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Corporate Governance, Corporate Social Responsibility and Zakat Transparency in Islamic Financial Institutions: A Bibliometric Network Analysis

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Abstract− This study investigates the intellectual development of research on corporate governance, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and zakat transparency within Islamic financial institutions through a bibliometric network analysis. The study aims to map publication trends, influential sources, collaboration patterns, thematic evolution, and emerging research directions in the field. A bibliometric approach combined with the PRISMA framework was employed to ensure a systematic and transparent research process. Data were collected from the Scopus database using the search query related to zakat transparency and governance, resulting in 30 relevant publications published between 2010 and 2025. The analysis was conducted using publication performance indicators, co-word analysis, co-citation analysis, collaboration networks, thematic evolution, and keyword dynamics. The findings reveal a significant increase in scholarly attention after 2021, with 66.7% of publications appearing during 2024–2025, indicating that zakat transparency has become an increasingly important topic in Islamic economics and social finance. Governance, transparency, accountability, and zakat emerged as the dominant conceptual foundations of the literature, while newer themes such as blockchain, FinTech, sustainability, CSR integration, and digital accountability represent emerging research trajectories. Indonesia and Malaysia were identified as the leading contributors and primary collaboration hubs in the field. The study further demonstrates that zakat transparency has evolved from a narrow administrative concern into a multidimensional governance mechanism linked to institutional trust, stakeholder accountability, digital transformation, and social impact measurement. This research contributes by providing a comprehensive knowledge map that integrates fragmented discussions on governance, CSR, and zakat transparency and offers directions for future empirical and comparative studies in Islamic financial governance.

Keywords: Corporate Governance; Corporate Social Responsibility; Zakat Transparency; Islamic Social Finance; Accountability; Sharia Governance

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the global discourses on Islamic economics, Islamic financial institutions are facing increasing public pressure to demonstrate not only financial soundness but also ethical accountability, social legitimacy and transparent redistribution of wealth through mechanisms based on zakat (Brescia et al., 2025). This pressure is an indicator of the wider transformation of Islamic finance from a compliance-oriented industry to a governance-oriented ecosystem where corporate governance, corporate social responsibility and Islamic social finance are expected to be mutually reinforcing pillars (Hudaefi et al., 2025). In this environment, zakat has gone beyond its original position as a religious requirement, evolving into a strategic weapon for poverty reduction, institutional trust, stakeholder involvement and verifiable social effect (Abdul Wahab & Ali, 2025). This problem is even more serious given that recent data suggests that zakat governance research is focusing more on transparency, accountability, digital transformation and institutional performance rather than collection and distribution procedures (Zakiy et al., 2025). The preliminary reference corpus for this study was 24 of the 30 documents (80 percent) produced between 2021 and 2025, which indicates that the issue has been quite current in the recent five years ((Beik et al., 2021); (Evriyenni et al., 2025); (Zakiy et al., 2025);(Saputra et al., 2026)). More specifically, 20 of 30 documents or 66.7 percent were published in 2024 and 2025 with a clear recent focus of scholarship on zakat governance, Islamic social finance, digital transparency, and institutional accountability ((Amri et al., 2024); (Fadhilah et al., 2025); (Nashirudin et al., 2025)). This concentration shows how the academic community is engaging with the emerging governance difficulties facing Islamic financial institutions, as stakeholders are demanding reliable reporting, traceable social funds, and robust sharia-based certification mechanisms (Nor et al., 2025). Generally, the nexus between corporate governance, CSR, and zakat transparency can be perceived in a stakeholder-based accountability perspective where Islamic financial institutions are required to strike the balance between the interests of shareholders, depositors, zakat payers, beneficiaries, regulators, and the wider Muslim community (Saptono & Khozen, 2024). Thus, the present moment is appropriate to explore this link by bibliometric network analysis, since the subject has developed fast but is still conceptually fragmented in the areas of governance, CSR, zakat compliance, Islamic banking, digital finance, and Islamic social impact literature (Brescia et al., 2025).

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The worldwide relevance of zakat transparency is further enhanced by the rising need for Islamic financial organisations to give verifiable evidence of social responsibility, rather than just symbolic religious branding (Al-Thaqeb & Alkhunaini, 2025). In this context, corporate governance is the institutional framework for supervision, CSR is the ethical and social orientation, and zakat transparency is the accountability route where Islamic financial firms reveal their redistributive effect to society (Abdul Wahab & Ali, 2025). The rising convergence of zakat and CSR is of particular relevance here since Islamic financial firms operate in a dual accountability setting that demands both market credibility and sharia legitimacy (Brescia et al., 2025). Recent research on zakat and Islamic social finance show that public trust has a tight relationship with the quality of institutional governance, religious devotion, openness in reporting and confidence in equitable fund management (Evriyenni et al., 2025). When Islamic financial institutions are challenged to demonstrate that CSR activities tied to zakat are not merely philanthropy but systematic ways to achieve sustained social development, governance issues become more serious (Hudaefi et al., 2025). In addition, digital transformation has transformed the nature of transparency, providing new options for tracking zakat collection, allocation, reporting, and beneficiary outcomes using blockchain, FinTech, and information security systems ((Amri et al., 2024); (Beik et al., 2021)). Technological changes suggest that the transparency of zakat is no longer confined to yearly reports or institutional disclosure, but increasingly includes real-time data, digital accountability, and verifiable social effect measurement (Nor et al., 2025). Weaker governance can undermine confidence of zakat payers whereas improved openness and accountability systems can increase compliance, loyalty and institutional credibility ((Roziq et al., 2021); (Sawmar & Mohammed, 2021b)). Thus, this study considers zakat transparency as a strategic governance issue in Islamic financial institutions rather than a restricted administrative issue of zakat collecting agencies (Zakiy et al., 2025).

