

Islamic Philanthropy Research Trends on Zakat Infaq and Waqf Based on Bibliometric Mapping 2000–2024

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Keywords:	
Islamic philanthropy; Zakat; Infaq; Sadaqah; Waqf; ZISWAF; Islamic social finance; Bibliometric analysis	<p><i>This study examines the development and intellectual structure of Islamic philanthropy research focusing on zakat, infaq/sadaqah, and waqf (ZISWAF) over the period 2000–2024 using a bibliometric approach. Drawing on peer-reviewed publications indexed in major academic databases, the study applies science mapping techniques—including keyword co-occurrence, overlay visualization, density mapping, co-citation, and collaboration analysis—using VOSviewer. The findings reveal a significant growth and diversification of the literature, with waqf emerging as the central and most influential theme, closely connected to Islamic microfinance, cash waqf, economic recovery, and sustainable development. Temporal analysis indicates a clear thematic shift from early discussions on microfinance and charitable redistribution toward more recent emphases on Islamic social finance, SDGs, food security, and post-crisis economic resilience. The intellectual structure of the field is shaped by a relatively small group of influential authors and institutions, predominantly based in Indonesia, which also acts as the main hub of international collaboration.</i></p>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic philanthropy has long been recognized as a cornerstone of socio-economic justice within Muslim societies, rooted in the core tenets of Islamic theology and jurisprudence [1]. Its institutional instruments (zakat, infaq, and waqf) serve multiple roles: poverty alleviation, social welfare provision, and community development [2], [3]. Unlike secular charity systems, zakat is compulsory for eligible Muslims and functions not only as a redistributive mechanism but also as a spiritual obligation that fosters moral accountability [4]. Meanwhile, infaq refers to voluntary spending in the path of Allah, broadening the scope of giving beyond mandatory contributions to encompass proactive social investment [5].

Waqf, the endowment of assets for perpetual public benefit, historically financed public goods such as education, health, and infrastructure in Muslim civilizations [6]. Together, these instruments represent a uniquely integrated ecosystem of philanthropy shaped by religious, socio-cultural, and economic imperatives.

Through the beginning of the 21st century, global interest in Islamic philanthropy has increased significantly, not only within the Muslim world but also among international development actors seeking alternative models of sustainable financing [7]. This expansion in interest has been accompanied by a commensurate growth in academic literature exploring how zakat, infaq, and waqf can

contribute to contemporary development challenges such as inequality, unemployment, and social exclusion [7], [8]. The rise of Muslim populations in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East has further catalyzed research on Islamic philanthropy as scholars attempt to contextualize traditional instruments within modern socio-economic frameworks [9]. Despite this, there remains a notable diversity in thematic focus, methodological approaches, and geographical emphasis across the literature.

Bibliometric studies have emerged as a vital lens for synthesizing large bodies of scholarly work and identifying patterns, trends, and knowledge gaps within a research domain [10]. By quantitatively mapping publication outputs, citation networks, and keyword co-occurrences, bibliometric analysis enables researchers to objectively assess the structure and evolution of scientific fields (Chen, 2017). In disciplines where literature is highly fragmented or interdisciplinary, such as Islamic philanthropy research, bibliometrics can reveal connections that are not immediately visible through traditional literature reviews (Liu et al., 2020). In addition, bibliometric mapping can pinpoint emerging topics and influential scholars or institutions that shape the research frontier.

Over the period from 2000 to 2024, the landscape of research on zakat, infaq, and waqf has expanded in scope and complexity, reflecting broader socio-economic trends in Muslim and global contexts [11]. For example, studies increasingly investigate zakat as a mechanism for financial inclusion and poverty reduction within formal banking systems [12]. Simultaneously, the digitalization of giving through fintech platforms has introduced new dynamics that challenge traditional models of infaq and waqf engagement. Furthermore, cross-disciplinary explorations involving law, economics, and social policy have further diversified the field, underscoring the need for a comprehensive meta-analysis to map evolving research patterns.

