

# Mapping Islamic Law Scholarship (2000–2025): Co-citation Structure, Key Authors, and Research Clusters

Loso Judijanto  
IPOSS Jakarta, Indonesia

## Article Info

### Article history:

Received Apr, 2026  
Revised Apr, 2026  
Accepted Apr, 2026

### Keywords:

Islamic Law, Bibliometric Analysis, Co-Authorship, Citation Analysis, Keyword Co-Occurrence, VOSviewer

## ABSTRACT

The goal of this research is to analyze the intellectual network structure, prominent publications and thematic trends within the field of Islamic law studies during the period of 2000 – 2025 through the bibliometric methodology. Data was extracted from the Scopus database and was processed using the VOSviewer software to identify co-authorship, citations and keywords. Findings show that a rather homogeneous network structure characterizes this community with some important individuals and institutions making up its core. As for citation analysis, it demonstrates that most of the highly cited works deal with secularism, political Islam, religious/secular dynamics and other topical questions related to the relationship between religion and state. Moreover, the thematic change in research is also evident in keyword analysis. It proves that in addition to traditional themes, which relate to classical Islamic jurisprudence, there appeared several important topics including human rights, gender justice, Islamic feminism, and others.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.*



## Corresponding Author:

Name: Loso Judijanto  
Institution: IPOSS Jakarta, Indonesia  
Email: [losojudijantobumn@gmail.com](mailto:losojudijantobumn@gmail.com)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The analysis of Islamic law (fiqh and sharia) has always played a key role in the intellectual history of Muslims, impacting legal, moral, and social principles in a variety of historical and geographic environments [1], [2]. In recent years, however, the research on Islamic law has experienced a notable change under the influence of globalization, multidisciplinary interaction, and digitization of scientific information sources. An increased number of scholarly works produced over the last two decades can be attributed not only to growing academic interest but also to the emergence of new thematic foci, methodological approaches, and

epistemology of the discipline itself. The contemporary studies of Islamic law involve such fields as human rights, economics, governance, gender issues, and technological advancements, among others [3], [4].

As an accompaniment to this growth, there has been a growing necessity for systematic mapping and analysis of the intellectual structure of Islamic legal scholarship [5]. The use of bibliometric techniques, especially co-citation analysis, has been found to be effective in analyzing scholarly networks and field development. Co-citation analysis allows scholars to identify important authors, important publications, and key themes that are the

backbone of knowledge in any particular field of study. Some previous bibliometric researches have shown that co-citation networks are useful in unveiling the hidden intellectual structure of the subject matter under consideration.

The time span from 2000 to 2025 is highly important for the study of Islamic law literature because it involves a phase marked by dynamic change. The empirical data shows a consistent increase in the number of publications in this regard, with considerable growth recorded post 2015, following the trend of increasing output globally in terms of academic literature. This is coupled with a change in the nature of themes, which have evolved from purely jurisprudence-related topics towards applied issues, including Islamic finance, maqasid al-shariah, family law, and governance models.

One other notable aspect of this developing body of knowledge is its growing international and collaborative nature. Scholarly works are no longer produced exclusively within the conventional centers of Islamic studies located within the Middle East; rather, Southeast Asian countries like Indonesia and Malaysia have come to be among the leading scholars in Islamic legal discourse. This development can be seen within the context of a general trend toward a change in the geographies of knowledge production, whereby different institutional and cultural settings play a role in the formation of Islamic law discourse.

Despite all the progress, however, the increasing complexity of Islamic law studies raises great difficulties for scholars trying to work within this discipline. Due to the large number of works and their variety in subject matter, it is hard to determine who are the important authors, what issues and approaches dominate and which areas can be considered the new directions in the development of the field. Bibliometric studies of various aspects of Islamic law, such as Islamic finance, family law, and maqasid al-shariah, have already been conducted, but a holistic assessment of the field and its intellectual landscape is still lacking.

