

# Zakat Research through a Bibliometric Analysis: A two Decade Review

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## Abstract

This bibliometric study analyses the development of Zakat Research from 2004 to 2024 based on data from 930 Scopus-indexed publications. Zakat is one of the major Islamic financial instruments in the world and has a crucial role in poverty alleviation and socio-economic development. The analysis points out the dominant research themes, including compliance, governance, economic impact, and recipient empowerment, and it identifies Malaysia and Indonesia as leading contributors. Co-authorship and citation network analysis reveals the top authors, institutions, and collaborations shaping this field. However, its limitation is that it includes only the publications indexed by Scopus; hence, important contributions may be missed, either from other databases or the regional literature.

**Keywords:** Zakat, Bibliometric Analysis

## Introduction

Zakat is one of Islam's five pillars and represents a fundamental act of worship and social responsibility for Muslims (Johari et al., 2014). Every Muslim who has reached the point of paying zakat, which is called "nisab" in Arabic (minimum threshold of wealth), is compelled to pay zakat. Typically, it is calculated as 2.5% of an individual's qualifying assets, such as savings, business profits, and investments, who possess wealth beyond their basic needs for at least one lunar year (Wahyudi et al., 2022). It is an obligatory form of worship (Ibadah) prescribed by Allah s.w.t. Allah commanded in the Qur'an: "So establish Salat and give Zakat, and hold fast to Allah" (Johari et al., 2014). Zakat has become one of the Islamic financial instruments that have a significant role in overcoming the problem of poverty" (Amalia et al., 2020, as cited in Wahyudi et al., 2022).

As a unique tool blending spirituality and social justice, zakat contributes to economic redistribution, poverty alleviation, and societal cohesion. Beyond charity, zakat also embodies ethical stewardship, reminding Muslims that wealth is a divine trust. In recent decades, scholarly attention has turned toward zakat as a framework for Islamic social finance (Ahmad et al., 2012).

This study is motivated by the need to systematically map and visualise zakat research trends over the past two decades, offering valuable insights into key contributors, themes, and gaps through bibliometric analysis.

This research plays a critical role in understanding zakat's significance as an Islamic social finance instrument by analysing past literature through bibliometric methods. It uses quantitative and statistical techniques to uncover patterns in zakat research, such as distribution across regions, themes, contributors, and collaboration trends. These insights are crucial for academia to identify gaps, recognise influential studies, and recommend areas for future research in zakat's global application and hope to answer the following research questions (RQs).

RQ1: What is the historical and geographical development of zakat research?

RQ2: Which authors have the strongest collaboration pattern?

RQ3: Which countries have the strongest collaboration pattern?

RQ4: Which topics and themes dominate zakat literature, and how have they evolved?

RQ5: Who are the leading researchers, countries, institutions, and authors shaping zakat studies?

RQ6: Which documents have been the most influential in zakat studies?

RQ7: Who are the authors as central figures of shared references within their publications?

## **Literature Review**

### *Bibliometric Analysis*

Bibliographic analysis has been used in academic circles as an assessment tool and indicator for research into academic education. The features analysed will link and contrast statistical methods from books, papers, and other publications to bibliometric data, such as citations of authors, publications, institutions, journals, and countries (Dede & Odzimer, 2022). This develops the scientific and technical output from huge data collected from allowed sources like PubMed, Scopus, and Dimensions.

This bibliometrics method uses various strategies to give comprehensive results. These include publication counting with attribution by nation, institution, and author, also called citation analysis, and counting citations, which measure the impact of work published on the scientific community, also called co-citation analysis (Okubo, 1997). Furthermore, Okubo also provided that all combination strategies will yield significant outcomes by demonstrating the conclusion in plenty of patterns and visualisations, like mapping, to show the relationships of the selected primary articles in the specified field of knowledge with the other articles.

Moreover, this analysis is among the most widespread methodologies used in recent years across the applications of academic research, including those related to economics, medicine, mathematics, and accounting (Wahyudi et al., 2022; Passas, 2024), as its popularity is now broadening toward other fields. Citing Dede and Odzemir (2022), the other forms of bibliometric analysis commonly used in scientific studies are co-occurrence, bibliographic coupling, and co-author analysis. These bibliometric analysis approaches will help academics obtain effective findings and information, which are beneficial for scientific study since the analysis can handle and scan many scientific data (Al-Sharaa et al., 2024).

**Literatures on Zakat**

Zakat is one form of Islamic financial support that has benefitted society and has recently become a hot topic among researchers worldwide. As a result, scholars from different institutions and countries have conducted several research studies on various aspects of Zakat. According to Hankodo, Bayinah, and Firmansyah (2022), bibliometric analysis is one of the most effective metrics for evaluating successful scientific works on Zakat. Some bibliometric analyses have been conducted on Zakat publications.

Wahyudi et al. (2022) present a bibliometric analysis concerning trends, themes, and social structure based on five research topics. The data was retrieved from Scopus from 1969 to 2021 by typing the phrase “zakat” or “zakah” in their attempt to access the database. Based on the findings of their study, Zakat studies started to emerge in 2008, even though a few studies were conducted in the previous year. Their study also yielded data on the most productive countries, which helped stimulate the publication of Zakat studies. Malaysia topped the list with 46.67% of the shares, followed by Indonesia with 29.38%.

In addition, many scholars use bibliometric analysis in scientific studies on Zakat or related issues (Wahyudi et al., 2022). Mansyur and Rusanti (2023) conducted a bibliographic mapping analysis to study Zakat-related publications' evolution in Malaysia and Indonesia. Moreover, they accessed databases separately from Scopus to analyse data for each country. Their final findings from the analysis indicate that Malaysia started to publish Zakat-related papers in 1997, while Indonesia started in 2008. Even though Malaysia started the research on Zakat earlier than Indonesia, it is surprising to find that Indonesia has a higher growth rate of publications at 22.7%, 6% higher than Malaysia's growth rate of 16.66%.