Studies have shown that governance is an important factor for the performance of zakat institutions, mainly because zakat payers want assurances that their donations are managed ethically, professionally and in compliance with sharia (Sawmar & Mohammed, 2021b). (Sawmar & Mohammed, 2021a) developed a conceptual framework that explained the role of good governance in enhancing zakat compliance via increasing accountability, transparency, responsibility, and institutional legitimacy. In a similar empirical contribution, (Sawmar & Mohammed, 2021b) demonstrated that governance practices effect the mandated zakah payment in Saudi Arabia, demonstrating that the quality of governance has implications not just for institutional administration, but also for payer behaviour. (Roziq et al., 2021) discovered also that the capacity of zakat organisations to sustain credible governance and service quality affects the confidence and loyalty towards zakat institutions. The excellent governance of zakat institutions in Indonesia (Amalia, 2019) may be judged by confirming elements including institutional quality, accountability, and public confidence. (Hasiara et al., 2019) also found a relationship between effective corporate governance procedures and muzakki satisfaction. This means that the processes of governance impact how zakat payers view the legitimacy of zakat organisations. New research from Indonesia suggests that zakat compliance is predicted by institutional trust and religious commitment, suggesting that governance and religion interact to affect payer decisions (Evriyenni et al., 2025) The governance literature has seen a continuous advance from normative arguments on zakat requirement to empirical studies of trust, contentment, compliance, performance and accountability (Zakiy et al., 2025). This trend warrants a bibliometric analysis to trace the growth of governance-related zakat studies and their association with CSR and Islamic financial institutions (Brescia et al., 2025).

Another strand of work highlights the increasing linkage between CSR, Islamic financial institutions, and zakat-based social responsibility (Abdul Wahab & Ali, 2025). (Abdul Wahab & Ali, 2025) argued that strategic zakat management may enhance the societal effect of corporate social responsibility and hence zakat is a realistic instrument for Islamic corporate citizenship. In their recent bibliometric and content-based studies, (Brescia et al., 2025) highlighted that CSR and diversity management in Islamic banking have become major themes, especially in the context of Western corporate responsibility frameworks. Therefore, CSR in Islamic financial institutions cannot be fully explained by standard CSR reasoning as it is influenced by Sharia principles, social justice, religious responsibility and ethical redistribution (Al-Thaqeb & Alkhunaini, 2025). (Hudaefi et al., 2025) also highlighted the need of measuring the nonprofit institutional performance in Islamic social finance, which is directly significant in analysing if CSR tied to zakat provides quantifiable social value. (Santoso et al., 2024) (Santoso et al., 2024)found that excellent corporate governance with religious principles may increase the confidence of zakat payers in the Nahdlatul Ulama community, demonstrating that governance combined with religion can promote institutional legitimacy. also associated zakat performance with management decisions and dedication to the spiritual servant government, saying that zakat administration requires managerial competence and spiritual accountability. (Saptono & Khozen, 2024) further highlighted that the rise of compliance in Muslim communities may be achieved via fiscal openness, involvement and accountability. The results support the idea that transparency in governance might increase the public's readiness to meet financial responsibilities. Together, these studies show that CSR, corporate governance, and zakat transparency are increasingly interrelated, but their intellectual structure has not been fully mapped by bibliometric network analysis (Brescia et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, research on zakat governance, Islamic social finance, CSR and transparency ((Amri et al., 2024); (Brescia et al., 2025)) has grown rapidly but the literature is still divided into several unrelated study groups. The studies cover good governance and zakat compliance, CSR in Islamic banking, sharia governance, nonprofit performance, digital zakat, blockchain transparency, and legislative reform in zakat administration ((Fadhilah et al., 2025); (Hudaefi et al., 2025); (Sawmar & Mohammed, 2021a)). This fragmentation hinders the understanding of the

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development of corporate governance, CSR and zakat transparency as a coherent study area in the Islamic financial institutions ((Abdul Wahab & Ali, 2025)). Previous studies have produced valuable conceptual and empirical insights, but typically do not identify the most prominent authors, journals, nations, keywords, documents and thematic clusters driving the subject ((Brescia et al., 2025)). The absence of bibliometric network analysis further limits the academic understanding of whether the subject is characterised by governance theory, CSR discourse, Islamic social finance, digital innovation, or sharia compliance research ((Zakiy et al., 2025)). This is particularly relevant given the emergence of themes such as blockchain-based zakat transparency, FinTech adoption, digital transformation, and legal reforms in recent studies that may influence the future trajectory of zakat governance research ((Amri et al., 2024); (Beik et al., 2021); (Nashirudin et al., 2025)). Without rigorous mapping, researchers may still regard corporate governance, CSR and zakat transparency as distinct subjects, rather than interrelated components of Islamic institutional responsibility (Nor et al., 2025). Thus, the main research problem of this study is to find out the absence of a comprehensive bibliometric mapping that represents the knowledge structure, thematic evolution, and network relationships between corporate governance, CSR, and zakat transparency in Islamic financial institutions (Brescia et al., 2025) The importance of dealing with this issue is to clarify the intellectual basis of the discipline, identify research gaps and provide a research agenda for future scholarship to be published worldwide in the field of Islamic economics and finance (Hudaefi et al., 2025).

This study aims to perform a bibliometric network analysis of global research on corporate governance, corporate social responsibility, and zakat transparency in Islamic financial institutions using publication metadata from reputable indexed sources such as Scopus and Web of Science (Brescia et al., 2025). The first purpose is to analyse the patterns of publishing, yearly growth, productive journals, important authors, leading nations, and key institutions that have directed the development of this study area (Zakiy et al., 2025). The second purpose is to map the intellectual structure of the area using co-authorship, co-citation, bibliographic coupling and keyword co-occurrence analysis (Brescia et al., 2025). The third aim is to identify the dominating, rising, decreasing and niche issues of corporate governance, CSR, zakat transparency, sharia governance, Islamic social financing and digital accountability (Nor et al., 2025). The fourth aim is to discuss the development of the literature from traditional zakat governance and compliance studies to more complex issues such as blockchain, FinTech, institutional trust, CSR integration, sustainability, and Islamic social impact measurement ((Amri et al., 2024); (Hudaefi et al., 2025)). Scientifically, this research contributes to the growth of Islamic economics by unifying the scattered discourses of governance, CSR, and zakat transparency into a more comprehensive knowledge map ((Abdul Wahab & Ali, 2025)). The study also adds conceptually by placing the zakat transparency in a larger framework of stakeholder accountability, legitimacy, sharia governance, and performance of Islamic social finance (Saptono & Khozen, 2024). Practically, the findings can help Islamic financial institutions, zakat management agencies, regulators and Sharia supervisory authorities to develop research-based governance initiatives to enhance disclosure, trust and social effect (Evriyenni et al., 2025) The bibliometric study is anticipated to offer a systematic foundation for empirical, conceptual, and policy-oriented studies on transparent and socially responsible Islamic financial institutions (Zakiy et al., 2025).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses bibliometric research to examine the relationship between corporate governance, corporate social responsibility and zakat transparency in Islamic financial organisations. The bibliometric analysis was applied because it provides a systematic and quantitative approach to mapping the trajectory of scientific publications in a specific area of research. Such an approach enables scientists to observe the development of publications, the development of topics and the intellectual structure of the subject of research in dynamics. In this study literature selection procedure was visualised, systematised and reproducible by using PRISMA framework. The use of PRISMA improved the methodological rigour further by providing details of the processes of identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion of the downloaded information. In this approach, the research can provide a comprehensive overview of academic debates on governance procedures and transparency issues in Islamic financial institutions.