Despite the considerable growth that Islamic law scholarship has witnessed in recent times, from 2000 until 2025, the body of work generated is yet to undergo an exhaustive mapping that would reflect the intellectual structure of the literature. Most of the bibliometric works carried out in the area so far have been selective in addressing specific themes and regions, leaving much to be desired from a holistic view of the subject. Indeed, such an approach fails to take into account the inter-relatedness of issues that have dominated Islamic law scholarship. Therefore, the present study seeks to map Islamic law scholarship in relation to the co-citation structure and themes.

This study seeks to create a map of the Islamic law literature from 2000 to 2025 through a co-citation analysis in order to reveal the most important research clusters and authors.

## 2. METHODS

The present study adopts a quantitative approach based on bibliometrics to examine the evolution of research on Islamic law from 2000 to 2025. The concept of bibliometrics refers to the use of quantitative methods of analysis to examine academic literature. As a methodology, bibliometrics offers researchers an analytical framework within which patterns in publication, citation, and influence can be investigated. The data sources used in the present study consist of reliable and well-known academic databases, whose selection is premised upon their comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed journal articles and relevance to the social sciences and humanities. Specific keywords, including "Islamic law," "Shariah," "fiqh," and associated keywords, will be used to select articles from the sources. All articles included in the study will be journal papers, conference papers, or review articles written in English during the period under investigation.

In order to identify the structure of knowledge production within this field, the research adopts a method known as co-citation analysis, which is commonly used in bibliometric studies. The analysis process will

be performed by means of bibliometric software that can provide visualizations of citation links along with the computation of important indicators like centrality, density, and clustering coefficient.

Apart from co-citation analysis, the present investigation utilizes cluster analysis and descriptive bibliometric measures to analyze the data. Cluster analysis is employed to categorize relevant articles into themes, which makes it possible to discern prevalent and emergent topics in this field. The findings are analyzed using an integrated methodology that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative analyses.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Co-Authorship Analysis

The co-authorship analysis has been used for exploring the trends in collaboration among scholars conducting research on Islamic law. The analysis involves uncovering the connections between the authors and

helps to identify key contributors, as well as understanding the degree of collaboration within the international and institutional spheres. In this section, co-authorship analysis will be performed based on the data gathered from Scopus, and the results will be visualized using VOSviewer software.

#### 4. Author-level Visualization

The network of co-authorship shows the collaborative framework of scholars working on Islamic law. Through this network, one can see how different authors collaborate with each other based on their collective writings. Based on information extracted from Scopus and mapped using VOSviewer software, the network helps identify the magnitude of collaboration that takes place within the scholarly community. The nodes in the graph show the authors, and links between nodes show the collaboration, where thick links depict higher collaboration levels.

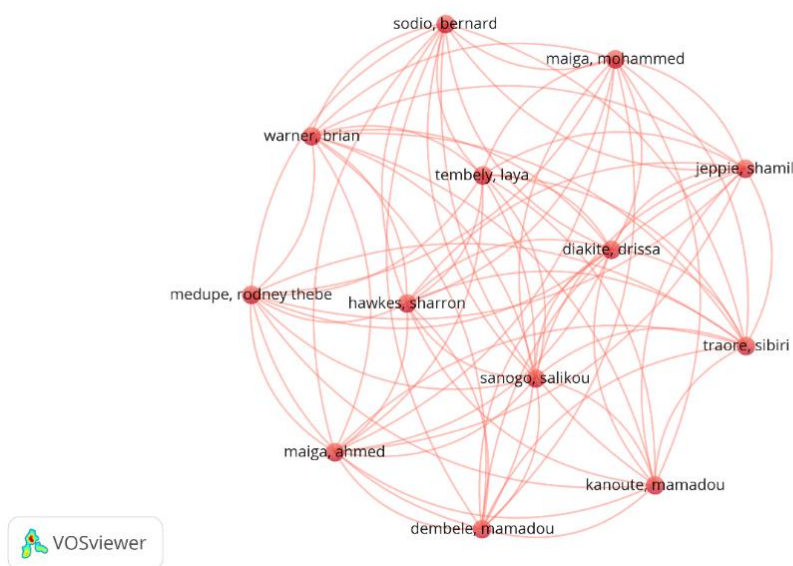


Figure 1. Author-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

The graph shows that there is a tightly interwoven network whereby almost all of the authors in the network are connected through several links of collaboration. Some of the individuals who seem to be occupying critical roles include Diakite Drissa, Sanogo Salikou, and Tembely Laya. These authors play the

crucial role of bringing together other authors since they are centrally located in the network. It would mean that they act as central individuals that help in fostering collaborative practices. The equally distributed connections show that

collaboration is a collective effort amongst a group of researchers.

