

A PRISMA Systematic Review of *Waqf* Research (2019-2023): Global Trends and Methodological Insights

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Abstract:

The global importance of *waqf* in mitigating economic crises has been widely acknowledged, leading to a growing number of literature reviews in the field. This research is significant as it serves as a reference for scholars in *waqf* studies. This review analyzes *waqf* literature from 2019 to 2023 using the Scopus database. Utilizing the PRISMA framework as a methodology, the study initially identified 1153 articles, reducing this to 208 after applying specific filters. The findings highlight key elements of the literature on *waqf*, including theoretical frameworks, regional focus, and key findings and propositions. A key finding is the geographical focus of *waqf* research on Malaysia and Indonesia, the prevalence of case studies as a methodology, and the direction of future research agendas towards enhancing governance practices, leveraging technology, and pursuing legal reforms. The results of this review not only demonstrate what is already known but also highlight areas that remain underexplored. Therefore, the recommendations presented are formulated based on these findings to encourage more focused and relevant further research.

Keywords:

bibliometric review; Islamic social finance; PRISMA; *waqf*

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Introduction

The investigation of *waqf* is a crucial subject in Islamic studies, as it is a vital instrument in the Islamic economy and has the potential to make a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of the community. The results of a field study demonstrate that an increase in Islamic philanthropy contributes to reducing poverty in Indonesia, both in the short and long term.¹ In addition, it helps address funding limitations by providing continuous and stable funding sources.² Therefore, reviewing the literature on *waqf* helps in analyzing the current situation and anticipating future needs in the field of *waqf*. This study sought to do so by employing a dual methodological approach involving a bibliometric analysis followed by a systematic review. This research, conducted in 2023, addresses a research gap that has not been previously covered in the literature. This research also expands on the scope of research from previous literature, as it included: advancements in *waqf* literature have emerged and contributions notable, research methodologies and data analysis techniques employed, geographical regions which have been the main subjects of earlier research, theoretical frameworks utilized, types of samples used, the primary contribution and future research agendas identified for studies conducted in the specified period. Therefore, this study aims to systematically review *waqf* research (2019–2023) using the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) methodology, identify key methodological trends, and propose future research directions for the field.

This scholarly investigation scrutinizes the corpus of literature on *waqf*, utilizing the PRISMA methodology in accordance with the updated 2020 framework.³ The research employed a dual methodological approach comprising a bibliometric analysis followed by a systematic review. To achieve the study's objective, the Scopus database was used on July 14, 2024. For screening, a set of specific keywords was used to refine the search. The study

¹ Azwar Iskandar et al., "Islamic Philanthropy and Poverty Reduction in Indonesia: The Role of Integrated Islamic Social and Commercial Finance Institutions," *Jurnal Hukum dan Pranata Sosial* 16, no. 2 (2021): 274–301, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-ihkam.v16i2.5026>.

² Norshahira Kamarzaman, Azlin Alisa Ahmad, and Mohd Zamro Muda, "Utilizing Waqf in Enhancing Islamic Finance Contributions for Overcoming Research and Innovation Funding Challenges in TVET Education Sector," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 9, no. 1 (March 2025): 178–203, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhkv9i1.26381>.

³ Matthew J. Page et al., "The PRISMA 2020 Statement: An Updated Guideline for Reporting Systematic Reviews," *Bmj* 372, no. 71 (2021): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>.

covered diverse research fields related to inclusion and exclusion, including economics, social sciences, and the arts and humanities. These criteria ensured a comprehensive and focused review of the literature on endowment, providing a solid foundation for subsequent analysis and synthesis of findings. For details, see the appendix.

The initial search strategy in the Scopus database during the specified period included 1,153 articles without filtration. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria used in this review (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1
Inclusion criteria

Keyword	Waqf
Year	2018 < years >2024
Subject	Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Economics, Econometrics and Finance.
Document	Articles
Keyword	Awqāf, Islamic Philanthropy, Charity, Crowdfunding, Financing, Philanthropy, Productive Waqf, Endowment, Endowments, Waqf Land, awqaf, Waqf, Cash Waqf, Waqf Management, Global Cash Waqf Model, Endowment Sukuk, Endowment Regulations, Endowment Expansion, Endowment Continuity, Empowerment, Waqf Management, Development of Waqf, Cash-Awqāf, Cash Waqf Contribution, Cash Endowment, Waqf-Management, Waqf Sukuk, Waqf-Income, Sustainability, Trust.
Language	Arabic, English

Table 2
Exclusion criteria

Exclusion criteria	Reason
Conference papers, book chapters, thesis, blogs were excluded.	To cover peer-reviewed research only.
Non-Arabic and non-English articles	To facilitate accurate searching for the researcher.

The criteria determined that 208 articles were eligible for the research scope. However, a total of 89 papers were obtained because 119 articles could not be retrieved in full-text format. Therefore, they were excluded from the analysis. Of the 89 articles, 19 were excluded due to four being irrelevant, seven being missing, and four not falling within the language limitations of the filtration. Four bibliometric and literature reviews were also excluded, bringing

the total number of articles used in the final evaluation to 70, as shown in Figure 1 (Source: Page MJ, et al. BMJ 2021; 372:n71. doi:10.1136/bmj.n71).