The method of literature search was performed through the Scopus database. It is considered as one of the most extensive and credible indexing systems for the worldwide scientific publications. The search approach was based on indexed papers from 2010 to 2025 to cover the progress of research in the last 15 years. The search phrase in Scopus was TITLE-ABS-KEY (zakat AND transparency) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (governance). The search string was created to include articles that directly address issues related to zakat transparency and governance in the title, abstract and keywords of the documents. Boolean operators like “AND” were used to ensure that the retrieved articles were closely related to the research objectives and thematic scope of the study. The search was not restricted by language, source, document type or topic area in order to enhance the breadth and inclusiveness of the material collected.

The first step of the PRISMA technique was identification. All the records that met the search parameters were downloaded from the Scopus database. The search was done on April 10, 2025. We have identified thirty articles that are relevant to our research question. These were intellectual discussions concerning the ways of governance and procedures of transparency in the management of zakat and institutions of Islamic finance. Screening was first performed to determine the relevance of the retrieved records to the pre-defined study topic. The screening process

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involved checking titles, abstracts and keywords to verify the conceptual match of each article with the goals of the study. This was done to reduce the chances of irrelevant or unrelated works being added to the bibliometric collection.

After the identification and screening steps, the study passed to the exclusion step according to the PRISMA methodology. The filtering procedure was found to contain no duplicate or irrelevant entries and no records were filtered from the dataset, the study showed. This result implies that the search method used in Scopus database was quite detailed and successful to capture the relevant papers. The non-existence of the deleted records also confirms the match between the search terms and the study subject. Therefore, all the 30 documents found were kept and considered suitable for further bibliometric research. Such an inclusive approach increased the reliability and validity of the dataset used in the study.

The selected articles were also included in the bibliometric analysis in the last phase of the PRISMA process to investigate the intellectual and thematic evolution of the study area. The papers retained were analysed for trends in publishing, key authors, research collaborations and emerging issues pertaining to governance and zakat transparency. Bibliometric methods like citation analysis, co-occurrence analysis and network visualisation can provide further insights into the structure and development of the literature. This research approach helps to understand more about the effect of governance systems on transparency practices in the Islamic financial institutions. The findings are expected to serve as a useful reference for scholars, policy makers and practitioners who are interested in improving the accountability and transparency of zakat management systems. In general, the use of bibliometric analysis and PRISMA framework provided the authors with a systematic, transparent and academically rigorous approach to the study. Figure 1 shows that PRISMA Framework of the research.

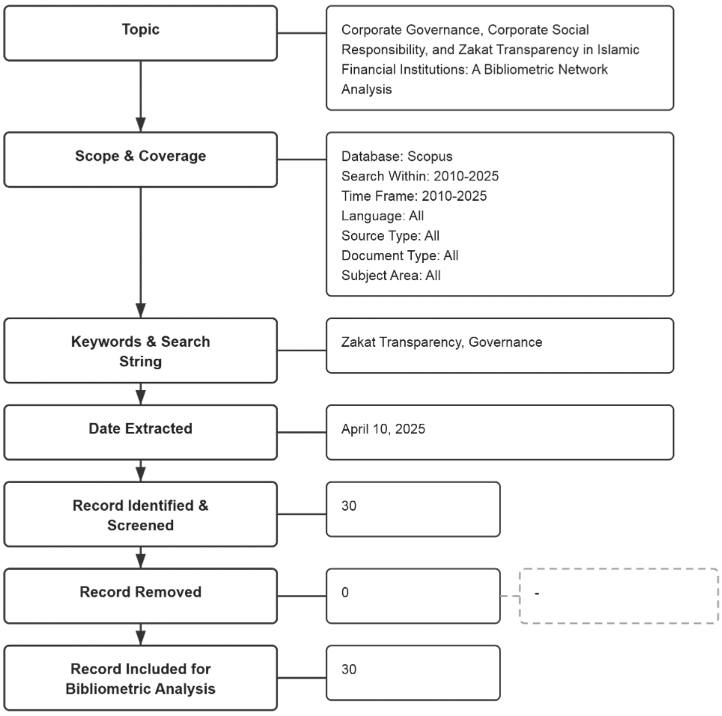

Figure 1. Research stage

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Meta-Analysis

3.1.1 Publication by Subject Area

The publication distribution by subject area shows that the corpus is strongly concentrated in the thematic domain of zakat governance and accountability. Because the Scopus CSV file does not contain an official "Subject Area" column, the classification in Figure 1 was constructed as an inferred thematic subject-area map based on titles, abstracts, keywords, and source titles. The results indicate that 23 of the 30 documents are located in the category of zakat governance and accountability, which confirms that governance, transparency, accountability, trust, and compliance form the dominant knowledge base of the dataset. This dominance is consistent with the research title because zakat transparency is treated in the literature mainly as a governance issue rather than a purely administrative or theological matter. The smaller clusters, including law, regulation, and maqasid, CSR and sustainability, accounting and performance measurement, and digital finance and technology, show that the field has begun to diversify into more specialized research directions. The presence of CSR and sustainability as a smaller but visible cluster suggests that

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zakat is increasingly being connected to institutional social responsibility and social impact agendas. The digital finance and technology cluster is still limited in size, but it is conceptually important because blockchain, FinTech, and digital reporting are likely to become future drivers of transparent zakat governance. The figure therefore demonstrates a field that is still anchored in governance but gradually expanding toward legal reform, CSR integration, digital accountability, and performance measurement. Figure 1 should be used to explain the broad intellectual orientation of the dataset before moving to year-based and network-based analyses.