Moreover, the lack of distinct groups implies that this field, at least based on this database, possesses high internal consistency rather than having different fragmented groups. Notable authors like Maiga Ahmed, Kanoute Mamadou, and Traore Sibiri have successfully embedded themselves into this network, implying their involvement in collaborative research endeavors. The complex network of connections emphasizes the significance of cooperation and co-authorship in furthering studies related to Islamic law, along with the fact that the

exchange of knowledge takes place between interlinked academic groups.

#### 5. Institution-level Visualization

The institution-level citation network shown in the following diagram shows how academic institutions influence each other in contributing to the field of Islamic law. Using information drawn from Scopus and visualized in VOSviewer, the network map shows how institutions are linked to one another through citations. In the network, nodes represent institutions, and connections show citations made by one institution to another. The difference in color indicates how institutions are clustered together into groups

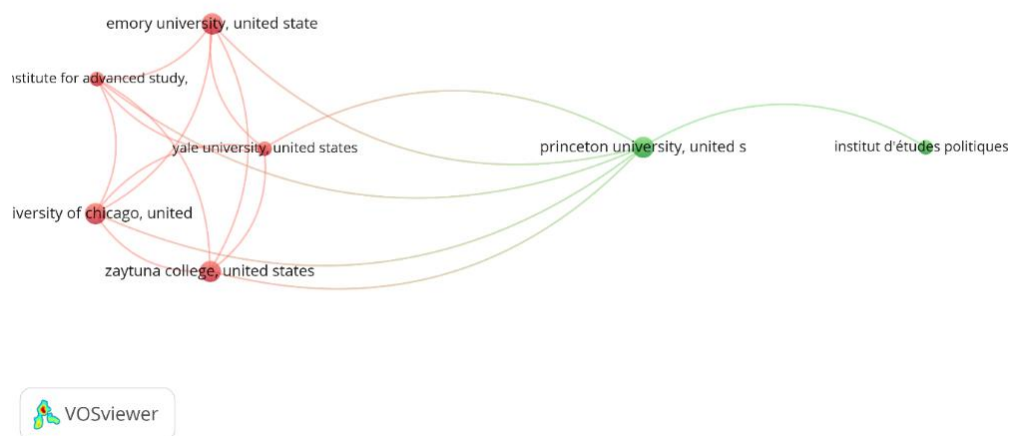


Figure 2. Institution-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

There is evident structure among the two main clusters in this figure, which demonstrates the existence of geographically or institutionally coordinated communities of scholars. There is a red cluster, comprising of institutions like Yale University, Emory University, University of Chicago, Zaytuna College, and Institute for Advanced Studies. This is an indication of a community that is highly connected to itself and consists of institutions from the United States of America. The close connection among these institutions denotes a high degree of interaction and sharing of ideas among

themselves. On the other hand, the green cluster, with its core members being Princeton University and Institut d'Études Politiques, constitutes yet another important cluster, but with somewhat greater external ties than the others. In fact, Princeton University seems to be a bridging node for both clusters, linking the predominantly U.S. cluster in red with the internationally-oriented green cluster.

#### 6. Country-level Visualization

The country collaboration network displayed here shows the world map of research collaborations in Islamic law studies.

Based on bibliographic analysis data compiled in the Scopus database and mapped via VOSviewer software, the map demonstrates the relationship and connectivity among countries in the form of research collaborations through co-authoring

and research collaboration processes. Each country is shown by the node, whereby its size corresponds to the extent of the research contributions, whereas the thickness of the connecting lines indicates the extent of cooperation between countries.