The added advantage is that Arsad et al. (2023) conducted various bibliometrics-based research studies on Zakat, which generated data on the most influential institutions in publishing the paper, showing Universiti Utara Malaysia took the lead, followed by International Islamic University Malaysia. Wahyudi et al. (2022) also found the same results after conducting a bibliometric analysis. However, data from both research projects showed that the two most important institutions were the same; the third and fourth-highest rankings were different in both studies. Whereas the paper by Wahyudi et al. in 2022 was ranked third for Universiti Teknologi MARA and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia at fourth place. However, this would not be the same result according to the bibliometric study by Arsad et al., 2023.

**Methodology**

This study adopts bibliometric analysis to quantitatively assess zakat literature from 2004 to 2024. The Scopus database was selected for its broad journal coverage and advanced search capabilities (Singh et al. (2021). The data collection process begins by choosing the keyword in the Scopus database based on the article's title, abstract, and keywords. The words selected for this analysis are “zakat” and “zakah.” This study is limited to articles from the past 20 years, from 2004 until 2024, and restricted to article types only. The search produced 930 documents on zakat literature. However, we have performed a screening to find any problematic documents. After the screening, no documents have been removed. Thus, all 930 papers were eligible for this bibliometric analysis. This study was analysed using vosviewer.

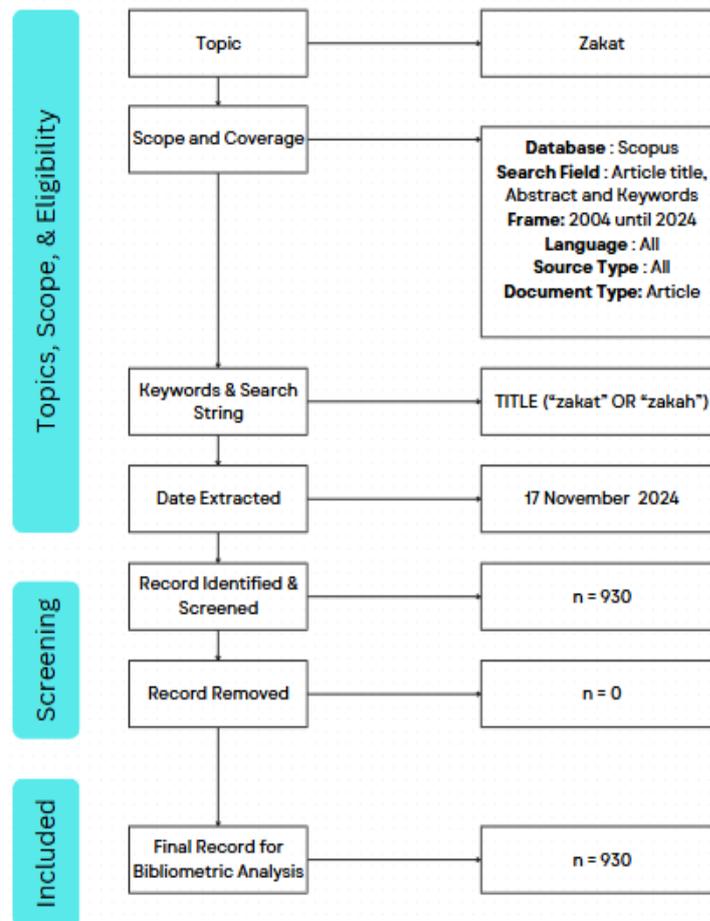


Figure 1: The Process of Data Collection

## Results and Discussion

### *Growth of Zakat Studies: 2004–2024*

Over the past two decades, research on zakat has grown significantly, evolving from foundational discussions to advanced studies on its role in addressing poverty and promoting social welfare.

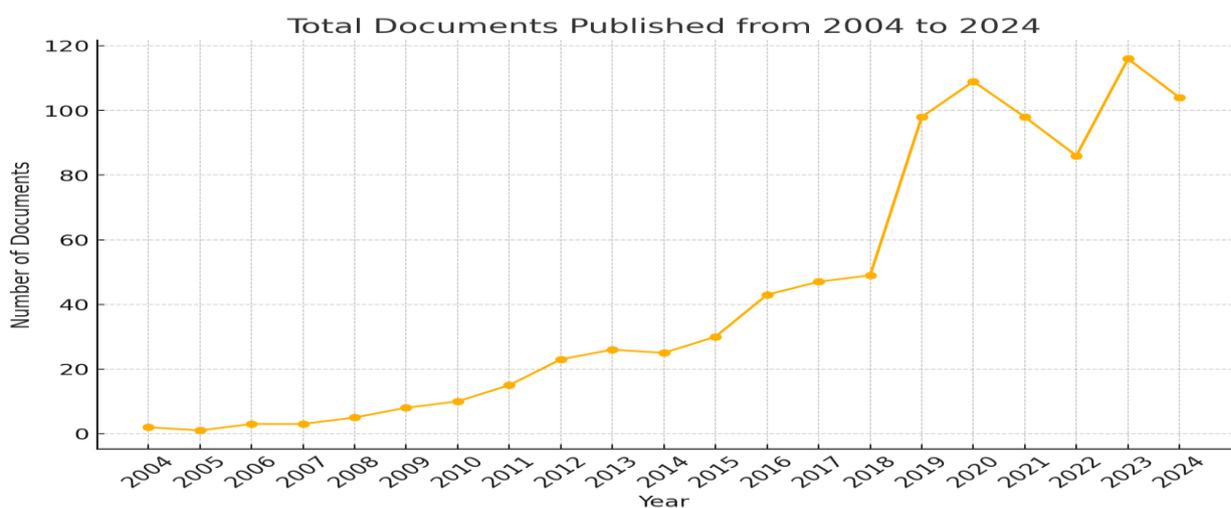


Figure 2: Total Documents Published from 2004 to 2024

This graph shows the number of documents published on zakat studies from 2004 to 2024. This trend shows a significant upward trend in research over 20 years. The zakat studies experienced small growth from 2004 until 2010, but this growth was only a small number of documents published. From 2011 to 2017, the trend shows a steady increase in published papers, increasing from 20 to 50 annually, which was better than in previous years. This growth indicates a high interest in zakat studies to alleviate poverty. From 2018 to 2020, there was a very sharp increase in research on zakat studies, with publications at the peak stage of over 100 in 2020. This was driven by the global financial crisis and increased focus on Islamic social finance in addressing socioeconomic challenges. After peaking in 2020, there was a fluctuation in publication numbers, stabilising at 100 by 2024. This might point to a stage of development as studies concentrate on digital zakat platforms, zakat governance, and how they contribute to the success of sustainable development objectives.