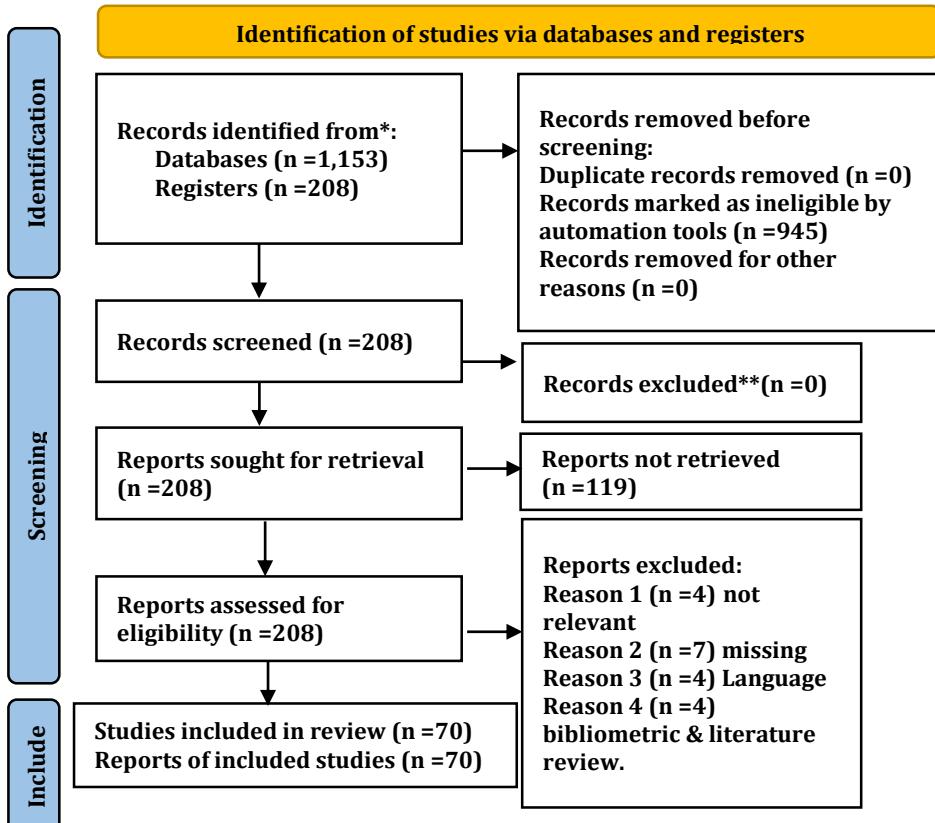


Figure 1
Prisma Framework

The *Waqf* Concept

Ibn Fāris said that *waqf* is based on a single root that denotes remaining in or adhering to something, and analogies are derived from it. He also stated under the entry *h-b-s*: *al-habs* refers to what has been set aside (*wuqifā*), and its plural form is *ahbās*.⁴ The definitions of *waqf* differed among the jurists. The most common of them is that which is devoid of precise details and conditions,

⁴ Ahmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī, *Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muhammād Hārūn (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1979).

which is retaining the corpus (*habs al-ası̄l*) and dedicating the usufruct (*tasbīl al-manfa‘a*).⁵ The purpose of *waqf* is charity, benevolence, and building the economy of the Islamic state. Previous research has examined various aspects of *waqf*.

Cizakca highlighted the economic significance of *waqf* in Muslim societies. Bello and Haneef conducted a bibliometric study on four influential Islamic economics journals in the Scopus database between 2010 and 2019 to examine and evaluate trends in Islamic economics research. The results of the bibliometric analysis revealed that research primarily focuses on Islamic banking and finance, rather than Islamic social finance, such as *zakat* and *waqf*. It may represent a gap in research aimed at achieving well-being and countering the ideology that prioritizes profit maximization.⁶ Another study analyzed the status and trends in academic research on *waqf* using a bibliometric approach over the past forty years (1980–2020). This study examined a sample of 257 articles published in the WOS and Scopus databases. It was found that Islamic economics journals paid significantly more attention to *waqf* compared to mainstream economics journals. The results demonstrated a strong research commitment to the topic of *waqf* from Indonesian and Malaysian researchers and their educational institutions.⁷ Another study maps the literature on environmental *waqf* to explore future research directions, using data from Scopus from 2001 to March 2022. The data include the number of publications per year, document type, journal, author, affiliation, country, subject, and topic. The subjects most frequently covered were social sciences. Most authors and affiliates who contributed to environmental *waqf* research were from Malaysia.⁸

Jahangir and Bulut conducted a study aimed at verifying the recurrence of concepts related to nano entrepreneurship, business, and SBF in the literature

⁵ ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ahmad al-Maqdisī, *Al-Muqni‘ fi Fiqh al-Imām Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī*, ed. al-Arnā’ūt Maḥmūd and al-Khaṭīb Yāsīn Maḥmūd, 1st ed. (Saudi Arabia: Maktabat al-Sawādī li al-Tawzī, 2000).

⁶ Lawan Bello and Mohamed Aslam Haneef, “Trends and Contributions in Islamic Economics Research: A Decade Bibliometric Analysis of Four Journals in Scopus Database,” *Journal of King Abdulaziz University, Islamic Economics* 35, no. 2 (July 2022): 3–20, <https://doi.org/10.4197/Islec.35-2.1>.

⁷ Khaled Nour Aldeen, “40-Year Bibliometric Analysis of Waqf: Its Current Status and Development, and Paths for Future Research,” *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance* 7, no. 1 (2021): 181–200, <https://doi.org/10.21098/jimfv7i1.1308>.

⁸ Rasikh Saifan Ahmad Anam, Muhammad Syariful, Reza Awaliah Ali, and Rina Rosia, “Waqf and Environment: A Bibliometric Analysis,” *Shirkah: Journal of Economics and Business* 7, no. 2 (September 2022): 201–2018, <https://doi.org/10.22515/shirkah.v7i2.480>.

on *waqf*. They examined the number of models focusing on *waqf* in relation to business or entrepreneurship through a PRISMA-compliant systematic literature review from 2000 to 2022, using various academic databases. After analyzing the selected articles, the study revealed that most published papers focused on Malaysia and were indexed in the Web of Science database. Furthermore, the most significant number of documents was published in 2021, and questionnaires were the most used data collection method during the sample period.⁹

While these studies provide a basic understanding of *waqf*, there is a need for a more in-depth examination of bibliographical trends and methodological developments in this field. These studies did not address this, as they focused on specialized aspects such as Islamic economics research, journals that paid significant attention to *waqf* compared to mainstream economics journals, the literature on environmental *waqf*, and the concepts of nano-entrepreneurship, business, and structured finance projects in the *waqf* literature. They also did not address the aspects investigated in this study. Although there were literature reviews of *waqf* in the covered period, apart from 2023, most of these literature reviews were bibliometric studies. This study, however, expanded the research topics and added, in addition to the bibliometric study, the PRISMA framework and methodology.

Distribution of the Development of Writing in *Waqf*

By analyzing the literature review, it was found that the number of publications on *waqf* nearly doubled between 2019 and 2022, but then began to decline, reaching its peak in 2022, and subsequently declined by a quarter in 2023.

⁹ Mehmet Bulut, Bora Altay, and Cem Korkut, *Islamic Financial Institutions from the Early Modern Period to the 20th Century: Comparative Perspectives on the History and Development of Cash Waqfs*, 1st ed. (Cham: The Palgrave Macmillan, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-51318-3>.