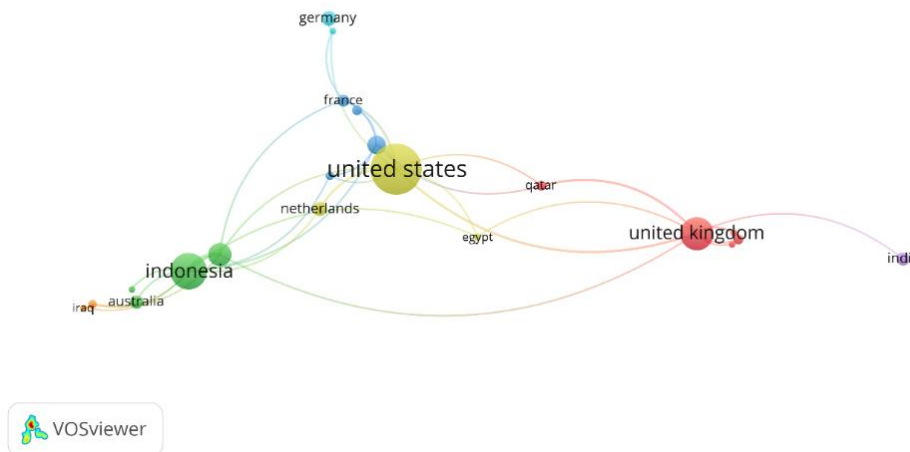


Figure 3. Country-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

This graph shows how the United States plays a key role in the international network of cooperation. The large size of the node representing the United States and the presence of multiple connections to other nations show this. The United States acts as an important intermediary between different geographical locations, such as Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Other countries like France, Germany, and the Netherlands have close ties with the United States, forming a cluster of countries that demonstrate intense academic collaboration on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Furthermore, the graph demonstrates the increasing relevance of newly emerging

countries and Muslim majority countries, especially Indonesia, which features as an important node in its respective group. Indonesia exhibits strong ties with other countries such as Australia and Iraq, as well as some indirect associations with Western regions. Another important node in this graph is the UK, which has links with Qatar, Egypt, and India among others.

### 3.2 Citation Analysis

Citation analysis is utilized to identify the most influential works and authors that have shaped the development of Islamic law scholarship.

Table 1. The Most Impactful Literatures

Citations	Authors and year	Title
667	[6]	Religious difference in a secular age: A minority report
227	[7]	The fall and rise of the Islamic state
88	[8]	The Headscarf Controversy: Secularism and Freedom of Religion

Citations	Authors and year	Title
87	[9]	Governing Islam: Law, Empire, and Secularism in South Asia
80	[10]	Therapeutic abortion in Islam: Contemporary views of Muslim Shiite scholars and effect of recent Iranian legislation
77	[11]	The Cambridge companion to classical islamic theology
72	[12]	The history of Islamic political thought: From the prophet to the present: Second edition
68	[13]	The concept of Jihad in Islamic international law
46	[14]	The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought

Source: Scopus, 2026

As can be seen from the citation numbers shown in Table 1, there is an extensive but highly interrelated corpus of literature impacting the study of Islamic law, which places particular focus on themes of secularism, politics, and religion-state relations. Well-cited sources like [6] and [7] suggest that the current issues of religious differences, minority rights, and the development of the Islamic state remain at the forefront of the debate. Alongside, research papers dealing with contemporary jurisprudence problems, for instance, therapeutic abortion [10] and jihad in international law [13] show how relevant the field is to practical aspects of law and policymaking. Finally, key reference works by scholars such as [11] and [15], along with the Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought, demonstrate the significance of understanding history and theology for the development of modern discourse.

### 3.3 Keyword Co-Occurrence Analysis

The use of co-occurring keywords analysis will help identify the research themes that exist within the field of Islamic laws. The analysis will help determine the main topics of interest within the area, as well as the connections between them. From data gathered from Scopus database and visualized in the VOS viewer software, this section presents the analysis of research themes in the area.