**Collaboration Patterns**

*Co-Authorship Amongst Authors*

This map used a fractional counting approach based on information from writers who have written at least one zakat-related document. The degree of connection between writers is indicated by colour, circle size, text size, and line thickness. Related writers are usually listed together, as indicated by the same colour.

Co-Authorship Amongst Author

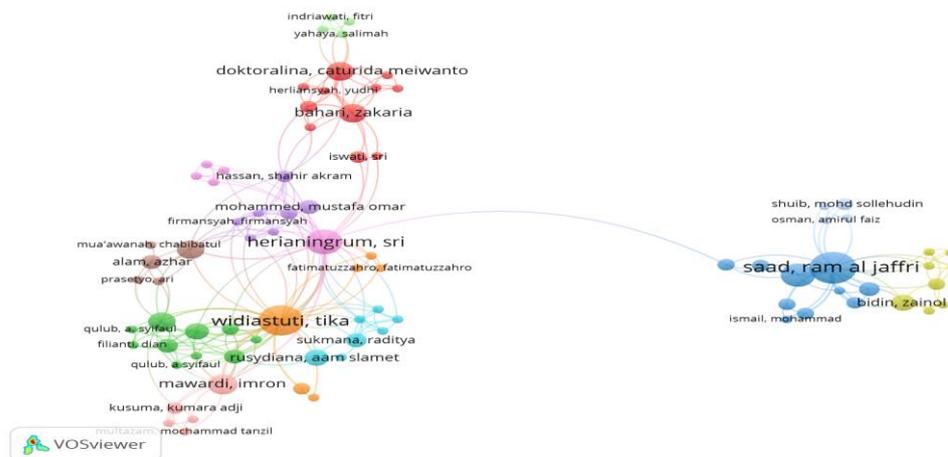


Figure 3: Co-Authorship Amongst Authors

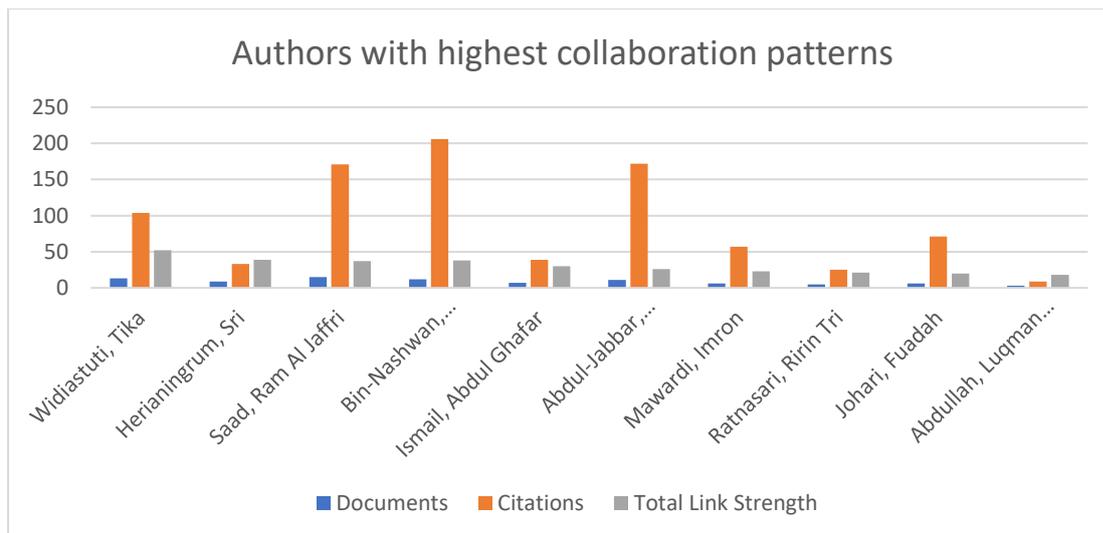


Figure 4: Authors with highest collaboration patterns

The first analysis is to study the network visualisation of co-author mapping among different authors, as shown in Figure 1 above. Widiastuti, Tika appears as a key node in the first cluster (Green), actively collaborating with authors like Rusydiana, Aam Slamet, and Maward, Imron. With the highest Total Link Strength (52) and 13 publications, the strong links suggest a critical research network with significant contributions. The second cluster (Purple) features Herianingrum, Sri, as a central node with strong connections to authors such as Mohammed, Mustafa Omar, Bahari, Zakaria, and Fatimatusz Zahro. This is reinforced by her total link strength (39) and participation in 9 documents, which signify her connections highlight significant collaborative efforts in their research outputs.

*Co-Authorship among Countries*

Collaboration in research has huge benefits, as it allows researchers to exchange expertise, methodologies, and insight that may not be readily available within a single country.

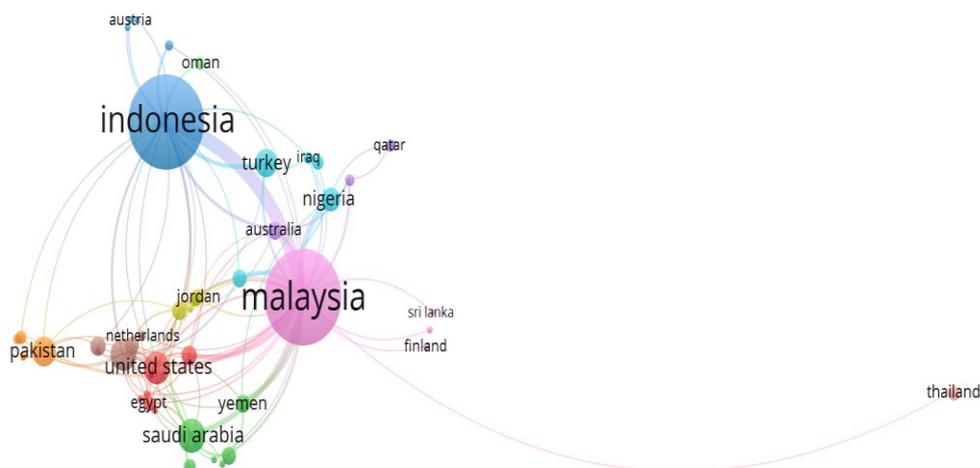


Figure 5: Co-Authorship among Countries



Zakat recipients with 24 items. found, such as waqf, Islamic finance, economic growth and management as the top-used words in the study of zakat. Lastly, with the theme of Good Zakat Governance in cluster 5, 23 items were used with Islamic banks, charity and maqasid al-shariah words representing the most used keywords.