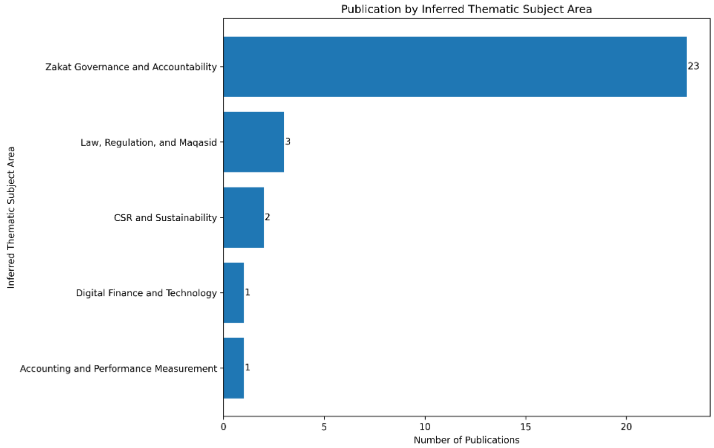

Figure 1. Publication by Inferred Thematic Subject Area

Figure 1 confirms that the dataset is not thematically dispersed at random, but structured around a clear governance-centered research orientation.

3.1.2 Publication Trend by Year

The publication trend by year reveals that research on corporate governance, CSR, and zakat transparency has developed unevenly but has accelerated sharply in recent years. The dataset begins with one publication in 2010, followed by one publication in 2014, one in 2016, two in 2019, one in 2020, four in 2021, seven in 2024, and thirteen in 2025. This pattern indicates that the topic was initially marginal but became much more visible after 2021. The most significant expansion appears in the 2024–2025 period, where 20 of the 30 documents, or 66.7 percent of the total dataset, were published. If the period is extended from 2021 to 2025, the dataset contains 24 documents, meaning that 80 percent of the corpus belongs to the last five years of available publication data. This finding supports the argument that zakat transparency and governance have become contemporary issues in Islamic economics and Islamic social finance. The increase after 2021 may reflect growing scholarly concern with digital transformation, institutional trust, post-pandemic social finance, sharia governance, and measurable social impact. The strong rise in 2025 also suggests that the field is still in an active growth phase rather than a mature or declining stage. Figure 2 can therefore be positioned as evidence that the proposed bibliometric study addresses a timely and emerging research stream.

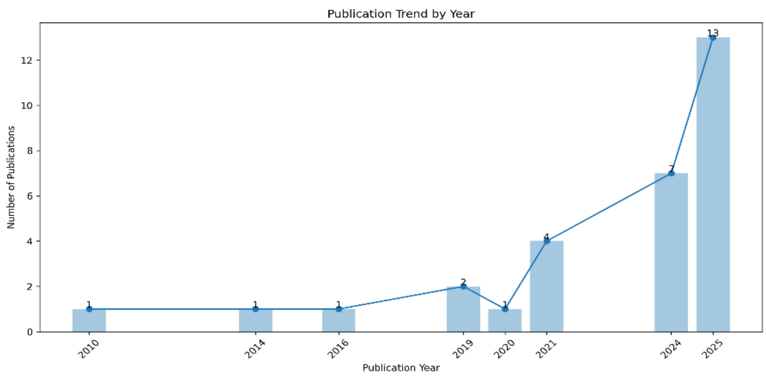

Figure 2. Publication Trend by Year

Figure 2 shows that the urgency of the research is supported by a clear publication acceleration in the most recent period.

3.1.3 Top Sources and Documents

The analysis of top sources and documents shows that the literature is distributed across many journals and publication outlets, but only a limited number of sources appear repeatedly within the dataset. The most productive source is the *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance*, which contributes two documents, while the remaining sources

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generally contribute one document each. This pattern suggests that the field is still fragmented across Islamic finance, Islamic economics, governance, social finance, law, accounting, and technology-oriented outlets. The absence of a single dominant journal, apart from the slightly stronger presence of *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance*, indicates that zakat transparency and governance remain interdisciplinary. The citation analysis provides a clearer picture of intellectual influence because some documents are much more cited than others. The most cited document is the study on enhancing zakat compliance through good governance, with 48 Scopus citations in the dataset. The second strongest document is the work on economic crisis, capitalism, and Islam, with 27 citations, followed by the paper on information security governance in Malaysian zakat institutions, with 13 citations. Other influential documents include studies on muzakki trust and loyalty, good governance for zakat institutions in Indonesia, zakat payment among Thai Muslims, mandatory zakah payment in Saudi Arabia, blockchain optimization, zakat regulation, and sharia governance performance. Figures 3 and 4 should be read together because Figure 3 identifies publication outlets, while Figure 4 identifies the documents that carry the strongest citation influence.

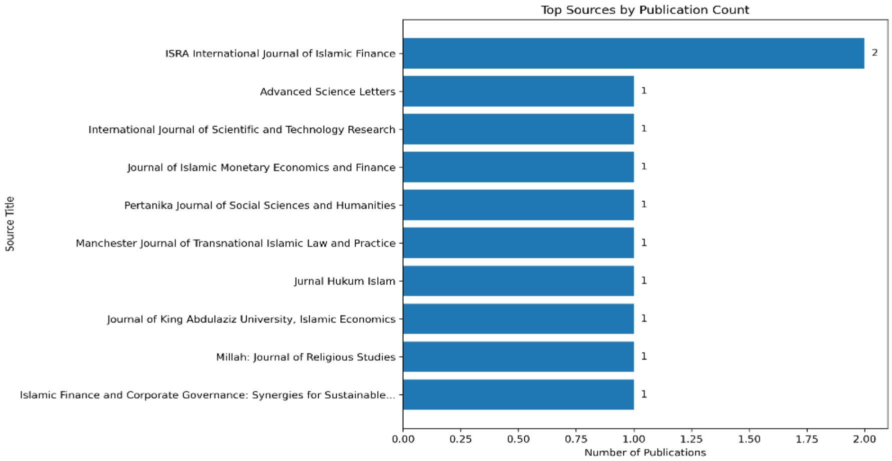

Figure 3. Top Sources by Publication Count

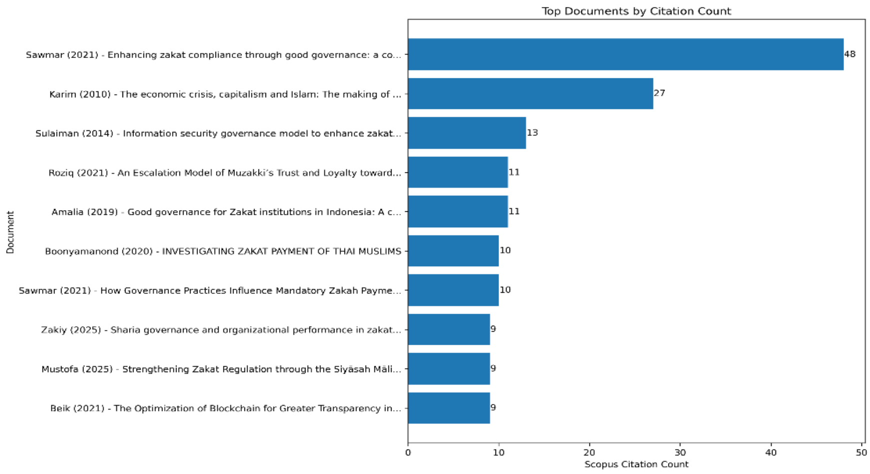

Figure 4. Top Documents by Citation Count

Figures 3 and 4 indicate that the field is institutionally dispersed but intellectually shaped by a smaller group of highly cited governance and zakat-compliance publications.