#### 1. Network Visualization

This network of keyword co-occurrences provides an analysis of the concepts underlying the development of Islamic law literature. This map has been generated based on data provided by Scopus and is illustrated using the VOSviewer software program. This map reveals the co-occurrences among certain keywords within scholarly journals. In the diagram, the nodes symbolize keywords where the size of each node shows the frequency with which the keyword appears in scholarly articles. On the other hand, the linking lines between nodes show the strength of co-occurrences among these keywords.

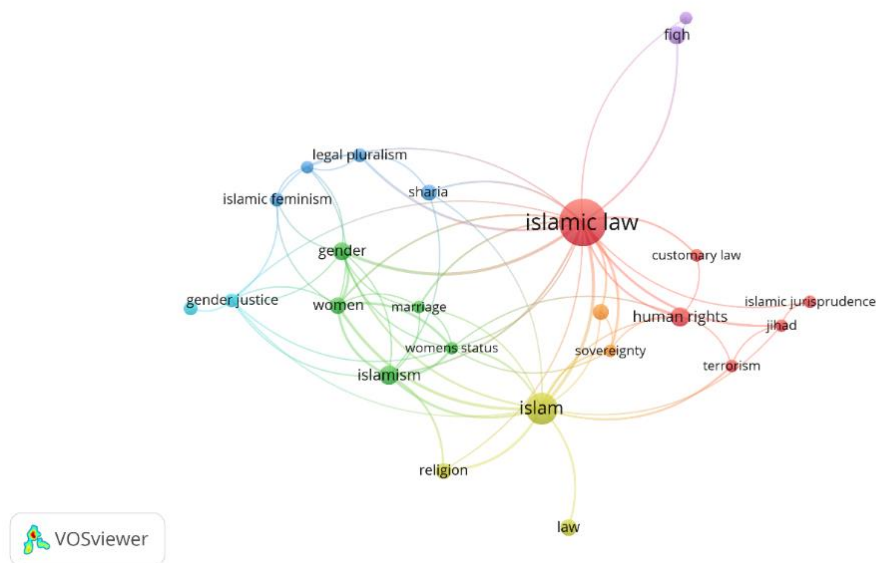


Figure 4. Network Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

From the diagram above, it is evident that Islamic law holds the highest importance in the entire network, where it serves as the primary node among different themes. The strong connections of Islamic law with the keywords of human rights, customary law, Islamic jurisprudence, and sovereignty suggest that most of the studies are focused on the interactions between the concepts of Islamic law and other modern-day legal and political ideas. Islamic law acts as the key linking idea that connects classical jurisprudence to modern global concerns. Prominent clusters on the right-hand side of the map highlight the themes associated with law, politics, and global security issues, such as human rights, terrorism, and jihad. This indicates that there is a strong possibility of research articles being concerned about the understanding of Islamic law in relation to global political issues and international relations. The use of these keywords reveals the research interests that are commonly tied up with the geopolitics, security issues, and the relationship between the concepts of Islamic law and human rights.

Yet another prominent cluster revolves around Islam in a more general sense, with terms like religion and law associated with it. It is significant to note that Islam plays an instrumental role in forming

the basis of law in the context of Islamic theology. The relationship between Islam and Islamic law illustrates how numerous works explore legal themes from a theological perspective, stressing the interdependence of religion and law in the Islamic world. In the left-hand part of the network, there is also a separate cluster centered on the theme of gender, which involves terms such as “women”, “gender”, “Islamic feminism”, “gender justice”, and “women’s status”. It suggests that there is a developing literature dealing with gender equality and women’s rights through the prism of Islamic laws. The relationships between the keywords imply a new and rising research agenda, one that interprets Islamic law according to the current gender discussion.

While the lesser yet important concepts like fiqh and legal pluralism highlight particular fields, the first one, namely fiqh, which is the classical Islamic jurisprudence, is linked to the key concept of the paper, and therefore, shows the significance of legal studies in the classical way. Legal pluralism, on the other hand, reveals interest in the relationship between Islamic law and other legal systems in different socio-political environments. From all the above, it becomes clear that studies in Islamic law are profoundly grounded in their

classical roots and, at the same time, dynamic enough.