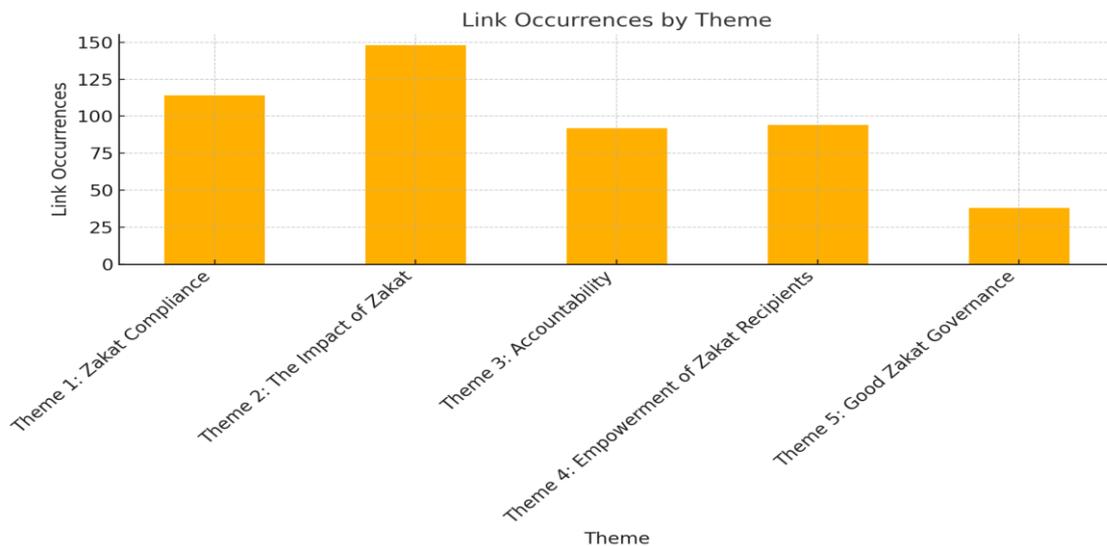


Figure 7: Link Occurrences by Theme

Citation

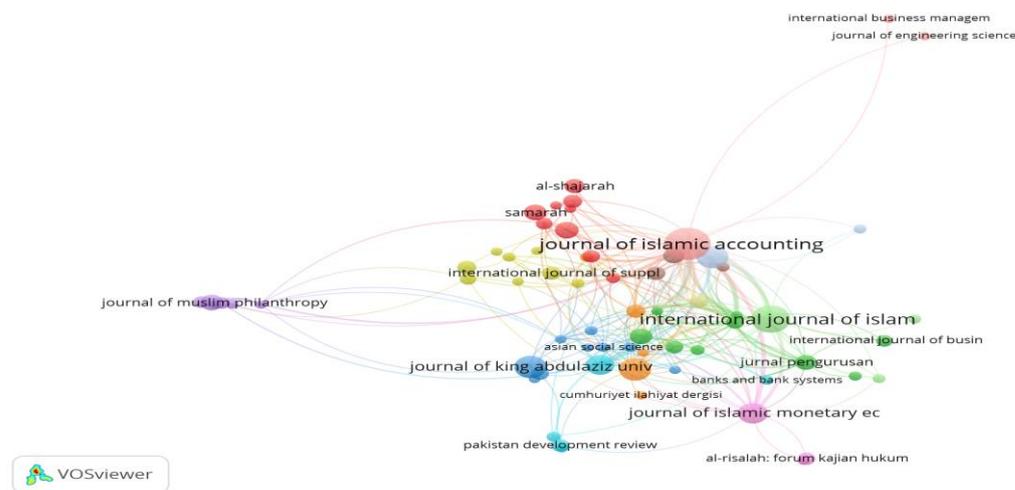


Figure 8: Citation Source with at least three occurrences

According to the figure above, the Journal of Islamic Accounting has the major nodes indicating its central role in citation and network connectivity. The first cluster (Red) comprises the Journal of Islamic Accounting, Al-Shajarah, and Samarah, primarily focusing on Islamic finance, accounting, and economic thought. The second cluster (green) includes the International Journal of Islam, Journal Pengurusan, International Journal of Social, and other journals highlighting Islamic business and management journals. The third cluster (Purple) contains the Journal of Muslim Philanthropy and Al-Risalah, focusing on philanthropic and legal aspects. Lastly, cluster four (Blue) contains Asian Social Science, Journal of King Abdulaziz

Univ, and Pakistan Development Review, which encompasses regional and social impact studies. The Journal of Islamic Accounting plays a huge role as a bridge in multiple fields linking Islamic finance, economics, philanthropy and social studies. This evidence is supported by its highest connectivity with 190 total link strength and substantial document output.