3.1.4 Scientific Collaboration Network

The scientific collaboration network shows that the dataset is geographically concentrated but not entirely isolated from international collaboration. Indonesia appears as the most frequent country in the affiliation data, with 15 detected publication links, followed by Malaysia with 13 detected links. Saudi Arabia appears three times, while the United States and Nigeria appear twice each, and several other countries appear once. This distribution indicates that Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia and Malaysia, functions as the main regional hub for research on zakat governance, transparency, and Islamic social finance. The strongest collaboration edge is between Indonesia and Malaysia, which appears five times in the country network. A smaller but meaningful connection is also visible between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia, while additional links connect Indonesia with Saudi Arabia, the United States, India, Nigeria, and Australia. The network pattern suggests that zakat governance scholarship is shaped by countries with strong Islamic finance infrastructures and active zakat institutions. However, the collaboration structure remains relatively narrow because many countries appear as peripheral nodes rather than central collaborative actors. Figure

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5 is therefore useful for explaining both the regional strength and the internationalization gap within this bibliometric field.

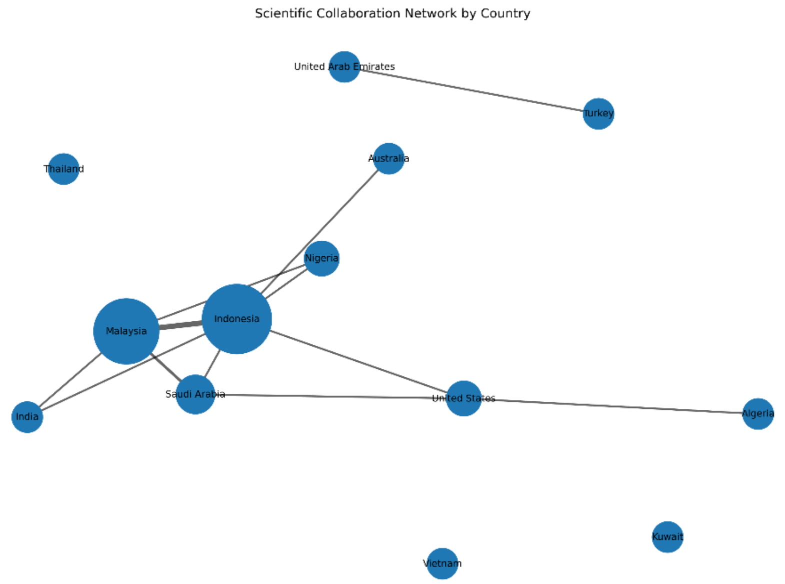

Figure 5. Scientific Collaboration Network by Country

Figure 5 demonstrates that future research would benefit from broader cross-country collaboration beyond the dominant Indonesia–Malaysia axis.

3.1.5 Co-word and Keyword Dynamics

The co-word and keyword dynamics analysis reveals that the conceptual center of the dataset is formed by the terms governance, transparency, and zakat. In the enriched keyword structure, governance appears in all 30 documents, transparency also appears in all 30 documents, and zakat appears in 29 documents. Accountability is the next most important term, appearing in 15 documents, followed by sustainability and Islamic finance, each appearing seven times. Other relevant terms include zakat governance, corporate governance, Islamic social finance, performance, waqf, trust, sharia governance, blockchain, FinTech, and digital transformation. This keyword structure shows that the field is organized around institutional accountability and gradually moving toward technology-enabled governance and sustainability-oriented Islamic social finance. Figure 6 visualizes the co-word network and shows that the main keywords are closely connected rather than isolated. Figure 7 adds a temporal dimension by showing that the keywords governance, transparency, zakat, accountability, Islamic finance, sustainability, and zakat governance become more visible in the most recent publication years. Together, the two figures indicate that the field has shifted from general zakat and governance discussions toward more specific debates on digital transparency, CSR, performance, and institutional trust.

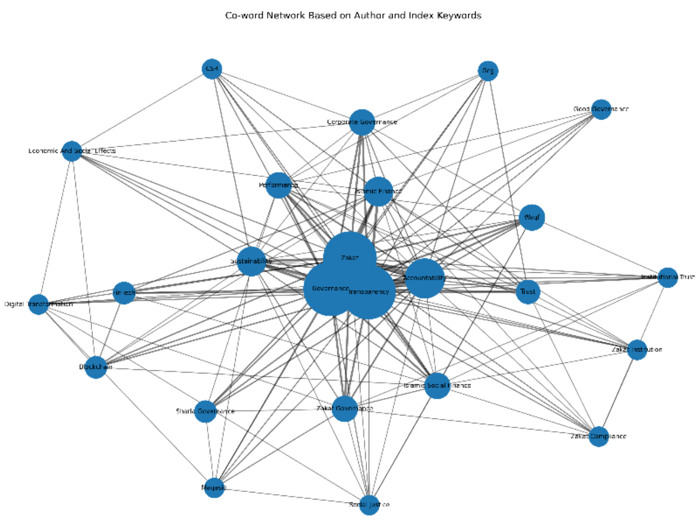

Figure 6. Co-word Network Based on Author and Index Keywords

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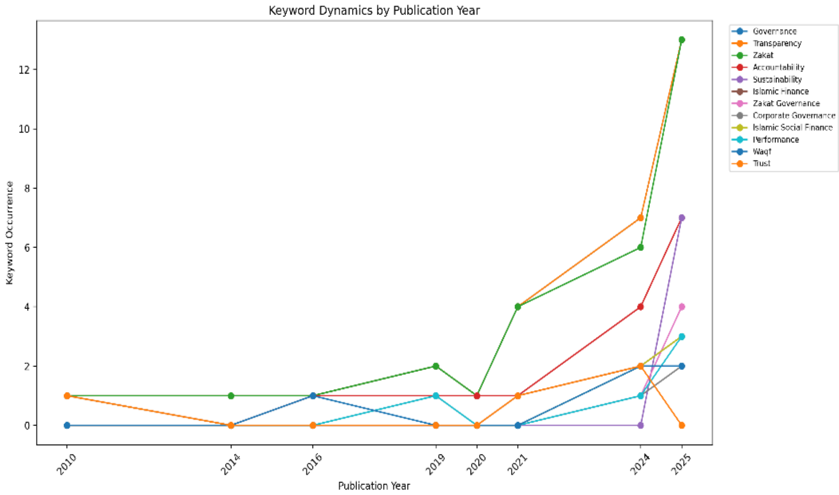

Figure 7. Keyword Dynamics by Publication Year

Figures 6 and 7 show that the research field has a stable conceptual core but also contains emerging keyword trajectories linked to digital and sustainability agendas.