## 2. Overlay Visualization

As shown in the figure below, the overlay network of co-occurring keywords provides the timeline of changes in research trends within the literature on Islamic law. By employing bibliometric techniques with the

aid of Scopus and VOSviewer, this diagram does not only present the linkages among the keywords, but it also adds the element of time, which is denoted by the varying colors from dark (for earlier periods) to light (for more recent periods). Through the use of this timeline, one can determine both established and new research issues.

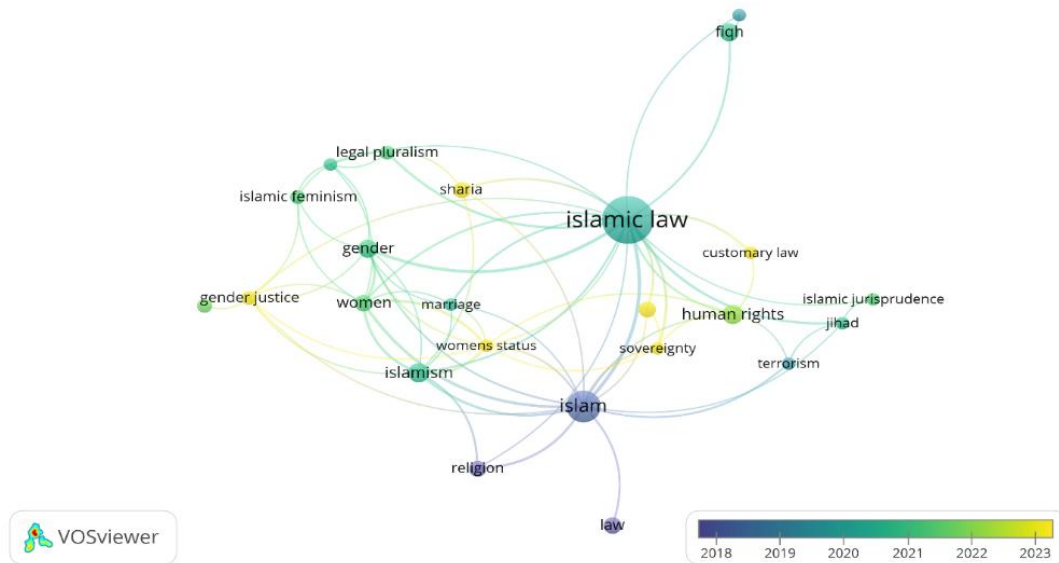


Figure 5. Overlay Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

The diagram reveals that Islamic law is indeed the main subject matter discussed over time, evident from its dominant position and equal coloring pattern. Linked to this subject matter are key words like Islam, religion, and law, which usually feature in dark colors. This means that the issues have indeed been around for some time now and form part of the core areas of discussion in Islamic law. The conclusion one draws from this is that there was initially a lot of work done in trying to define the doctrine of Islamic law. On the other hand, the current trends of research have been captured by lighter nodes like human rights, gender justice, Islamic feminism, and women's position. All these topics point out an increasing academic interest in socio-legal research, especially in

the field of gender equality and right-based discourse in Islamic laws. It is notable that an increasing number of studies on such issues shows a trend towards critical or reformist approaches, where Islamic laws are analyzed against the backdrop of global contemporary standards. Furthermore, new concepts such as sovereignty, customary law, and legal pluralism demonstrate the interdisciplinary trend in the development of the discipline. The emergence of these keywords, which can be found in later shades of color, implies that recent studies have become more involved in discussing matters of governance and legal diversity.

