the growing interest in Islamic inheritance topics across varied regions. Countries like Pakistan and Iran have deeply rooted Islamic legal systems, and their contributions suggest more localized or doctrinal focuses. Meanwhile, countries such as Germany and Australia may be engaging in interdisciplinary research, particularly in migration, multicultural policy, and legal pluralism. Collectively, the data illustrate a globally distributed research effort, with both Muslim-majority and Western countries contributing to the evolving discourse on Islamic inheritance instruments.



Figure 4: Plotted map based on most cited articles

4.4 What are the prevalent keywords associated with the study?

The keyword analysis from VOSviewer indicates that “inheritance” is the most dominant term, appearing 129 times with a total link strength of 162, reflecting its centrality in Islamic inheritance research. Closely linked terms like “Islamic law” (87 occurrences, 97 strength) and “Islam” (32 occurrences, 70 strength) further highlight the religious and legal contexts in which inheritance is studied. The high linkage scores of terms such as “human rights” (73) and “economics” (73) also suggest that Islamic inheritance is frequently examined through socio-economic and rights-based lenses, integrating traditional jurisprudence with contemporary concerns about equality, justice, and development.

The thematic landscape also shows a substantial focus on gender-related keywords. Terms like “gender” (15 occurrences, 31 strength), “female” (8, 42), “gender equality” (11, 19), and “women’s rights” (13, 63) reveal that gender

dimensions are key components of scholarly discourse on Islamic inheritance. This indicates a strong academic interest in how inheritance laws impact gender equity and the role of women within Islamic legal frameworks. The presence of “marriage” (22, 48) and “family law” (12, 17) further emphasizes the familial and societal structures that shape inheritance practices.

Instruments like “*hibah*” (23 occurrences), “*wasiyyah*” (7), and “*faraid*” (9) show lower link strength despite being core to Islamic estate distribution, suggesting these terms are often used in isolation or without strong integration into broader themes. This may highlight a gap in the literature where these specific inheritance tools are underexplored in connection to issues such as economics, gender, or legal reform. Additionally, keywords like “legal pluralism” (25, 43) and “sharia” (12, 21) suggest that scholars frequently engage with the coexistence of Islamic and civil legal systems. Overall, the keyword map reflects an evolving interdisciplinary field that blends traditional Islamic concepts with modern legal, social, and economic issues.

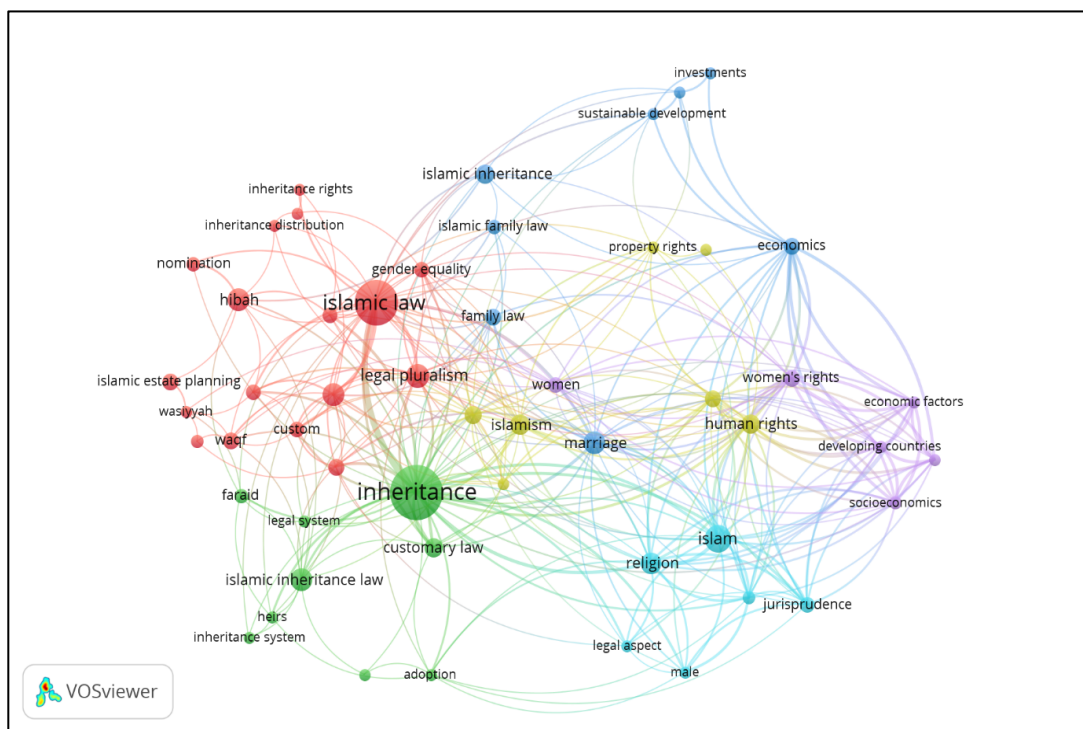


Figure 5: Visualization of keyword co-occurrence in Islamic inheritance instruments publications

4.5 What is the nature of co-authorship in terms of international collaboration?

The co-authorship analysis by country collaboration reveals that Indonesia leads with a substantial 218 documents, 973 citations, and a total link strength of 51, demonstrating not only high research productivity but also strong international collaboration. Malaysia follows with 156 documents and 522 citations, and an impressive link strength of 46, highlighting its role as a regional research hub in Islamic inheritance studies. These figures reflect the prominent integration of Islamic legal principles in both countries' legal systems, fostering robust academic interest in inheritance instruments like *wasiyyah*, *hibah*, and *faraid*.