3.1.6 Co-citation Network

The co-citation network provides insight into the intellectual foundations that connect the documents in the dataset. In this analysis, cited references are connected when they are cited together within the same documents, so the network reflects shared knowledge foundations rather than direct authorship collaboration. The strongest co-citation structure is shaped by references related to zakat governance, good governance, Islamic finance, compliance, institutional trust, information governance, and accountability. Older and more cited works tend to occupy more central positions because they have had more time to become common reference points in later publications. This pattern explains why governance-based zakat compliance, information security governance, and broader Islamic economic arguments appear as important intellectual anchors. The co-citation network also indicates that zakat transparency research is not built from a single theoretical tradition, but from overlapping traditions in Islamic economics, corporate governance, institutional accountability, and social finance. The relatively compact structure of the network reflects the small size of the dataset, but it still shows meaningful clustering around governance and compliance themes. Figure 8 should be interpreted carefully because co-citation proximity indicates intellectual relatedness rather than causal influence. Nevertheless, Figure 8 is valuable for identifying the knowledge base that supports the development of corporate governance, CSR, and zakat transparency research.

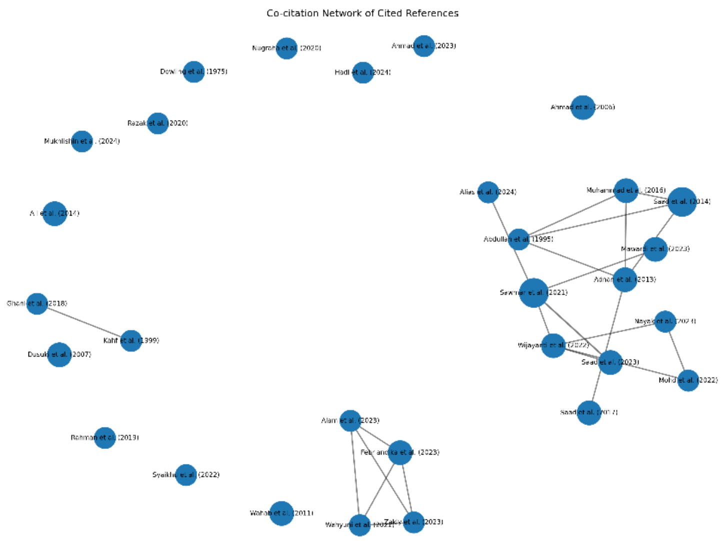

Figure 8. Co-citation Network of Cited References

Figure 8 supports the interpretation that governance and compliance studies form the intellectual backbone of the dataset.

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3.1.7 Thematic Evolution

The thematic evolution analysis shows that the research field has moved from a narrow governance focus toward a more diversified set of themes. In the 2010–2016 period, the documents are concentrated in zakat governance and accountability, which indicates that early scholarship was mainly concerned with institutional order, obligation, and governance principles. In the 2017–2021 period, zakat governance and accountability remain dominant, but digital finance and technology appear as an additional theme. This shift is important because it marks the beginning of a transition from traditional governance frameworks toward technology-supported transparency. In the 2022–2026 period, the field becomes more complex, with 14 documents still classified under zakat governance and accountability, three under law, regulation, and maqasid, two under CSR and sustainability, and one under accounting and performance measurement. This development suggests that recent studies are not abandoning governance, but extending it into legal reform, CSR, performance, and social impact domains. The thematic evolution also shows that the field has become more policy-relevant because regulation, maqasid, fiscal transparency, and digital transformation increasingly appear in recent documents. Figure 9 can therefore be used to explain the movement from foundational zakat governance to multidimensional Islamic social finance governance. The figure also supports the argument that future research should integrate CSR, digital transparency, legal accountability, and institutional performance into a more comprehensive zakat governance framework.

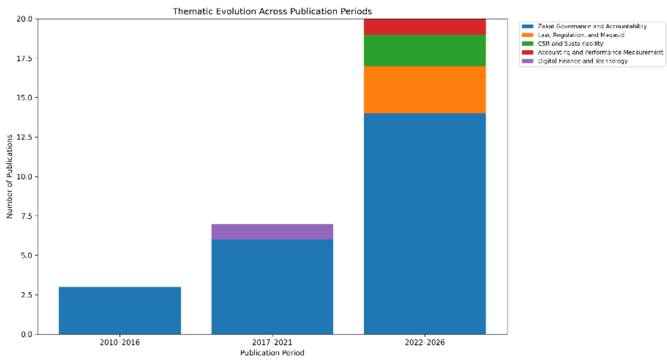

Figure 9. Thematic Evolution Across Publication Periods

Figure 9 shows that zakat governance remains the dominant theme, but its surrounding research ecosystem has become broader and more specialized.

3.1.8 Keyword–Year Heatmap

The keyword–year heatmap provides a more detailed view of how specific concepts appear across publication years. Governance and transparency are consistently present across the dataset because both concepts were intentionally central to the corpus and are strongly represented in titles, abstracts, and keywords. Zakat appears in almost all publication years and reaches its highest concentration in 2025. Accountability begins to appear more visibly after 2016 and becomes much stronger in 2024 and 2025. Sustainability is highly concentrated in 2025, which suggests that the sustainability framing of zakat transparency is a very recent research development. Islamic finance shows a more gradual pattern, appearing in early years and then reappearing more strongly in the recent period. Zakat governance, Islamic social finance, performance, blockchain, FinTech, and sharia governance also gain more visibility in the most recent years. This pattern shows that the field is not only growing in publication volume, but also expanding in conceptual vocabulary. Figure 10 is therefore useful for demonstrating that the newest phase of research is characterized by the convergence of governance, transparency, sustainability, digital finance, and institutional performance.