Although there have been bibliometric efforts in related areas such as Islamic finance and social entrepreneurship, a systematic bibliometric mapping specifically focusing on zakat, infaq, and waqf as integrated components of Islamic philanthropy remains limited [11]. Most existing studies explore these instruments in isolation, without adequately capturing their interconnectedness or the broader intellectual structure that has developed over the past two decades [13]. This deficiency in synthesis reduces the field's capacity to build cumulative insights that robustly inform policy, institutional strategy, and future scholarship.

Despite the growing volume of research on zakat, infaq, and waqf, there is a lack of comprehensive bibliometric mapping that systematically assesses developmental trajectories, thematic clusters, and knowledge gaps across the entire period from 2000 to 2024. As a result, scholars and practitioners lack a holistic overview of how research trends have evolved, which topics have gained traction, and where future studies might be most impactful. Without such an analytical synthesis, the field remains fragmented, limiting evidence-based dialogue and strategic scholarly progress. This study aims to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of research on Islamic philanthropic instruments (zakat, infaq, and waqf) between 2000 and 2024.

2. METHOD

This study employed a bibliometric research design to systematically analyze scholarly publications related to Islamic philanthropy, specifically zakat, infaq, and waqf, published between 2000 and 2024. Bibliometric analysis was selected due to its ability to quantitatively evaluate large volumes of scientific literature and to identify patterns in research productivity, thematic evolution, and intellectual structure within a field [14]. The data set consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles written in English that explicitly addressed zakat, infaq, or waqf as core research

themes. Publications were retrieved using structured keyword searches combining terms such as "zakat," "Islamic philanthropy," "infaq," and "waqf," ensuring comprehensive coverage of relevant literature while excluding non-scholarly documents such as editorials and book reviews.

Following data collection, the bibliographic records were screened and refined to remove duplicates and irrelevant entries. To examine the intellectual and conceptual structure of the literature, this study applied science mapping techniques, including keyword co-occurrence analysis and citation analysis. These techniques enabled the identification of dominant research themes,

thematic clusters, and evolving areas of scholarly interest related to Islamic philanthropic instruments over time [15]. Visualization and network analysis were conducted using VOSviewer. Co-occurrence networks were interpreted to reveal thematic concentrations, while citation networks were used to assess influential works and foundational studies within the field. The interpretation of bibliometric findings was complemented by qualitative analysis to contextualize trends and patterns within broader socio-economic and institutional developments in Islamic philanthropy.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

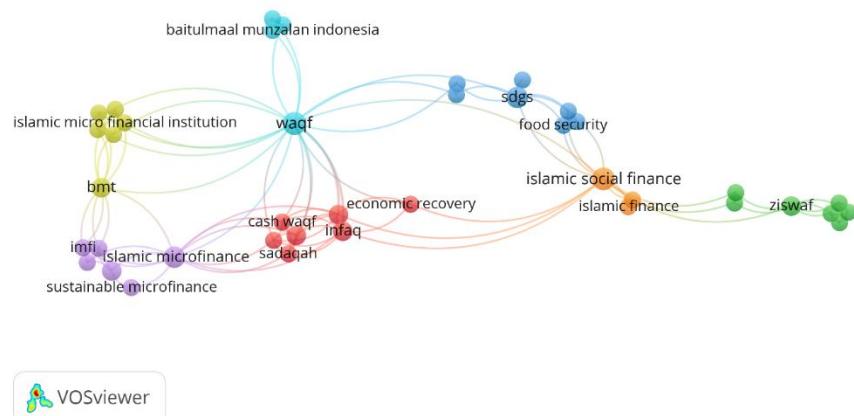


Figure 1. Network Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual structure of Islamic philanthropy research by showing how zakat, infaq/sadaqah, and waqf-related themes are interconnected. At the center of the network, waqf emerges as a dominant and highly connected node, indicating its pivotal role in shaping the literature. Its strong links with terms such as cash waqf, baitulmaal munzalan Indonesia, Islamic micro financial institution, and SDGs suggest that waqf research has evolved beyond traditional religious discourse toward institutional, developmental, and policy-oriented applications. The zakat-infaq-sadaqah cluster

(red nodes) reflects a closely knit thematic group emphasizing economic recovery, cash waqf, and sadaqah-based redistribution mechanisms. The proximity and strong linkages among infaq, sadaqah, and economic recovery indicate that recent studies increasingly frame zakat and voluntary almsgiving as countercyclical instruments for socio-economic resilience, particularly in response to crises such as poverty, inequality, and post-pandemic recovery. This cluster highlights the practical orientation of zakat and infaq research toward measurable economic outcomes.