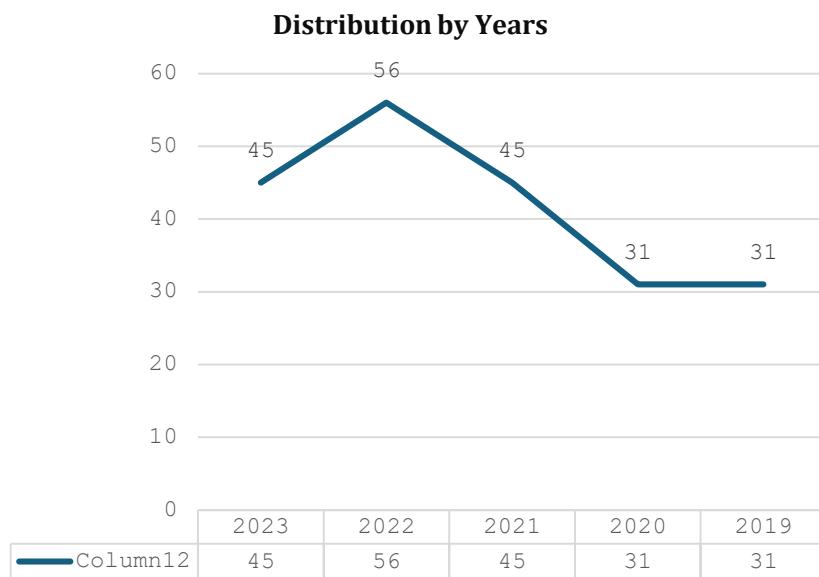


Figure 2
Distribution by years in the development of *waqf* literature

The Nations and Institutions with the Most Impact on Writing about *Waqf*

Figure 3 shows that the number of articles published in the Scopus database from Malaysia and Indonesia was approximately eight times higher than the number from other countries. The number of articles published in the Scopus database on *waqf* from Malaysia and Indonesia was nearly eight times higher than from other countries. Figure 4 and Table 4 confirm this by showing the educational institutions with the most notable contributions. It became clear that the number of papers published by the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) was 23, compared to 10 articles from the University of Malaya, Malaysia, with Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia, and Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia, in between.

Nations with most impact on writing in *waqf*

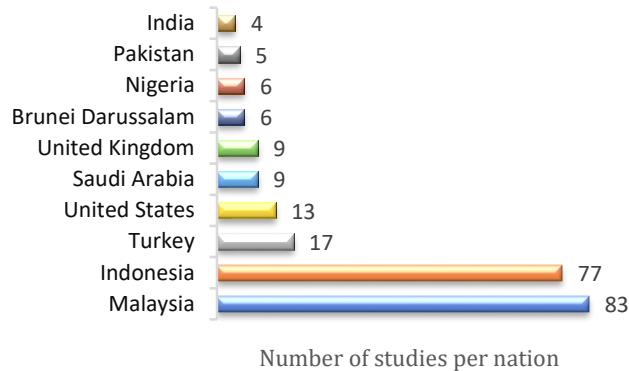


Figure 3
Top 10 countries in developing *waqf* literature

Educational institutions with the Most notable contributions

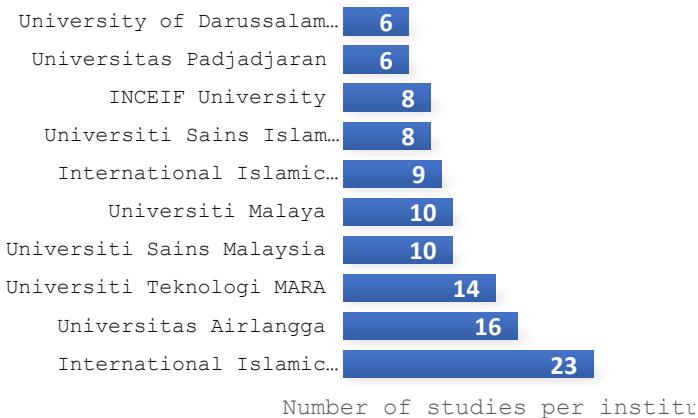


Figure 4
Top 10 educational institutions in the development of *waqf* literature

Author's Contributions

The table below presents the top 10 authors in the development of *waqf* literature, ranked by total publications and total citations.

Table 3
Top 10 authors in the development of *waqf* literature

No	Author	TP	TC	H-index	Most cited article	Times cited	Affiliation
1	Ascarya, Ascarya	23	151	7	The role of Islamic social finance during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia's economic recovery	39	University of Darussalam Gontor, Ponorogo, Indonesia
2	Laila, Nisful	36	254	10	The intention of small and medium enterprises' owners to participate in <i>Waqf</i> : the case of Malaysia and Indonesia	15	Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia
3	Sukmana, Raditya	60	428	11	A study of cash <i>waqf</i> contributions between millennials in Malaysia and Indonesia	3	Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia
4	Huda, Miftahul	9	26	4	Development of <i>Waqf</i> in the Middle East and Its Role in Pioneering Contemporary Islamic Civilization: A Historical Approach	6	Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ponorogo, Ponorogo, Indonesia
5	Abduh, Muhamad	35	400	10	A proposed human resource management model for zakat institutions in Malaysia	22	Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam
6	Allah Pitchay, Anwar	44	466	15	Cash <i>Waqf</i> model for micro enterprises' human capital development	17	Universiti Sains Malaysia institution, Minden, Malaysia
7	Daud, Dalila	15	43	4	<i>Waqf</i> integrated income generating model (WIIGM) for enhancing sustainable development goals (SDGS) in Malaysia: an evaluation of behavioral intention	5	Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

No	Author	TP	TC	H-index	Most cited article	Times cited	Affiliation
8	Engku Ali, Engku Rabiah Adawiah	17	118	8	A proposed human resource management model for zakat institutions in Malaysia	22	International Islamic University Malaysia, Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
9	Hasan, Aznan	26	106	6	A proposed human resource management model for zakat institutions in Malaysia	22	International Islamic University Malaysia, Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
10	Hassa, M. Kabir	514	10,3 33	51	A bibliometric review of the Waqf literature	23	University of New Orleans, New Orleans, United States

TP=Total publications, TC=Total citation

Research Techniques and Data Analysis Used in *Waqf* Studies

Various scholarly investigations have employed a multitude of research methodologies and data analytic techniques to scrutinize the concept of *waqf*. Qualitative analysis has emerged as a prevalent methodology, as evidenced in the scholarly contributions of Ismail,¹⁰ Abd. Wahab et al.,¹¹ and Gundogdu.¹² Case study methodologies represent another prominently utilized technique. Significant illustrations include the investigations conducted by 21 studies:

¹⁰ Rifki Ismail, "Identifying the Optimal Cash Waqf Linked Sukuk: Indonesian Experience," *Hamard Islamicus* 45, no. 3 (2022): 9–27, <https://doi.org/10.57144/hi.v45i3.500>.