### *Citation by Organisations*

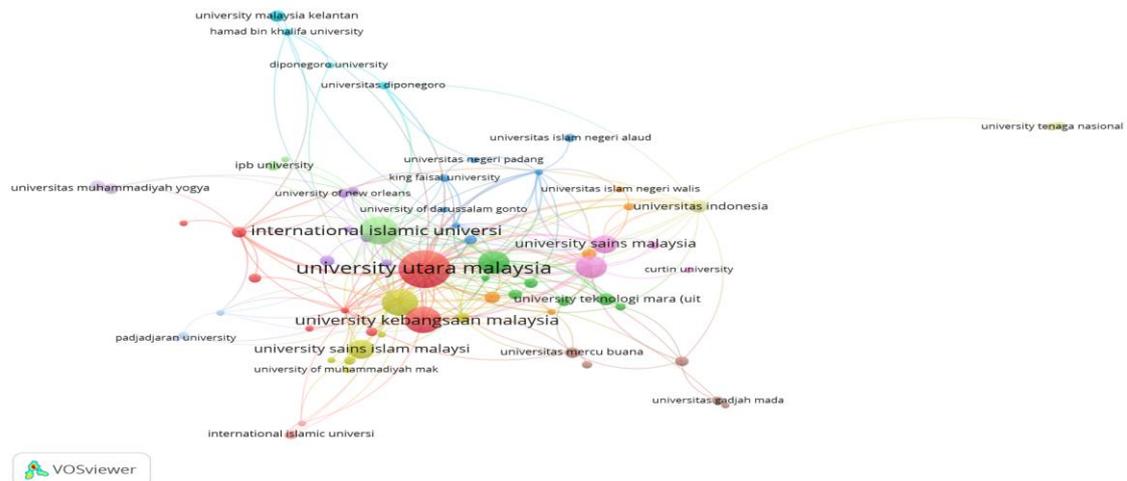


Figure 9: Citation by Organisations

The figure uses colours to group organisations into clusters based on collaboration. The minimum number of documents of an organisation is three; out of the 647 organisations, 89 meet the threshold. Malaysian institutions like Universiti Utara Malaysia and International Islamic University Malaysia (red cluster) dominate with strong connections, showing close collaboration. Other Malaysian universities, such as Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (green) and Universiti Teknologi MARA (yellow), also play key roles. In contrast, Indonesian institutions like Universitas Airlangga (yellow) and Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya (orange) appear in smaller clusters with fewer connections, indicating limited collaboration. Overall, Malaysian institutions are central and tightly connected, while Indonesian universities are smaller and more on the network's edges.

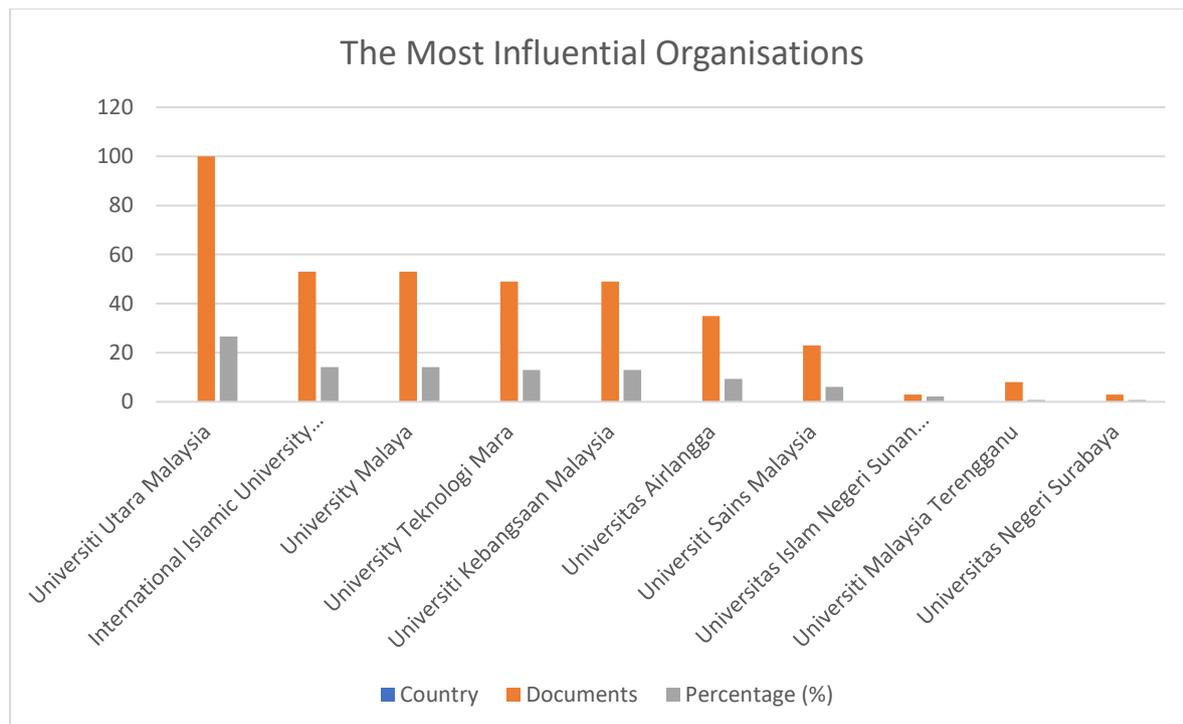


Figure 10: The Most Influential Organisations

The graph identifies the Top 10 contributing organisations based on their document contributions and the percentage of 89 organisations meeting the thresholds. Among these, Malaysian institutions dominate, contributing the majority of research outputs. Leading the list is Universiti Utara Malaysia, with 100 documents, accounting for 26.6% of the total. Other significant contributors include International Islamic University Malaysia and University Malaya, each producing 53 documents (14.1%), followed by Universiti Teknologi MARA and University Kebangsaan Malaysia with 49 documents (13.03%). These institutions highlight Malaysia’s strong focus on zakat-related research and governance. Meanwhile, Indonesian universities play a smaller yet notable role. Institutions such as Universitas Airlangga contributed 35 documents (9.31%), while smaller contributors like Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya and Universitas Negeri Surabaya each contributed three documents (0.80%).