Another prominent thematic group revolves around Islamic microfinance and sustainable microfinance (purple and yellow clusters), featuring keywords such as BMT, Islamic microfinance, IMFI, and Islamic micro financial institution. The strong ties between these nodes and waqf signal an important research stream that integrates Islamic philanthropy with financial inclusion and grassroots economic empowerment. This reflects a shift in the literature toward hybrid models that combine philanthropic funds with microfinance mechanisms to achieve sustainability and long-term impact. The Islamic social finance and SDGs cluster (blue and orange nodes) connects waqf and zakat-related instruments to broader development agendas, including food security, SDGs, and Islamic social finance. This cluster indicates a

growing alignment between Islamic philanthropy research and global development discourse, positioning ZISWAF instruments as complementary tools for achieving sustainable development goals. The linkage between Islamic finance and Islamic social finance also suggests an expanding conceptual boundary where philanthropic instruments are increasingly integrated into the wider Islamic financial ecosystem. The ZISWAF node (green cluster) appears slightly peripheral yet distinctly connected to Islamic finance and Islamic social finance, implying its role as a consolidating and integrative concept rather than a narrowly operational one. This positioning suggests that ZISWAF is increasingly used as an umbrella framework to unify zakat, infaq/sadaqah, and waqf within a single analytical lens.

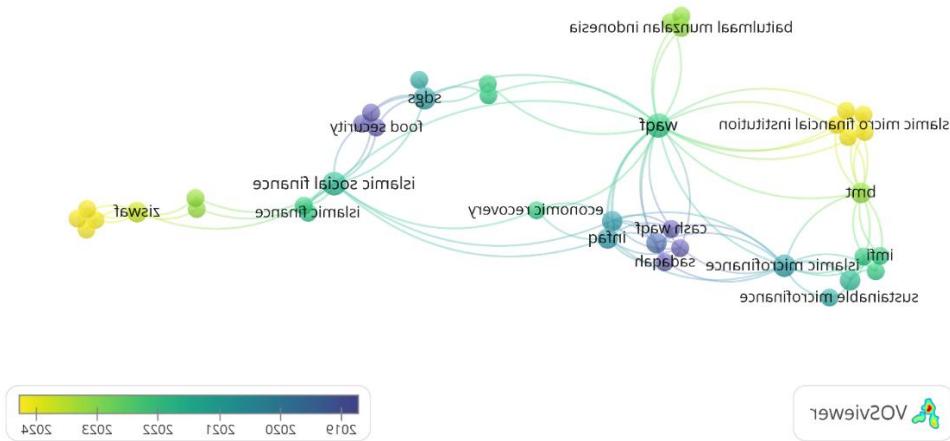


Figure 2. Overlay Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 2 highlights the temporal evolution of Islamic philanthropy research by mapping keywords according to their average publication year. Earlier themes, shown in darker blue tones, are concentrated around Islamic microfinance, sadaqah, and cash waqf, indicating that initial studies largely focused on traditional philanthropic instruments and their integration with microfinance and sustainability concepts. This suggests that early

research emphasized foundational mechanisms for poverty alleviation and financial inclusion through charitable and semi-commercial Islamic finance models. More recent research trends, represented by green to yellow colors, show a clear thematic shift toward waqf-centered institutional development and ZISWAF integration. Keywords such as waqf, baitulmaal munzalan Indonesia, and Islamic micro financial institution appear in mid-to-late

periods, reflecting growing scholarly interest in governance structures, professional management, and national-level institutional practices. This phase marks a transition from conceptual discussions toward more applied and context-specific studies, particularly in emerging Muslim-majority economies. The newest and most emergent themes, shown in

yellow hues (2023–2024), are clustered around ZISWAF, SDGs, food security, Islamic social finance, and economic recovery. This indicates a strong alignment between Islamic philanthropy research and global development agendas, especially in response to socio-economic shocks and sustainability challenges.