¹¹ Norazlina Abd. Wahab et al., "Developing Best Practices of Islamic Estate Planning: A Construction Based on the Perspectives of Individuals and Estate Planning Providers," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 13, no. 2 (2021): 211–28, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-03-2020-0052>.

¹² Ahmet Şuayb Gündoğdu, "Poverty, Hunger and Inequality in the Context of Zakat and Waqf," *Darulfunun İlahiyat* 30, no. 1 (2019): 49–64, <https://doi.org/10.26650/di.2019.30.1.0005>.

Sulaiman et al.,¹³ Thas Thaker et al.,¹⁴ Laallam et al.,¹⁵ Jouti,¹⁶ Raja Adnan et al.,¹⁷ Khan,¹⁸ Mohaiyadin et al.,¹⁹ Justine and Abd Jalil,²⁰ Madni,²¹ Mahrus,²² Sharip et

¹³ Syahnaz Sulaiman et al., "Proposed Models for Unit Trust Waqf and the Parameters for Their Application," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 11, no. 1 (2019): 62–81, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-02-2018-0019>.

¹⁴ Mohamed Asmy Mohd Thas Thaker et al., "Cash Waqf Model for Micro Enterprises' Human Capital Development," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 13, no. 1 (2020): 66–83, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-08-2018-0091>.

¹⁵ Abdelkader Laallam et al., "Intellectual Capital in Non-Profit Organisations: Lessons Learnt for Waqf Institutions," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 12, no. 1 (2020): 27–48, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-10-2018-0111>.

¹⁶ Ahmed Tahiri Jouti, "An Integrated Approach for Building Sustainable Islamic Social Finance Ecosystems," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 11, no. 2 (2019): 246–66, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-10-2018-0118>.

¹⁷ Raja Aishah binti Raja Adnan Mutalib, Mahazan Abdul Mutalib, and Muhammad Ridhwan Ab Aziz, "Factors Necessary for Effective Corporate Waqf Management for Malaysian Public Healthcare," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 14, no. 1 (2022): 73–88, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-11-2019-0178>.

¹⁸ Tariqullah Khan, "Venture Waqf in a Circular Economy," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 11, no. 2 (2019): 187–205, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-12-2018-0138>.

¹⁹ Norlaila Mazura Hj. Mohaiyadin et al., "Addressing Accountability and Transparency Challenges in Waqf Management Using Blockchain Technology," *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance* 8 (2022): 53–80, <https://doi.org/10.21098/jimf.v8i0.1413>.

²⁰ Nurul Izzati Binti Justine and Mohamad Isa Abd Jalil, "Repeated Giving of Cash Waqf: A Case Study of Sabah, Malaysia," *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance* 8 (2022): 107–24, <https://doi.org/10.21098/jimf.v8i0.1448>.

²¹ Hafiz Hassan Madni, "Waqf Properties Act 2020 and the Constitution of Pakistan: A Critical Study," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 12, no. 1 (2022): 322–32, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.121.20>.

²² Moh. Mahrus, "Settlement of Waqf Disputes and Its Asset Protection in East Java, Indonesia," *Mazahib Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 20, no. 2 (2021): 357–91, <https://doi.org/10.21093/mj.v20i2.3833>.

al.²³ Eficandra,²⁴ Haryanto et al.,²⁵ Saad et al.,²⁶ Rochani et al.,²⁷ Hossain,²⁸ Mat Hassan et al.,²⁹ Suhaimi and Suhaimi,³⁰ Hassan et al.,³¹ Orbay,³² and Soemitra et al.³³

²³ Sharfizie Mohd Sharip et al., "Rahmah among Muslim Leaders: The Case of Waqf Institutions," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 2 (2023): 242–57, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.132.16>.

²⁴ Eficandra Eficandra, "The Reconstruction of High-Inherited Wealth in Minangkabau through Cash Waqf Movement," *Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 21, no. 1 (2022): 121–33, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v21i1.5850>.

²⁵ Rudy Haryanto, Lailatul Maufiroh, and Sulaiman Hasan Sulaiman, "Waqf Land in Madura; Its Management and Typical Dispute Resolution," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum dan Pranata Sosial* 18, no. 2 (2023): 496–518, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-ihkam.v18i2.7570>.

²⁶ Abdo Yousef Qaid Saad et al., "The Prospect of Waqf in Financing Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Yemen," *QIJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)* 10, no. 2 (2022): 381–414, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v10i2.9689>.

²⁷ Agus Rochani, Nany Yuliastuti, and Budi Sudarwanto, "The Existence of Waqf in Establishing a Sustainable Communal Space," *Journal of Islamic Architecture* 7, no. 1 (2022): 57–66, <https://doi.org/10.18860/jia.v7i1.15310>.

²⁸ Basharat Hossain, "Islamic Microfinance and Rehabilitation Model for the Slum and Floating Population by Waqf Funds, the Case of Bangladesh: A Proposal for Muslim Countries," *Journal of King Abdulaziz University: Islamic Economics* 32, no. 2 (July 2019): 139–60, <https://doi.org/10.4197/Islec.32-2.11>.

²⁹ Mohd Arif Mat Hassan et al., "Waqf Land Development Approaches and Practices in the State Islamic Religious Councils," *Planning Malaysia Journal* 19, no. 3 (2021): 317–25, <https://doi.org/10.21837/pmj.v19i17.1009>.

³⁰ Farhana Mohamad Suhaimi and Ahmad Fatin Mohamad Suhaimi, "Development of Waqf Land for Economic Development: Is a Hotel a Viable Project?," *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law* 8, no. 1 (2020): 25–32, <https://doi.org/10.33102/mjslv8i1.190>.

³¹ M. Kabir Hassan, Nurul Meirama Irsyan, and Aishath Muneeza, "The Potential of Waqf-Blended Finance Using Crowdfunding in Indonesia," *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 24, no. 1 (December 2023): 72–99, <https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.24.2023.271>.

³² Kayhan Orbay, "'They Left Behind Institutions in Financial Jeopardy': Central Anatolian Waqfs in the Wake of the Great Flight," *Radovi Zavoda Za Hrvatsku Povijest* 51, no. 1 (2019): 103–16, <https://doi.org/10.17234/RadoviZHP.51.2>.

³³ Andri Soemitra, Kusmilawaty Kusmilawaty, and Tri Inda Fadhila Rahma, "The Role of Micro Waqf Bank in Women's Micro-Business Empowerment through Islamic Social Finance: Mixed-Method Evidence from Mawardiussalam Indonesia," *Economies* 10, no. 7 (2022): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.3390/economies10070157>.