## 3. Density Visualization

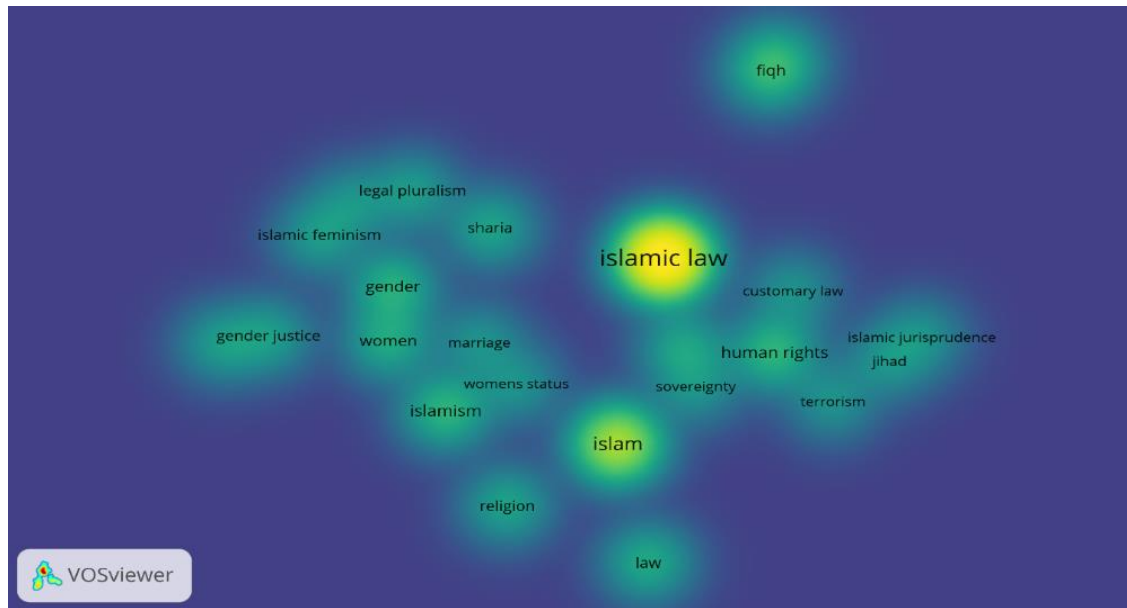


Figure 6. Density Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

As shown by the density visualization, the clusters demonstrate the density and intensity of the research topics in Islamic law. Herein, the color shows the high density and the importance of the keyword. The phrase "Islamic law" has been recognized as the most frequent topic and highest dense node, indicating the importance of the subject being the main issue under study in this discipline. Topics such as "Islam," "human rights," and "customary law" have been identified as other important issues appearing in relatively dense locations adjacent to the central topic, "Islamic law." This means that scholars working in the area have focused on discussing Islamic law against the socio-legal and political backgrounds, including aspects of governance, human rights, and laws. On the other hand, thematic elements like gender, Islamic feminism, gender justice, and women's position have medium density representation, showing that research on these areas is increasing but not at a significant level. Likewise, themes like jihad, terrorism, and Islamic jurisprudence have also been observed to be present in the map, but in lower densities, meaning that they belong to niche scholarly interests. The inclusion of fiqh in an isolated but observable density area denotes its significance within the domain of Islamic studies.

### Discussion

From the results of this study, it is clear that the area of Islamic law is marked by a continuously developing and changing intellectual system, which involves both classical traditions and current global concerns. The analysis of co-authorship patterns illustrates a quite consolidated pattern of networking, in which scientists interact with each other due to their joint research activities rather than splitting up into distinct groups. Thus, it becomes clear that cooperation among scholars provides some advantages for the area under discussion, though there is still no significant international diversification of the network. Based on the citation analysis, it can be noted that the most prominent literature revolves around issues concerning secularism, political Islam, and religion-state relations. Some of the major contributions to this debate made by notable scholars like Saba Mahmood and Noah Feldman are indicative of the fact that there is an urgent need to consider Islamic law in the context of current socio-political dynamics. This shows that the field has progressed beyond the mere discussion of doctrine to incorporate more interdisciplinary perspectives in the study of Islam. Nonetheless, the classical works on Islamic

politics and law retain their relevance in today's research environment.