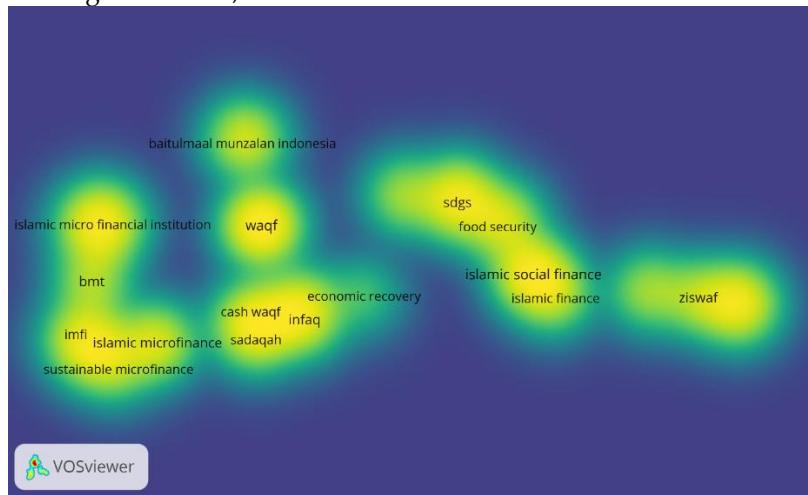


Figure 3. Density Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 3 reveals the core concentration areas of Islamic philanthropy research, with brighter yellow regions indicating topics that are most frequently studied and strongly interconnected. The most intense hotspot appears around waqf, confirming its central position in the literature as the dominant philanthropic instrument. Its proximity to cash waqf, infaq, sadaqah, and economic recovery suggests that waqf-based mechanisms are widely discussed not only as charitable endowments but also as flexible tools for socio-economic development and post-crisis recovery. A second major density area is formed by the Islamic microfinance ecosystem,

encompassing keywords such as Islamic microfinance, IMFI, BMT, Islamic micro financial institution, and sustainable microfinance. This cluster indicates a strong research focus on linking philanthropic funds with microfinance institutions to promote financial inclusion and sustainability. The overlap between this cluster and zakat–sadaqah themes reflects an integrated approach in the literature, where philanthropic instruments are increasingly embedded within operational financial systems rather than treated as stand-alone religious obligations.

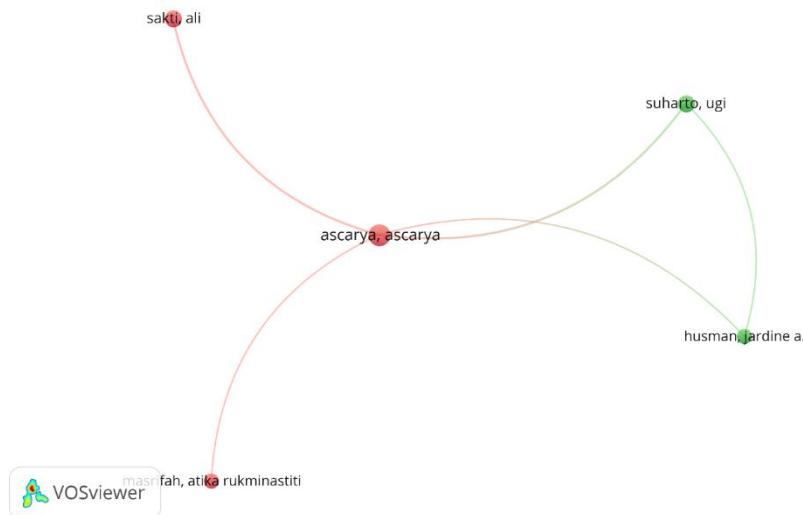


Figure 4. Author Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 4 highlights Ascarya, Ascarya as a central and highly influential scholar in Islamic philanthropy and Islamic social finance research, serving as a key intellectual bridge between different author groups. Strong co-citation links connect Ascarya with authors such as Sakti, Ali and Masrifah, Atika Rukminastiti, indicating a shared scholarly foundation focused on zakat, waqf, and institutional aspects of Islamic finance. Another connected cluster links Ascarya with Suharto, Ugi and Husman, Jardine A., reflecting cross-

stream engagement between Islamic social finance literature and broader development or policy-oriented studies. The network suggests that the intellectual structure of ZISWAF research is shaped by a small number of core authors whose works function as foundational references, reinforcing the central role of institutional and policy-driven perspectives in the evolution of Islamic philanthropy scholarship.