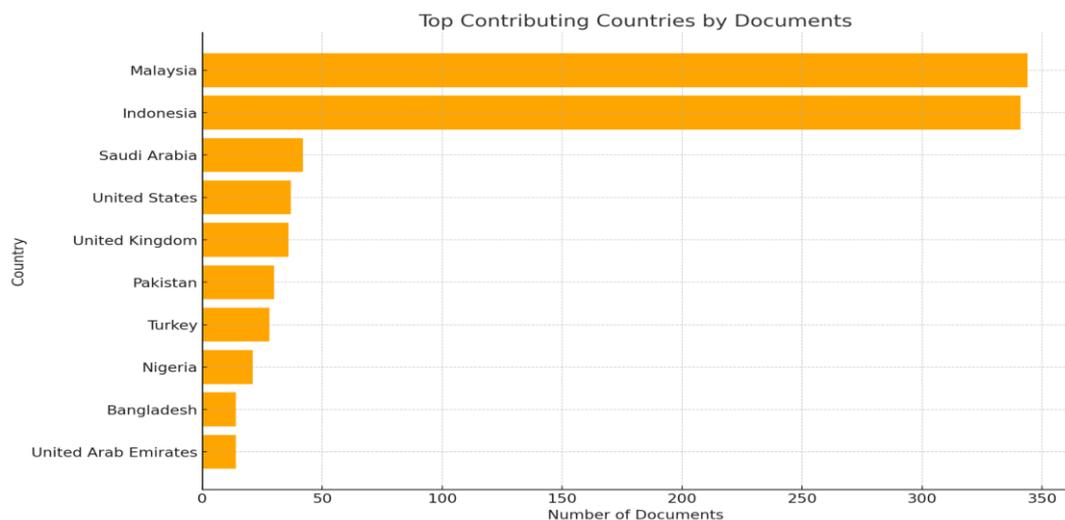


Figure 12: Top 10 Citations by Countries

The bar chart highlights Malaysia and Indonesia as the top contributors to zakat-related research, producing over 340 documents each, collectively accounting for more than 60% of the total outputs. This reflects the central role of these two countries in advancing zakat studies, driven by their strong institutional frameworks, policies, and emphasis on zakat governance and poverty alleviation. Countries like Saudi Arabia, the United States, and the United Kingdom also contribute significantly, indicating global interest in zakat's economic and social impact. Meanwhile, nations such as Pakistan, Turkey, and Nigeria focus on zakat's role in empowering recipients and addressing socio-economic challenges. The data emphasises Malaysia and Indonesia's leadership in global zakat research collaboration.

### *Bibliographic Coupling*

Bibliographic coupling is a bibliometric method that analyses the conceptual structure of scholarly literature. It is manifested when two or more documents cite the same sources in their bibliographies. The number of common references determines the strength of bibliographic coupling between documents. The method is used to discover relationships between publications, to find thematic clusters, and to trace the development over time of particular research areas. Bibliographic coupling is especially useful in outlining academic networks and measuring the connectedness of research contributions within a given subject area.

Bibliographic Coupling Analysis: Documents

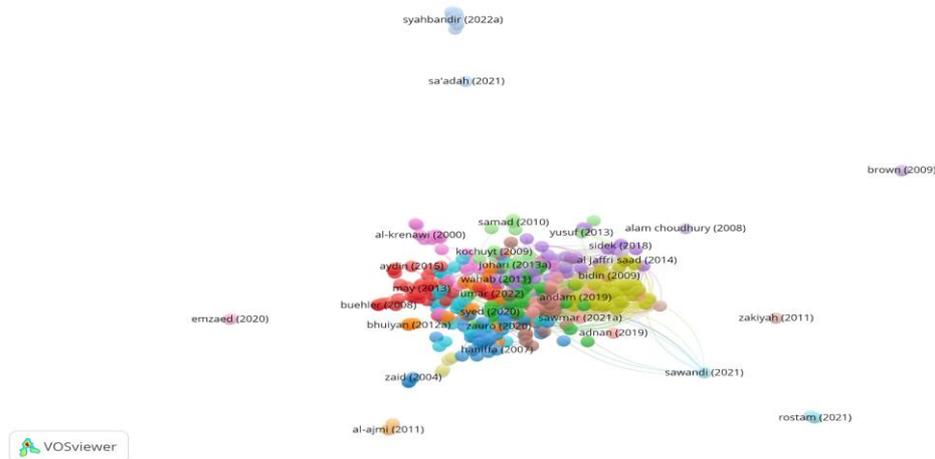


Figure 13: Bibliographic Coupling by Documents

A bibliographic coupling network appears in the picture, featuring nodes representing articles linked by common references. With outlying nodes scattering throughout the margins and dense connections in the centre, the colour-coded clusters represent groupings of closely connected research. A few primary colours—green, yellow, blue, and red clusters—that are related to one another and serve as the primary framework for references in the zakat study are highlighted in the figure's centre. The centre of the figure highlights a few main colours, which are green, yellow, blue and red clusters that are interconnected, indicating the main structure of references in zakat research. For example, publications like Umar (2022), Syed (2020), and Haniffa (2007) are some of the main research that emphasise zakat as the main foundation.

Other than that, researchers like Syahbandir (2022a), Sa’adah (2021), and Brown (2009) appear more secluded due to more emerging research areas and themes related to zakat. For instance, based on our analysis of keywords, the red cluster likely explores zakat governance and institutional frameworks, while the green and yellow clusters centralise on the areas of poverty alleviation and financial sustainability. Moreover, research such as Haniffa (2007) and Sawandi (2021) emphasises accountability, transparency, and zakat's socio-economic influence. Overall, the centre of the network highlights the documents related to zakat as the main principles; meanwhile the periphery of the networks indicates new insights into themes/areas that can contribute to zakat research.