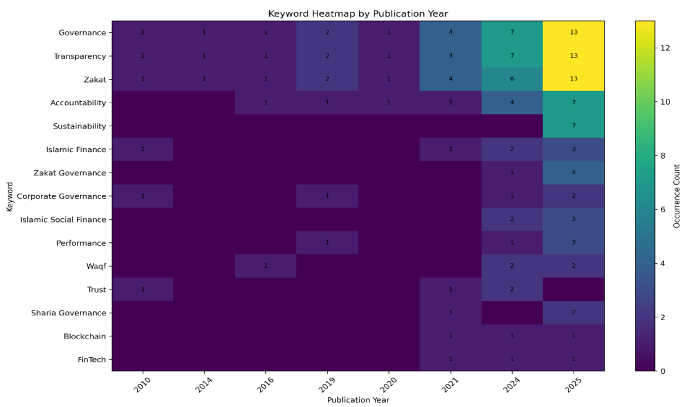

Figure 10. Keyword Heatmap by Publication Year

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Figure 10 confirms that the strongest thematic intensification occurs in the 2024–2025 period.

3.1.9 Word Cloud Analysis

The word cloud analysis provides a visual summary of the most frequent terms appearing in titles, abstracts, author keywords, and index keywords. The largest term is zakat, which appears 209 times in the processed textual corpus. Governance appears 75 times, management appears 62 times, Islamic appears 53 times, and transparency appears 51 times. Other prominent terms include compliance, trust, waqf, economic, accountability, social, performance, Indonesia, model, muzakki, sharia, financial, practices, public, framework, legal, and technology. This word structure confirms that the dataset is centered on zakat as the main object, governance as the dominant institutional lens, and transparency as a key accountability mechanism. The presence of terms such as trust, compliance, muzakki, performance, and public indicates that the literature is deeply connected to stakeholder confidence and institutional legitimacy. The appearance of legal and technology also shows that contemporary studies are moving toward regulatory and digital solutions. Although word clouds do not provide relational or causal evidence, they are helpful for quickly identifying the dominant vocabulary of the research corpus. Figure 11 should therefore be used as a complementary descriptive visualization alongside the more rigorous co-word, heatmap, and thematic evolution analyses.

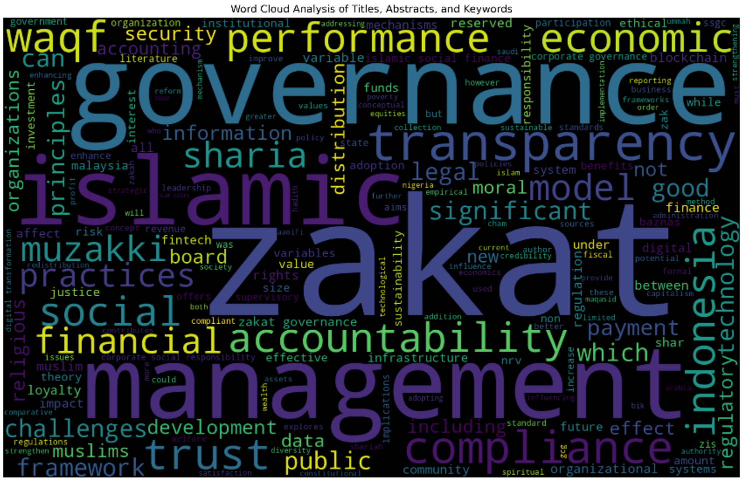

Figure 11. Word Cloud Analysis of Titles, Abstracts, and Keywords

Figure 11 reinforces the conclusion that zakat, governance, transparency, management, compliance, and trust are the most visible language markers in the dataset.

3.2 Thematic Synthesis and Critical Points

The classification of research themes indicates that the dataset can be organized into several interrelated layers rather than a single linear topic. The first and most dominant layer is zakat governance and accountability, which functions as the core theme of the corpus. This theme includes studies on good governance, transparency, accountability, compliance, trust, muzakki satisfaction, and institutional performance. The second layer is the institutional governance layer, which connects corporate governance, sharia governance, religious values, and stakeholder trust. The third layer is the CSR and sustainability layer, where zakat is interpreted as part of corporate social responsibility and Islamic social impact. The fourth layer is the digital transparency layer, which includes FinTech, blockchain, information security, and technology-supported zakat reporting. The fifth layer is the regulatory and maqasid layer, which reflects the growing concern with legal reform, constitutional analysis, maqasid-based governance, and public accountability. The sixth layer is the performance and reporting layer, which links zakat management with organizational outcomes, accounting standards, nonprofit measurement, and institutional effectiveness.

The critical point emerging from this thematic classification is that zakat transparency should not be treated as a narrow disclosure practice. It is better understood as a multidimensional governance mechanism that connects institutional design, social responsibility, regulatory legitimacy, technology adoption, and stakeholder trust. The dataset shows that governance remains the central organizing concept, but governance itself is being redefined through digitalization, CSR, maqasid, and performance measurement. This means that the field is moving from a compliance-based model to an accountability-based model. The CSR dimension is particularly important because it creates a bridge between Islamic financial institutions and the social purpose of zakat. The digital dimension is equally important because it introduces traceability, data visibility, and real-time accountability into zakat management. The regulatory and maqasid dimension strengthens the normative foundation of transparency by linking institutional practices to Islamic legal and ethical objectives. The performance dimension ensures that zakat transparency is not limited to reporting inputs, but also evaluates outputs, outcomes, and social value. Therefore, Figure 12 should be interpreted as a conceptual synthesis of the research field rather than merely a descriptive classification.

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3.3 Discussion

3.3.1 Synthesis of Findings

The synthesis of findings shows that the bibliometric structure of the dataset is shaped by three major patterns: rapid recent growth, governance-centered knowledge, and emerging digital-social integration. The rapid growth pattern is shown by the concentration of publications in 2024 and 2025, which indicates that the topic is becoming increasingly relevant in contemporary Islamic finance research. The governance-centered pattern is demonstrated by the dominance of governance, transparency, zakat, and accountability in the keyword and word cloud analyses. The emerging digital-social integration pattern is reflected in the appearance of blockchain, FinTech, sustainability, CSR, Islamic social finance, sharia governance, and performance measurement. These patterns suggest that the field is moving toward a more integrated understanding of zakat transparency in Islamic financial institutions. The findings also show that Indonesia and Malaysia play central roles in the collaboration network, which reflects the importance of Southeast Asia as a knowledge hub for zakat governance research. At the same time, the limited number of cross-country links suggests that broader international collaboration is still needed. The co-citation and top-document analyses show that foundational governance and compliance studies continue to shape the intellectual structure of the field.