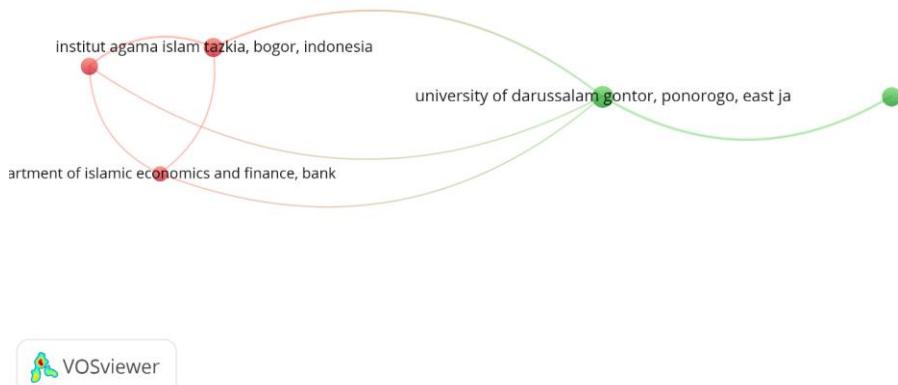


Figure 5. Affiliation Institution

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 5 illustrates a highly centralized and nationally concentrated structure in Islamic philanthropy research. Universitas Darussalam Gontor (Ponorogo, East Java) emerges as the main collaboration hub, maintaining visible links with Institut Agama Islam Tazkia (Bogor, Indonesia) and the Department of Islamic Economics and Finance (Bank-related institution). The limited number of nodes and connections suggests that institutional collaboration in ZISWAF research remains

relatively narrow, with strong ties concentrated among a few specialized Islamic economics institutions in Indonesia. This pattern indicates that while core institutions play a pivotal role in knowledge production, there is still significant room to expand inter-institutional and international collaboration to diversify perspectives and enhance the global impact of Islamic philanthropy scholarship.

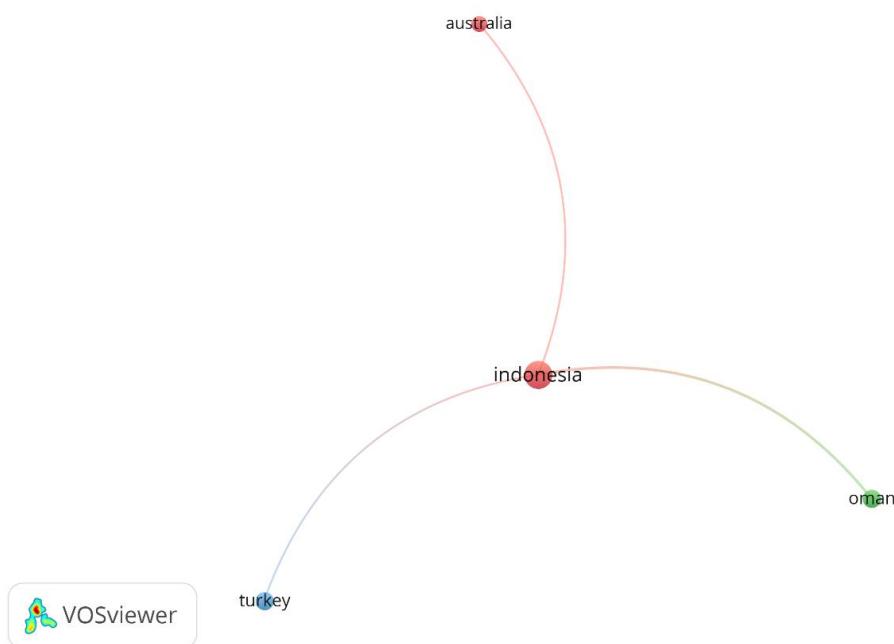


Figure 6. Country Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 6 shows Indonesia as the central hub in Islamic philanthropy research on zakat, infaq, and waqf, indicating its dominant role in publication output and international linkage. Indonesia maintains visible collaborative ties with Australia, Turkey, and Oman, suggesting that cross-country research cooperation, although present, remains relatively limited and selective. The sparse structure of the network implies that Islamic philanthropy

scholarship is still largely concentrated within national or regional contexts, with Indonesia leading knowledge production while engaging only modestly with global research partners. This pattern highlights a significant opportunity for broader international collaboration to enrich comparative perspectives and strengthen the global academic visibility of ZISWAF research.