Bibliographic Coupling Analysis: Authors

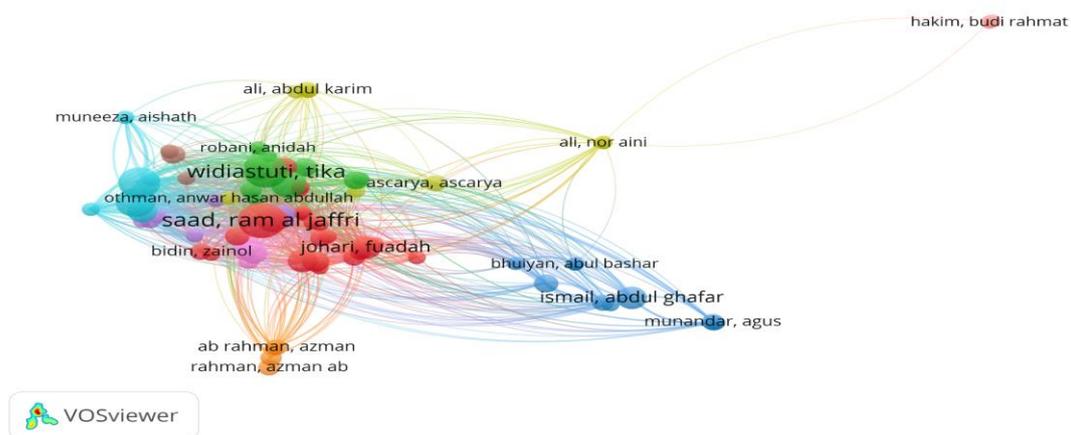


Figure 14: Bibliography Coupling among Authors

As shown in the figure above, bibliographic coupling analysis is a network of authors divided into three main clusters, each representing a distinct research community or thematic collaboration. The reason for this differentiation between the clusters is the frequency of shared references within their publications, resulting in some authors emerging as central figures and others occupying a more marginal position.

The most obvious and tightly connected cluster, denoted by red, shows a identified research focus and a high degree of collaboration among members. Centrally located, with a significant and highly noticeable position in this cluster, *Saad and Ram Al Jaffri* could indicate leadership or otherwise strong contributions to this research subject. *Hairunnizam*, like the attendant characters *Johari, Fudah, and Wahid*, has a high connectivity score to add to this group's already strong bibliographic coupling. The extensive links indicate continued attention to research topics related to economics, Islamic finance, or socioeconomic studies. The structural pattern of the group revolves around a well-structured and substantial corpus of literature with many shared citations.

In contrast, the blue cluster with a more scattered structure still exhibits a notable bibliographic coupling strength. *Abdulrahman Ghafar and Ismail* is one of the central nodes in this cluster, while other prominent authors, like *Munandar, Agus, and Salman Ahmed Shaikh*, also demonstrate high connections to the network. The relatively dispersed nature of this cluster would suggest a more generic research topic, possibly encompassing aspects of financial systems, banking, or issues related to the macroeconomy. Highly connected nodes suggest that collaborative works produced under different sub-themes might be contributions of scholars working from different institutional or geographical locations.

Moreover, the green cluster represents a moderately dense gathering characterised by a well-defined but less intertwined thematic focus compared to the red cluster. *Widiastuti, Tika* appears to be the central author and indicates a substantial influence on the research activities of this community. Scholars like *Hernaningrum, Sri, and Cahyono, Eko Fajar*, are also part of the shared bibliographic references but have fewer connections. This cluster may center around technology adoption, financial inclusion, or development economics themes.

The moderate density of this group, with some authors still isolated, suggests that the group is forming, with themes bringing together relatively rising collaboration among its authors. While the main clusters contain cohesive research communities, some authors appear isolated or at the network's periphery. Hakim, Budi Rahmat is also quite far from the major clusters, indicating that his work may represent a specialised or emerging field with less citation overlap.

Similarly, *Ali and Nor Aini* also appear partially connected, remaining at the network's periphery, hence possibly indicating interdisciplinary research or topics that have not gained much popularity or aligned with major themes. This analysis brings out clear research communities with different bibliographic coupling and influence levels. Especially, the red cluster is highly interconnected, which may indicate the greatest influence exerted by this cluster, while the blue and green clusters also show high but less concentrated connections.

Academics like *Saad, Ram Al Jaffri, and Ismai, Abdul Ghafar* act as focus points of knowledge, carrying out important roles within their own fields of research. The participation of peripheral authors, like *Hakim and Budi Rahma*, underscores the prospect of interdisciplinary collaboration and an inquiry into the research fields that are still underdeveloped. This bibliographic coupling map gives important outlooks on research dynamics, collaboration patterns, and trending topics within the academic community.

## Co-citation analysis

### Co-citation network of authors

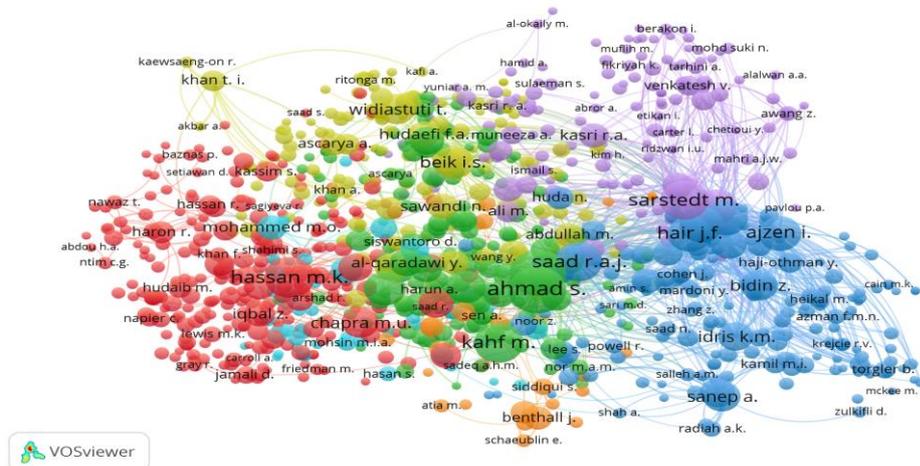


Figure 15: Co-citation network of authors

One of the most noticeable and dense groups in the co-citation map of writers is the red cluster, which includes authors like Hassan M.K., Chapra M.U., Mohammed M.O., Iqbal Z., and Haron R. Economic and Islamic finance are the main topics of this cluster, which also covers subjects like shariah-compliant financial systems, Islamic banking, ethical financial practices, and zakat.