Model development methodologies have been employed by Sulaiman et al.,³⁴ Majid and Sukmana,³⁵ and Hossain.³⁶ Surveys have also constituted a favored methodological approach, with investigations carried out by Ahmad,³⁷ Ab Shatar et al.,³⁸ Justine and Abd Jalil,³⁹ Hasan et al.,⁴⁰ and Che Embi et al.⁴¹

Empirical analysis is prominently featured in the scholarly works of Ahmad,⁴² Iskandar et al.,⁴³ Hosen et al.,⁴⁴ among others. Quantitative methodologies are exemplified in the research conducted by Ab Shatar et al., Rusydiana et al.,⁴⁵ Ibrahim et al.,⁴⁶ and Sapuan & Mohd Zeni.⁴⁷ Thematic analysis

³⁴ Sulaiman et al., "Proposed Models for Unit Trust Waqf and the Parameters for Their Application."

³⁵ Rifaldi Majid and Raditya Sukmana, "Designing A Waqf-Based Agricultural Financing Model," *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance* 9, no. 3 (2023): 443–64, <https://doi.org/10.21098/jimf.v9i3.1686>.

³⁶ Hossain, "Islamic Microfinance and Rehabilitation Model for the Slum and Floating Population by Waqf Funds, the Case of Bangladesh: A Proposal for Muslim Countries."

³⁷ Mahadi Ahmad, "An Empirical Study of the Challenges Facing Zakat and Waqf Institutions in Northern Nigeria," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 11, no. 2 (December 2019): 338–56, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-04-2018-0044>.

³⁸ Wan Nuraihan Ab Shatar, Jalal Rajeh Hanaysha, and Putri Rozita Tahir, "Determinants of Cash Waqf Fund Collection in Malaysian Islamic Banking Institutions: Empirical Insights from Employees' Perspectives," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 13, no. 2 (2021): 177–93, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-06-2020-0126>.

³⁹ Justine and Jalil, "Repeated Giving of Cash Waqf: A Case Study of Sabah, Malaysia."

⁴⁰ Hazriah Hasan, Ismail Ahmad, and Nur Aisyah Ghazali, "Comparative Analysis of Waqf Generosity Index (WGI) in Generation Y and Z," *Research in World Economy* 10, no. 2 Special Issue (2019): 26–29, <https://doi.org/10.5430/rwe.v10n2p26>.

⁴¹ Ahmad, "An Empirical Study of the Challenges Facing Zakat and Waqf Institutions in Northern Nigeria."

⁴² Ahmad.

⁴³ Iskandar et al., "Islamic Philanthropy and Poverty Reduction in Indonesia: The Role of Integrated Islamic Social and Commercial Finance Institutions."

⁴⁴ Muhamad Nadratuzzaman Hosen et al., "Evaluating the Fundraising Process of the World's First Cash Waqf-Linked Sukuk in Indonesia," *QJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)* 10, no. 1 (2022): 175–214, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qjis.v10i1.8161>.

⁴⁵ Aam Slamet Rusydiana, Raditya Sukmana, and Nisful Laila, "Measuring the Efficiency of Waqf Fund in Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics and Finance* 8 (2022): 153–74, <https://doi.org/10.21098/jimf.v8i0.1650>.

⁴⁶ Siti Sara Ibrahim et al., "Urgency in Waqf-Microfinance Project Collaboration for Socio-economic Growth and the Mediating Effect of Sustainability Using PLS-SEM Analysis," *Studies of Applied Economics* 39, no. 10 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.25115/eea.v39i10.5569>.

⁴⁷ Noraina Mazuin Sapuan and Nur Azni Mohd Zeni, "The Determinants of Waqf Sustainability in Malaysia: A PLS-SEM Analysis," *International Journal of Business and Society* 22, no. 1 (2021): 102–18, <https://doi.org/10.33736/IJBS.3164.2021>.

was employed by Abd. Wahab et al.,⁴⁸ whereas Abdullah undertook juristic analysis,⁴⁹ Nurjanah et al.,⁵⁰ and Bintarto et al.⁵¹ Here are the visual representations of the methodological approaches utilized in *waqf* research:

Pie Chart: This graphical representation illustrates the proportional distribution of various research methodologies employed in *waqf* investigations. "Case studies" represent the predominant method, accounting for nearly fifty percent of the total studies, followed by "Surveys," "Quantitative methods," and "Juristic analysis."

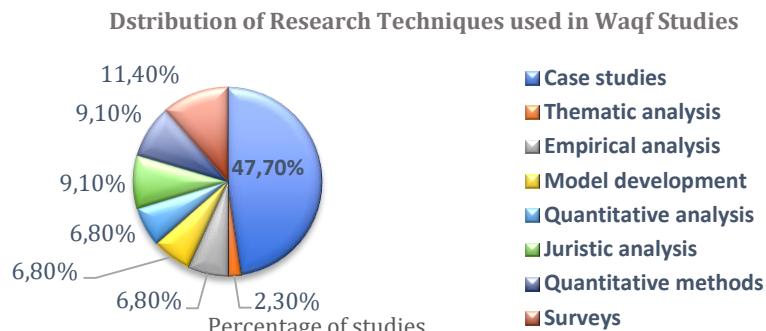


Figure 5
Percentage distribution of different research techniques used in *waqf* studies

Geographical Contexts for *Waqf* Studies

Investigations about *waqf* have been undertaken across a multitude of geographical contexts. Indonesia emerged as a significant focal point in scholarly

⁴⁸ Wahab et al., "Developing Best Practices of Islamic Estate Planning: A Construction Based on the Perspectives of Individuals and Estate Planning Providers."

⁴⁹ Mohammad Abdullah, "Classical Waqf, Juristic Analogy and Framework of Awqāf Doctrines," *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* 12, no. 2 (2020): 281–96, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-07-2019-0102>.

⁵⁰ Nurjanah Nurjanah, Rahmatsyah Rahmatsyah, and Ali Mutakin, "Fatwa Lajnah Bahtsul Masail NU Concerning Istibdāl Wakaf and Their Relevance with Renewal of Islamic Law," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 7, no. 2 (2022): 523–46, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v7i2.3707>.