Table 1. Top Cited Literature

Citations	Authors and year	Title
79	[16]	The role of Islamic social finance during Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia's economic recovery
31	[17]	Designing micro-fintech models for Islamic micro financial institutions in Indonesia
29	[18]	The role of islamic social finance in achieving sdg number 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
21	[19]	Proposed model of integrated Islamic commercial and social finance for Islamic bank in Indonesia
14	[20]	Green philanthropy: Islamic activism on Indonesia's environmental democracy
14	[21]	Waqt, Maqasid al-Sharia, and SDG-5: A Model for Women's Empowerment
13	[22]	Integration of New Media and Prophetic Communication Enhanced for Zakah, Infaq, Sadaqah, and Waqt Fundraising: A Case Study of Baitulmaal Munzalan Indonesia
10	[23]	Informal shariah pawnshop in the traditional markets of Surakarta
9	[24]	The potential of Islamic finance in reinforcing and regaining economic stability in qatar
8	[25]	Poverty, hunger and inequality in the context of Zakat and Waqt

Source: Data Analysis**Discussion**

This study reveals that Islamic philanthropy research on zakat, infaq/sadaqah, and waqt (ZISWAF) has evolved into a multi-dimensional and increasingly policy-oriented field. The keyword co-occurrence and density analyses demonstrate that waqt occupies a central position in the intellectual structure, functioning as a bridge between traditional philanthropic concepts and contemporary development agendas. The strong clustering of waqt with cash waqt, Islamic microfinance, and economic recovery indicates a clear shift from normative-doctrinal discussions toward applied models that emphasize financial inclusion, institutional sustainability, and measurable socio-economic impact. This confirms that ZISWAF research is no longer treated merely as a religious obligation but as a strategic instrument within Islamic social finance systems.

The temporal (overlay) analysis further shows a progressive thematic transition over time. Early studies were dominated by Islamic microfinance, sadaqah, and sustainability-oriented charity models, reflecting foundational

concerns with poverty alleviation and grassroots empowerment. More recent research increasingly aligns ZISWAF with Islamic social finance, SDGs, food security, and economic recovery, highlighting the responsiveness of the field to global development challenges and crises. This evolution suggests that scholars are actively reframing Islamic philanthropy within international development discourse, positioning zakat and waqt as complementary mechanisms to achieve inclusive growth and sustainable development, particularly in Muslim-majority economies.

From an intellectual and institutional perspective, the co-citation and collaboration networks reveal a highly centralized knowledge structure. A small number of influential authors and Indonesian institutions dominate the field, with Indonesia acting as the main country hub for ZISWAF research. While limited international collaboration exists with countries such as Australia, Turkey, and Oman, the overall network remains fragmented and nationally concentrated. This indicates a critical research gap: future studies should expand cross-country and interdisciplinary

collaboration to enhance theoretical diversity, comparative insight, and global relevance. Strengthening international partnerships would not only enrich the academic discourse but also support the development of scalable and globally applicable Islamic philanthropy models.

4. CONCLUSION

This bibliometric study concludes that research on Islamic philanthropy, particularly zakat, infaq/sadaqah, and waqf, has experienced substantial growth and conceptual maturation over the period 2000–2024. The field has evolved from predominantly normative and microfinance-oriented discussions toward

an integrated Islamic social finance framework that emphasizes institutional governance, economic recovery, and alignment with global development goals such as the SDGs. Waqf emerges as the central pillar linking various thematic streams, while ZISWAF increasingly functions as a unifying analytical concept. Despite this progress, the intellectual and collaborative landscape remains concentrated within a limited set of authors, institutions, and countries, notably Indonesia. These findings suggest that future research should prioritize comparative, cross-national, and impact-oriented studies to strengthen the theoretical robustness and practical relevance of Islamic philanthropy in addressing contemporary socio-economic challenges.

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