Another noteworthy grouping that includes important authors like Ahmad S., Beik I.S., Kahf M., Saad R.A.J., and Al-Qaradawi Y. is the green cluster. The goals of Islamic law and

socioeconomic policies, or maqasid al-shariah, are the main focus of this cluster. It explores topics such as reducing poverty, distributing wealth, and promoting sustainable economic growth, and it highlights how moral and ethical factors influence economic structures.

The blue cluster, on the other hand, is distinguished by its emphasis on quantitative analysis, behavioural models, and research procedures. Authors such as Hair J.F., Ajzen I., Sarstedt M., Idris K.M., and Bidin Z. are featured. This cluster stands out in particular for its contributions to research instruments and theoretical models often used in various fields, such as management, behavioural sciences, and economics.

The purple cluster, which includes writers like Venkatesh V., Mohd Sukin N., Tarhini A., and Berakon I., is smaller but concentrates on digital advances and technology adoption. This cluster demonstrates how human behaviour and technology interact, especially in digital transformation, ICT integration, and e-commerce adoption.

The yellow cluster, which includes important writers like Khan T.I., Widiasuti T., Ascarya A., Ritonga M., and Sawandi N., concludes by highlighting new topics in financial inclusion and development economics. This final cluster focuses on the socioeconomic issues facing communities, especially in developing nations, and also looks into ways to address them through inclusive financial and economic systems.

#### Co-citation analysis: cited references

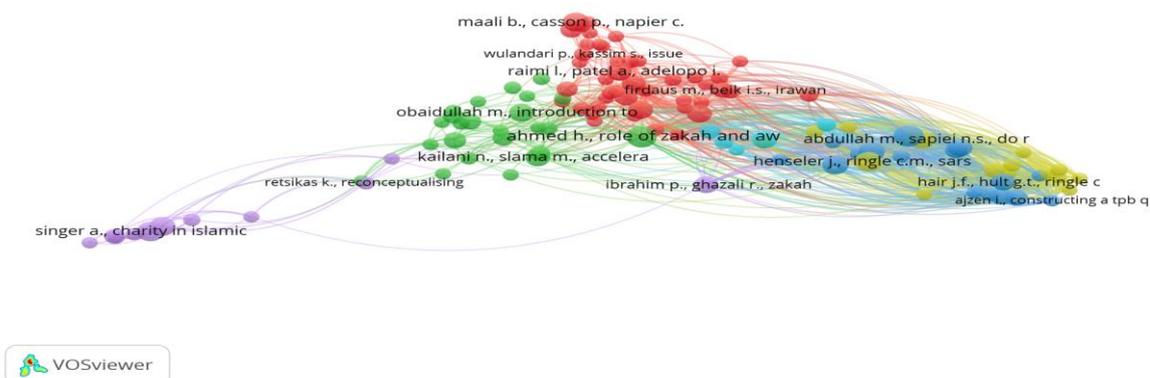


Figure 16: Co-citation network of references

The red cluster in this co-citation network focuses on zakah as a tool for economic development and social welfare. Key works by Bin-Nashwan, Abdul-Jabbar, and Aziz explore zakah compliance, economic behaviour, and poverty alleviation. Authors like Wulandari, Kassim, and Firdaus also examine issues in zakah implementation and Islamic financial systems. This cluster zakah's importance as a religious obligation and socio-economic justice mechanism.

The green cluster explores Islamic philanthropy beyond zakah, including waqf and sadaqah. Authors like Ahmed H. and Obaidullah M. study its role in economic development and poverty reduction. Researchers like Kailani N. highlight charitable behaviour in modern Muslim societies. The green cluster complements zakah in promoting social welfare.

The blue cluster highlights the quantitative methods used in Islamic economic studies, including structural equation modelling (SEM) and Ajzen I.'s Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which are crucial for analysing compliance and behaviour studies. It emphasises the need for rigorous methodologies to validate research findings in Islamic economics.

The yellow cluster links tax compliance, zakah, and religiosity. References such as Abdullah M. and Sapiei N.S. discuss the influence of religious education and faith on compliance behaviour. These studies demonstrate how religion affects economic decisions by bridging theoretical ideas with actual analysis.

The purple cluster looks at the origins of Islamic almsgiving. Writers such as Singer A. and Retsikas K. offer a conceptual analysis of the role of charity in Islamic communities. These texts give current studies depth by tying modern research to its historical foundations.

## **Conclusion**

This bibliometric analysis has explored the landscape of zakat-related research published between 2004 and 2024, based on 930 journal articles indexed in Scopus. The findings demonstrate a consistent upward trend in publication volume, particularly in the last decade, indicating a growing academic and institutional interest in zakat as both a religious obligation and a socio-economic tool.

Malaysia and Indonesia emerged as the leading contributors to zakat scholarship, with substantial outputs from institutions such as Universiti Utara Malaysia and International Islamic University Malaysia. The collaborative networks revealed that while Malaysia has built international research partnerships, Indonesian scholarship remains largely domestic. Influential authors like Ram Al Jaffri Saad and Tika Widiastuti have played central roles in shaping the field, with notable citation impact and regional collaboration.

Thematic mapping through keyword co-occurrence revealed five dominant clusters: zakat compliance and awareness, governance and accountability, poverty alleviation, empowerment and Islamic fintech, and maqasid al-shariah-based zakat distribution. These clusters reflect a rich diversity in research interests, but also reveal concentration in particular regions and topics. Journals such as the *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research* and the *Journal of Islamic Marketing* were central in disseminating zakat research.

Despite this progress, the analysis identified several gaps. The field remains heavily concentrated in Southeast Asia, with underrepresentation from Africa, the Middle East, and Western scholarship. Technological innovation, while increasingly discussed, is still limited in practical implementation within zakat management systems.

Moving forward, zakat research should strive for broader geographical inclusion, deeper exploration of digital transformation (e.g., blockchain, AI, mobile applications), and

empirical assessments of zakat's socio-economic impact. Comparative studies across different zakat institutions and integration with global development agendas such as the SDGs and ESG frameworks could significantly enrich future scholarship. Strengthening cross-border collaboration and embracing multidisciplinary approaches will be essential in elevating zakat's role in contemporary Islamic economics and global social finance.

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