⁵¹ Muhammad Al Ikhwan Bintarto et al., "Zakah and Waqf for Cryptocurrency in Islamic Law," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 7, no. 1 (May 2022): 21–38, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v7i1.4229>.

works like Mohaiyadin et al.,⁵² Sapuan and Mohd Zeni,⁵³ Hakim,⁵⁴ and others. Within the Malaysian context, substantial research efforts were executed by many researchers, such as Khairuddin and Ishak,⁵⁵ Mat Hassan et al.,⁵⁶ Suhaimi and Suhaimi,⁵⁷ Rasiam et al.,⁵⁸ Asmara and Abubakar,⁵⁹ and others. The scope of research further encompassed Northern Nigeria, as examined by Ahmad and East Java, where Mahrus concentrated his inquiries. Algeria was investigated by Laallam et al.,⁶⁰ while the focus of Hossain⁶¹ resided within the context of Bangladesh. The following visual representations illustrate the geographical distribution of *waqf* research:

This graphical depiction outlines the number of studies conducted in each geographical territory. Malaysia is at the forefront with 12 studies, followed by Indonesia with nine studies. The other geographical locations each account for a singular study. It can be attributed to the institutional empowerment of endowment institutions and the political environment that supports them. The

⁵² Mohaiyadin et al., "Addressing Accountability and Transparency Challenges in Waqf Management Using Blockchain Technology."

⁵³ Sapuan and Zeni, "The Determinants of Waqf Sustainability in Malaysia: A PLS-SEM Analysis."

⁵⁴ Muhammad Lutfi Hakim, "Waqf Information System (Siwak) and Problems of Its Application: The Case on Kantor Urusan Agama Sui Raya, Kubu Raya, West Kalimantan," *Al-Risalah: Forum Kajian Hukum dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan* 20, no. 2 (December 2020): 181–95, <https://doi.org/10.30631/al-risalah.v20i2.603>.

⁵⁵ Nur Khairina Khairuddin and Muhammad Shahrul Ifwat Ishak, "Islamic Crowdfunding Model for Empowering Student Entrepreneurship Program in Malaysia," *International Journal of Applied Economics, Finance and Accounting* 16, no. 1 (2023): 56–65, <https://doi.org/10.33094/ijaefa.v16i1.889>.

⁵⁶ Hassan et al., "Waqf Land Development Approaches and Practices in the State Islamic Religious Councils."

⁵⁷ Suhaimi and Suhaimi, "Development of Waqf Land for Economic Development: Is a Hotel a Viable Project?"

⁵⁸ Rasiam Rasiam et al., "Integration of New Media and Prophetic Communication Enhanced for Zakah, Infāq, Ṣadaqah, and Waqf Fundraising: A Case Study of Baitulmaal Munzalan Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Law* 4, no. 1 (2023): 28–46, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v4i1.1167>.

⁵⁹ Teguh Tresna Puja Asmara and Lastuti Abubakar, "Juridical Study on the Optimization of Cash Waqf Management by Islamic Bank in Indonesia," *Padjadjaran Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 6, no. 3 (2019): 427–45, <https://doi.org/10.22304/pjih.v6n3.a1>.

⁶⁰ Abdelkader Laallam et al., "Waqf in Algeria: Its Historical Exploration from Ottoman to Post-Independence Era," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 11, no. 1 (2021): 2520–0313, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.111.08>.

⁶¹ Hossain, "Islamic Microfinance and Rehabilitation Model for the Slum and Floating Population by Waqf Funds, the Case of Bangladesh: A Proposal for Muslim Countries."

presence of several internationally renowned academic institutions in these countries also plays a significant role.

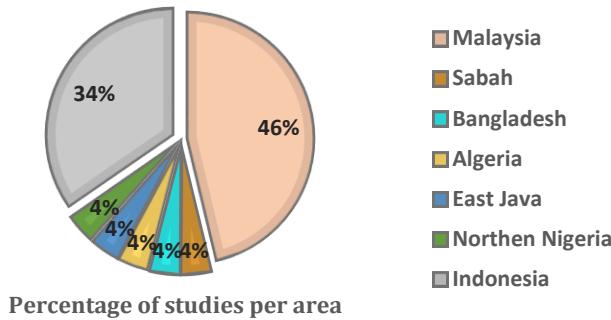


Figure 6

Percentage distribution of *waqf* studies across different geographical locations

Theory Integration

Research on *waqf* has drawn upon a diverse array of theoretical frameworks to enhance comprehension and insight. The table and graph illustrate the distribution of theoretical frameworks used in *waqf* research. The results reveal that historical institutionalism is the most frequently used theory, appearing in four different studies. It is followed by institutional theory, legal theory, and Islamic finance theory, each of which is used three times in the literature. Other theories, such as risk management theory, conflict resolution theory, crowdfunding theories, and resource management theory, were also used twice. In contrast, most theories—including stakeholder theory, human capital theory, sustainability theory, and Sharia objectives theory—were used only once.

This distribution suggests that while the literature demonstrates a wide variety of theoretical approaches, only a few theories (particularly historical institutionalism, legal theory, and Islamic finance theory) have been used more frequently, indicating their relative importance and relevance to explaining *waqf* practices. Additionally, the popularity of historical institutionalism stems from the fact that the *waqf* is an institution rooted in cumulative jurisprudential, legislative, and administrative rules. It connects jurisprudence, law, policies, governance, and investment in a single model. Thus, it directs the research

agenda toward theories that link codified rules, administrative structures, and development performance through testable tracking. It stimulates integration with institutional economics, policy analysis, Sharia objectives, and longitudinal mixed approaches, leading to explanatory models that are generalizable, predictable, and guide *waqf* sector reforms. The dominance of these theories highlights the increasing interest in the institutional and legal aspects of *waqf*. At the same time, the limited application of other frameworks highlights gaps and opportunities for future research. These varied theoretical frameworks underscore the intricate and interdisciplinary nature of *waqf* studies.