The keyword co-occurrence and overlays analysis also indicate a very evident change in the thematic focus of research on Islamic law. Whereas prior research was largely centered on key terms like *fiqh*, Islam, and law, current research has started focusing on topics like human rights, gender justice, Islamic feminism, and legal pluralism. The shift signifies an increasing tendency amongst scholars to analyze Islamic law in terms of its use in resolving issues relevant to contemporary society. The advent of these themes is indicative of reinterpretation of Islamic law in response to contemporary debates about equality and governance. Furthermore, the density visualization emphasizes the importance of Islamic law as a binding theme, along with the increasing diversification of the subject matter being studied in the field. High density on themes like Islamic law, Islam, and human rights imply that they remain predominant areas of study, but topics with low densities like terrorism, jihad, and Islamic jurisprudence represent a specialized field of study. The inclusion of topics related to gender studies in moderately dense themes points toward an increase in importance in research, implying an expansion of the subject matter being studied from a social justice perspective.

The research shows that Islamic law studies are evolving and that there is a transformation from a field characterized by traditionalism in its normative and textual

approach to one that is increasingly practical and international in scope. The use of classical legal thought in relation to current problems underscores the applicability of Islamic legal studies in the modern world. Nonetheless, there is an indication in the findings that there should be more inclusion, especially from underrepresented countries, in order to improve Islamic law studies.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Islamic law scholarship has evolved into a dynamic and interdisciplinary field shaped by both classical jurisprudential foundations and contemporary global concerns. The bibliometric analysis reveals a relatively cohesive collaboration network, a concentration of influential authors and institutions, and a strong intellectual core grounded in debates on law, religion, and the state. At the same time, the emergence of themes such as human rights, gender justice, and legal pluralism reflects a clear shift toward more applied and critical perspectives. These findings indicate that Islamic law research is increasingly responsive to modern socio-political challenges while maintaining its doctrinal roots. Nevertheless, the study also highlights the need for broader international collaboration and greater inclusion of diverse scholarly voices to further enrich the development and global relevance of the field.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] J. J. B. Suseno, T. F. M. Paksi, and Y. Yusriando, "Role of the Financial Service Authority of the Republic of Indonesia in Determining Financial Technology Crime as *Bijzondere Toestanden*," *Al-Bayyinah*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 76–98, 2024.
- [2] M. A. Rumasukun and A. L. Nugraha, "Learning Models in Sharia Economic Department in Forming Student Career Options in the Sharia Financial Industry," *Al-Iktisab J. Islam. Econ. Law*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 1–21, 2021.
- [3] A. Syukron, "Dinamika perkembangan perbankan syariah di Indonesia," *Econ. J. Econ. Islam. Law*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 28–53, 2013.
- [4] S. Husain, N. P. Ayoub, and M. Hassmann, "Legal pluralism in contemporary societies: Dynamics of interaction between islamic law and secular civil law," *SYARIAT: Akhwal Syaksyah, Jinayah, Siyasa and Muamalah*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1–17, 2024.
- [5] M. A. El-Gamal, *Islamic finance: Law, economics, and practice*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- [6] S. Mahmood, "Religious difference in a secular age: A minority report," 2015.
- [7] N. Feldman, *The fall and rise of the Islamic state*. Princeton University Press, 2012.

- 
- [8] H. Elver, *The headscarf controversy: Secularism and freedom of religion*. Oxford University Press, 2011.
- [9] J. Stephens, *Governing Islam: Law, empire, and secularism in modern South Asia*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- [10] K. M. Hedayat, P. Shooshtarizadeh, and M. Raza, "Therapeutic abortion in Islam: contemporary views of Muslim Shiite scholars and effect of recent Iranian legislation," *J. Med. Ethics*, vol. 32, no. 11, pp. 652–657, 2006.
- [11] T. Winter, *The Cambridge companion to classical Islamic theology*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- [12] Y. Perdana, S. Sumargono, R. A. Pratama, and N. I. Lestari, "The Gait of Islamic Unions in the Political Stage of the National Movement," *Riwayat Educ. J. Hist. Humanit.*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 269–275, 2022.
- [13] S. S. Ali and J. Rehman, "The concept of Jihad in Islamic international law," *J. Confl. Secur. Law*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 321–343, 2005.
- [14] G. Bowering, D. J. Stewart, W. Kadi, and P. Crone, "The Princeton encyclopedia of Islamic political thought," 2012.
- [15] A. Black, *History of Islamic Political Thought*. Edinburgh University Press, 2011.