The United States, though a non-Muslim-majority country, ranks third with 95 documents, 983 citations, and a total link strength of 15. Its high citation count reflects

significant academic influence, likely driven by interdisciplinary research and partnerships with scholars in Muslim-majority regions. The United Kingdom also plays a notable role, contributing 46 documents and 364 citations, supported by historical and contemporary interest in Islamic legal systems. Other countries with moderate but meaningful collaboration include Turkey (37 documents), Australia (19), and Pakistan (19), suggesting growing scholarly contributions from both Western and Muslim-majority nations.

Several countries exhibit smaller outputs but still engage in global scholarly networks, such as Saudi Arabia with 12 documents, 49 citations, and a link strength of 11, as well as Jordan, Singapore, and Thailand, all showing modest publication numbers but strong collaborative ties. Interestingly, countries like France, Japan, and Israel show relatively high citation counts despite low or zero link strength, suggesting more isolated but impactful research. Overall, the data highlights a well-distributed global academic landscape, with Southeast Asia taking the lead, and increasing cross-border collaboration that enhances the depth and diversity of Islamic inheritance research.

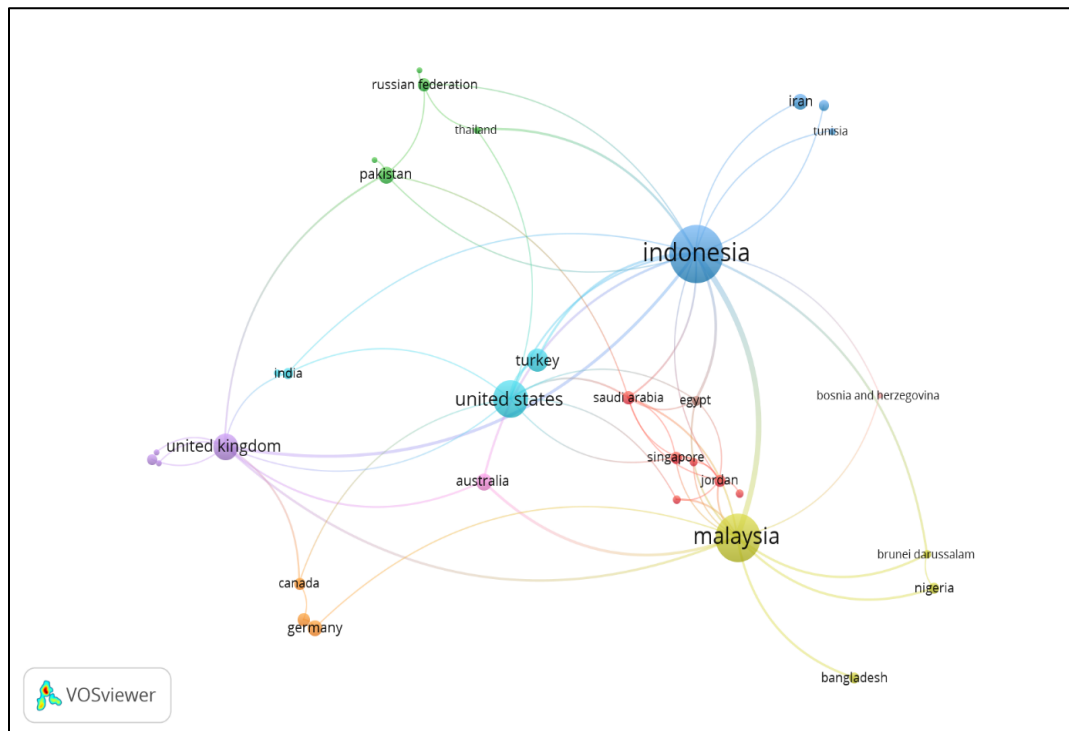


Figure 6: Visualization of co-authorship by countries collaboration

5. CONCLUSION

This bibliometric analysis set out to explore the scholarly discourse on Islamic inheritance instruments—specifically *wasiyyah*, *hibah*, and *faraid*—by examining publication trends, citation metrics, keyword patterns, and international collaborations. Using a comprehensive search strategy and robust analytical tools such as Scopus Analyzer, OpenRefine, and VOSviewer, the study successfully mapped the intellectual structure of the field, drawing insights from a final dataset of 809 documents. The findings highlighted a consistent growth in academic attention, with significant contributions from countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, and the United

States, and a marked increase in publications from 2010 onward, culminating in the peak years of 2023 and 2024.

Key findings revealed that the topic is inherently interdisciplinary, intersecting with fields such as gender studies, socioeconomics, law, and religious ethics. Notably, terms like "inheritance," "Islamic law," "gender," and "human rights" frequently occurred, indicating a strong thematic focus on equity, legal structure, and societal norms. While *faraid* remains the most established concept, *wasiyyah* and *hibah* are receiving growing attention, particularly in discussions involving gender equity and estate planning. Co-authorship analysis also pointed to moderate but evolving international collaboration, with regional hubs forming in Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

The study contributes to the broader academic understanding of Islamic inheritance by consolidating scattered research and identifying emerging themes and underexplored areas. Its findings have practical implications for scholars, legal practitioners, and policymakers seeking to enhance inheritance governance in Islamic contexts. Nevertheless, the study is constrained by its dependence on a single database and its exclusive focus on journal articles, excluding other potentially rich sources such as books or policy documents. Future investigations could deepen the analysis by incorporating case studies or examining how Islamic inheritance instruments are interpreted across different legal jurisdictions. Overall, the study underscores the utility of bibliometric methods in revealing the scope and direction of research in Islamic inheritance and points to a promising trajectory for future scholarly inquiry.

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