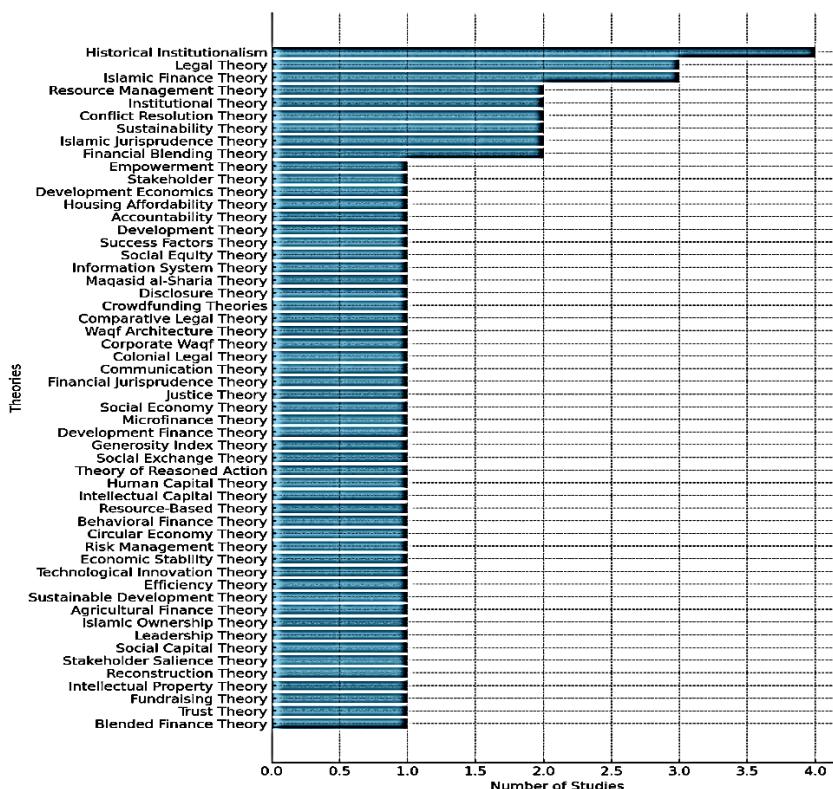


Figure 7
Number of studies per theory

Types of Samples

Research on *waqf* employs highly diverse samples drawn from institutional case studies, legal and religious texts, historical records, and data on dispute

resolution. Studies also involve estate planning services, *waqf* and zakat institutions, Islamic banks, donors, and financial experts, as well as agricultural, microfinance, SME, and community development projects. Surveys of individuals and households, as well as generational perspectives, and feasibility studies for housing and hotel initiatives, are also utilized. Furthermore, research explores regulatory systems, fundraising models, blended finance, crowdfunding, *waqf* information systems, and innovations such as cryptocurrencies. This broad range of institutional, social, legal, financial, and technological samples highlights the multidimensional nature of *waqf* studies, with case studies emerging as the most commonly used sample type, as reflected in the bar chart.

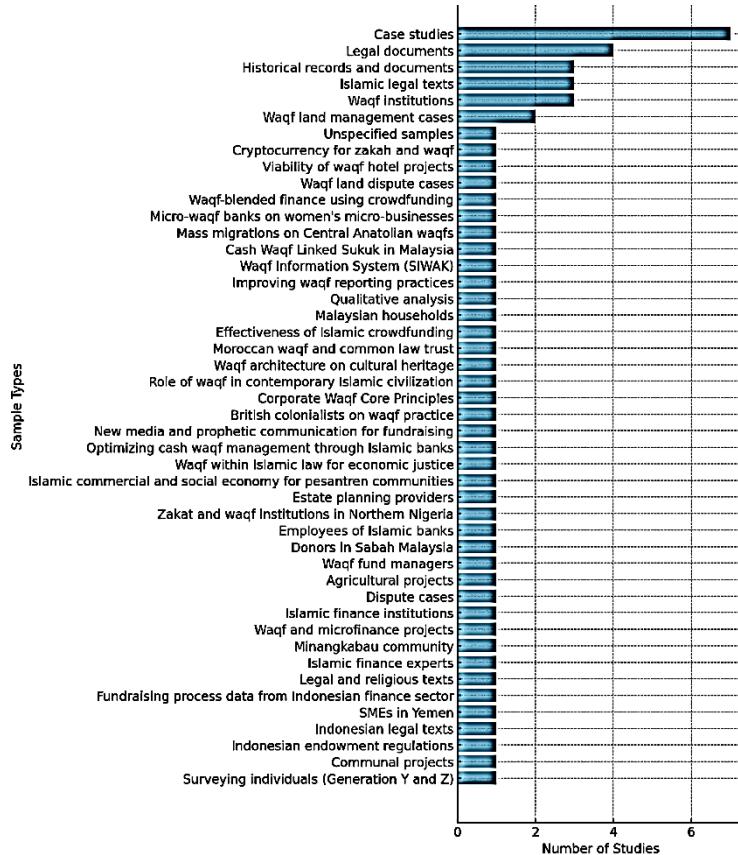


Figure 8
Number of studies for each sample type

Main Contribution

The investigation of *waqf* has yielded substantial advancements across a multitude of domains. Financial Innovations: Ismal delineated the optimal framework for cash *waqf*-linked *sukuk* within the Indonesian context, thereby presenting a financial innovation that has the potential to enhance the efficacy of *waqf* administration. Sulaiman et al. introduced pragmatic models for unit trust *waqf*, thereby offering novel methodologies for integrating *waqf* into contemporary financial systems. Abd. Wahab et al. highlighted exemplary practices relevant to Islamic estate planning, thereby enriching the broader understanding of how *waqf* can be effectively managed and preserved.

Governance: In the Northern Nigerian context, Ahmad elucidated critical challenges confronting zakat and *waqf* institutions, thereby illuminating operational impediments encountered in these regions. Jouti formulated sustainable Islamic social finance ecosystems that could foster a comprehensive paradigm for the stewardship of *waqf* assets. Tekdogan assimilated *waqf* into modern banking frameworks, positing that *waqf* could assume a pivotal role in promoting economic stability. Ambrose and Asuhaimi examined risk management and perpetuity challenges associated with cash *waqf*, providing insights into the strategies that may mitigate these issues. Laallam et al. extracted lessons concerning intellectual capital for *waqf* institutions, accentuating the paramount importance of knowledge management. Thas Thaker et al. advocated for a cash *waqf* model tailored for micro-enterprises, with the intent of bolstering small business initiatives through *waqf* funding. Khan investigated the concept of venture *waqf* within the framework of a circular economy, thereby presenting a novel approach to sustainable development. Majid and Sukmana proposed a *waqf*-centered model for agricultural financing, which could facilitate financial support for agrarian ventures through *waqf* mechanisms.

Legal Reforms: Madni conducted a critical analysis of the *Waqf* Properties Act 2020 in Pakistan, thereby providing a legal examination of recent legislative reforms. Rusydiana et al. assessed the operational efficiency of *waqf* funds in Indonesia, thereby highlighting avenues for enhancement in fund management practices. Hossain suggested a microfinance and rehabilitation framework for the slum and floating populations in Bangladesh, thereby exemplifying how *waqf* can be utilized to combat urban poverty. Hasan et al. conducted a

comparative analysis of the *waqf* generosity index between Generations Y and Z, providing insights into the generational variations in charitable inclinations.