3.3.2 Scientific Contribution

The scientific contribution of this bibliometric analysis lies in its ability to organize a scattered body of literature into a coherent knowledge structure. First, it contributes descriptively by identifying publication growth, source distribution, influential documents, dominant countries, and major keyword patterns. Second, it contributes relationally by showing how authors, countries, keywords, and cited references are connected through collaboration, co-word, and co-citation networks. Third, it contributes conceptually by demonstrating that corporate governance, CSR, and zakat transparency are not separate research domains, but interdependent dimensions of Islamic institutional accountability. Fourth, it contributes methodologically by combining performance analysis with network visualization and thematic classification. Fifth, it contributes theoretically by linking zakat transparency to governance theory, stakeholder accountability, legitimacy, sharia governance, and Islamic social finance. Sixth, it contributes practically by offering guidance for Islamic financial institutions and zakat organizations seeking to improve disclosure, digital reporting, and public trust. Seventh, it contributes to future research by identifying underdeveloped themes such as CSR-zakat integration, blockchain-based transparency, AI-supported reporting, and comparative governance studies. Eighth, it provides a foundation for more advanced systematic literature reviews and empirical models on zakat transparency.

3.3.3 Research Gaps and Future Research Opportunities

The first major research gap is the limited integration between corporate governance, CSR, and zakat transparency in Islamic financial institutions. Although the dataset contains studies on governance, zakat compliance, CSR, digital finance, and institutional performance, these themes often appear as parallel discussions rather than as an integrated framework. Future research should therefore develop models that explain how corporate governance mechanisms shape CSR-based zakat disclosure and how such disclosure affects stakeholder trust. The second gap is the limited development of technology-enabled zakat transparency research. Blockchain, FinTech, and digital transformation appear in the dataset, but they remain relatively small compared with the dominant governance and accountability cluster. This creates an opportunity for empirical studies on blockchain-based zakat traceability, AI-assisted zakat reporting, digital audit trails, and real-time public accountability dashboards. The third gap concerns comparative international research because the collaboration network is still concentrated around Indonesia and Malaysia. Future studies could compare zakat governance systems across Southeast Asia, the Gulf region, South Asia, and Muslim minority contexts.

The fourth research gap concerns the measurement of social impact and maqasid-based outcomes in zakat transparency studies. Many publications discuss governance and compliance, but fewer studies systematically measure whether zakat-related CSR improves poverty reduction, empowerment, social justice, or sustainable welfare. This creates an opportunity to connect bibliometric findings with empirical impact assessment, especially through maqasid al-shariah, stakeholder theory, and Islamic social finance performance frameworks. The fifth gap relates to the role of regulators and sharia supervisory bodies in standardizing zakat transparency across Islamic financial institutions. Future studies could examine whether regulatory quality, disclosure standards, and sharia audit mechanisms improve public trust and zakat compliance. The sixth gap concerns the relationship between ESG, CSR, and zakat in Islamic financial institutions, which remains underdeveloped despite the global rise of sustainability reporting. Future research could explore whether zakat can function as an Islamic ESG instrument or as a distinctive form of faith-based corporate responsibility. The seventh gap concerns methodological expansion, because future bibliometric studies can combine Scopus, Web of Science, Dimensions, and regional databases to achieve broader coverage. Therefore, Figure 15 should be read as a strategic research agenda for moving the field from descriptive governance studies toward integrated, comparative, digital, and impact-oriented scholarship.

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3.3.4 Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged when interpreting the results. The first limitation is the size of the corpus, because the analysis is based on 30 Scopus records, which is sufficient for exploratory mapping but still limited for broad generalization. The second limitation is database scope, because the uploaded dataset comes from Scopus and does not yet include Web of Science records for direct comparison. The third limitation is metadata completeness, because the CSV file does not contain an official Scopus "Subject Area" column, so the publication by subject area was inferred from available bibliographic fields. The fourth limitation is citation bias, because older publications have had more time to accumulate citations than newer publications. The fifth limitation is keyword normalization, because author keywords and index keywords vary in spelling, terminology, and conceptual granularity. The sixth limitation is that network visualization shows relational proximity, but it does not prove causality between concepts, authors, or research themes. The seventh limitation is that some visualizations, especially the word cloud and inferred thematic classification, are descriptive tools that need to be interpreted together with co-word, co-citation, and thematic evolution results. The eighth limitation is that the focus on English-language Scopus records may underrepresent local zakat scholarship published in national or regional outlets.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that research on corporate governance, corporate social responsibility, and zakat transparency in Islamic financial institutions has developed into a timely and increasingly important field within Islamic economics and Islamic social finance. The bibliometric findings show that the literature is strongly concentrated around zakat governance, transparency, accountability, institutional trust, and compliance, while newer themes such as CSR integration, blockchain, FinTech, sustainability, and digital accountability are beginning to shape the future direction of the field. The publication trend indicates a sharp increase in scholarly attention during the 2024–2025 period, suggesting that zakat transparency has become more relevant as Islamic financial institutions face stronger demands for credible governance and measurable social impact. The analysis of top sources and documents further confirms that the intellectual foundation of this field is built mainly on studies of good governance, zakat compliance, institutional performance, and Islamic social finance. The scientific collaboration network shows that Indonesia and Malaysia play a central role in producing knowledge on zakat governance, although wider international collaboration is still needed to strengthen comparative and cross-regional perspectives. The co-word, keyword dynamics, thematic evolution, heatmap, and word cloud analyses demonstrate that the field is moving from traditional zakat administration toward a broader model of transparent, technology-enabled, and socially responsible Islamic financial governance. The findings imply that Islamic financial institutions and zakat management organizations should strengthen disclosure systems, digital reporting, sharia governance, CSR-based zakat programs, and stakeholder accountability to increase public trust and institutional legitimacy. Theoretically, this study contributes by positioning zakat transparency as an integrated governance mechanism that connects corporate governance, CSR, stakeholder accountability, legitimacy theory, and Islamic social finance. However, the study is limited by the relatively small corpus of 30 Scopus-indexed documents, the absence of an official Scopus subject-area column in the dataset, possible citation bias toward older publications, and the lack of direct comparison with Web of Science data. Future studies should expand the dataset across multiple databases, apply systematic content analysis, and develop empirical models that examine how digital governance, CSR-zakat integration, and sharia-based accountability influence trust, compliance, and social impact in Islamic financial institutions.

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