Social Development: Justine and Abd Jalil explored the phenomenon of recurring cash *waqf* donations in Sabah, concentrating on the intrinsic patterns and motivations that govern this repetitive form of philanthropy. In a similar vein, Nurjanah et al. examined the ramifications of fatwas concerning *istibdal waqf*, thereby elucidating their significance for the evolution of Islamic jurisprudence. Furthermore, Rochani et al. investigated the role of *waqf* in promoting sustainable communal spaces, thereby underscoring its potential impact within urban development frameworks. Finally, Sharip et al. investigated the concept of *rahma* (compassion) as exemplified by Muslim leaders in *waqf* institutions, thereby highlighting the ethical considerations inherent in *waqf* management.

Future Agenda

The recommendations articulated in the future research agenda, derived from numerous scholarly investigations on *waqf* practices and models, can be systematically organized into five primary thematic directions. First, scholars emphasize the need to explore and implement new *waqf* models, particularly by optimizing existing frameworks and introducing innovative mechanisms across different regions—for instance, by investigating cash *waqf*-linked *sukuk* and unit trust *waqf* models in diverse geographical contexts. Second, numerous studies emphasize the importance of enhancing management practices within *waqf* institutions. These include standardizing Islamic estate planning methodologies, developing intellectual capital, improving transparency, strengthening management protocols for corporate *waqf*, integrating compassionate leadership, and establishing legal mechanisms for effective dispute resolution.

Third, researchers increasingly propose leveraging technology to enhance *waqf* governance—such as utilizing social media to engage millennials in cash *waqf*, adopting new media for fundraising, integrating blockchain for accountability, and improving the *Waqf* Information System (SIWAK). Fourth, scholars suggest developing new financial models, including integrating *waqf* with modern banking systems, designing risk management frameworks for cash *waqf*, applying blended finance via crowdfunding, and creating customized financing schemes for SMEs.

Finally, several investigations emphasize the need for legal and regulatory reforms, calling for revisions to the *Waqf* Properties Act, clarification of *istibdāl* provisions, and the modernization of Islamic legal frameworks to protect *waqf* assets amid contemporary challenges, including infrastructure development. The accompanying pie chart visualizes the proportional distribution of these recommendations across thematic categories.

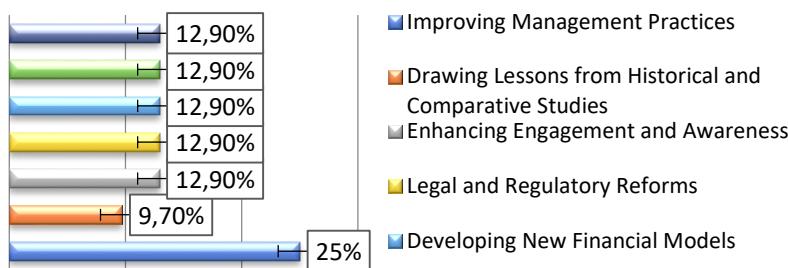


Figure 9
Percentage distribution of different future agenda recommendations

The previous results can be discussed as follows. The results show a predominance of case studies (47.73%), reflecting a preference for contextually rigorous approaches and easy access to the field. However, this limitation restricts generalizability and underscores the need for causal designs, longitudinal studies, and cross-country comparisons. This pattern is reinforced by the clear geographic concentration in Malaysia (46.15%) and Indonesia (34.62%), suggesting the presence of active centers of knowledge production and stimulating regulatory frameworks. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of other scholars, such as Khaled Nour Aldeen, Anam et al., and Bulut et al. However, that also reveals a national and linguistic bias that calls for expanding the scope of representation to include Arab, Gulf, and African contexts. At the theoretical level, historical institutionalism is at the forefront of its suitability for explaining path dependency and gradual change in *waqf* systems. However, maximizing its benefits requires integrative modelling that links codified jurisprudence to governance, financing, and performance through testable hypotheses and standardized measures of development impact and risk.

Trending topics highlight the practical applications of the literature, including modeling cash-based sukuk, investment fund endowments, and best practices. They also cover Islamic estate planning practices, sustainable social finance, banking integration, risk management, and intellectual capital. However, translating these findings into measurable decisions requires standardizing definitions, building open data repositories, and benchmarking indicators for governance, financial sustainability, and social impact. Accordingly, the future agenda is directed toward two complementary paths: the first is improving management practices through protocols for measuring and diagnosing interventions that can be evaluated empirically and quasi-experimentally, as well as through difference-in-differences, matching, and discontinuous regression analyses, provided that successive legal reforms are available. The second is legislative and regulatory reforms whose outcomes are measured over time and compared across regions, with increased geographic and linguistic representation. Thus, *waqf* studies move from descriptive to predictive and normative, providing evidence for decision-making that can be generalized and applied practically.

Conclusions

The review summarizes the current state of the *waqf* literature, which is primarily dominated by case studies and the clustering of production in Malaysia and Indonesia. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of other scholars, such as Khaled Nour Aldeen, Anam et al., and Bulut et al. It reveals institutional and cognitive activity, emphasizing the need to expand geographic representation to build stronger generalizations. Historical institutionalism emerges as a key interpretive lens for understanding continuity and change, with a call for integrative models that link codified jurisprudence to governance, finance, and performance through testable benchmarks. Applied research is moving toward monetary *waqf*, *sukuk*, governance, risk, and intellectual capital. Maximizing its impact requires unifying definitions and building data repositories and comparative indicators of sustainability and social impact. The future agenda recommends longitudinal and experimental designs, cross-regional comparisons, and a chronological assessment of legal reforms. It will move *waqf* studies from description to prediction and normativity, supporting policymaking and maximizing the developmental impact of *waqf* institutions.

The ongoing exploration and innovation within *waqf* research hold the potential to elevate its role in socio-economic development and community welfare significantly, a finding consistent with that of Kamarzaman et al. (2025). In summary, *waqf* studies encompass a rich and diverse corpus of knowledge that substantially enhances the understanding and implementation of *waqf* principles. Therefore, search in languages other than English/Arabic, rely on Scopus only, and exclude grey literature.[a]

Author Contribution Statement

Zahra Ali Nasser Al Ghafri: Conceptualization; Data Curation; Formal Analysis; Investigation; Methodology; Project Administration; Resources; Validation; Visualization; Writing Original Draft; Writing, Review & Editing.

Youcef Bensala: Data Curation; Funding Acquisition; Resources; Validation; Writing, Review & Editing.

Muhammad Ikhlas Rosele: Conceptualization; Funding Acquisition; Project Administration; Validation; Writing, Review & Editing.

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