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Islamic Microfinance Research Map: Bibliometric Analysis and Systematic Review of Trends, Gaps, and Future Research Agenda

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a bibliometric and content-based analysis of Islamic microfinance literature for the period 2020–2025 using English-language articles indexed by Scopus. Combining bibliometric and content analysis techniques, the study maps the intellectual structure, thematic evolution, and collaboration patterns through co-citation analysis, co-authorship, and bibliographic linkages. The results indicate that Malaysia is the most influential country, the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) is the leading institution, and *the International Journal of Ethics and Systems* is the most relevant journal. Four main research streams are identified: principles and performance of Islamic microfinance, sustainable development, women's empowerment, and the role of Islamic banking. The findings also reveal a trade-off between financial sustainability and social outreach, as well as structural and regulatory constraints that limit the impact of Islamic microfinance . This study emphasizes that optimizing the role of Islamic microfinance in inclusive and sustainable development requires strengthened governance, contextualized policies, and institutional innovations that balance social and commercial objectives.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic finance has rapidly developed as an alternative, ethical financial system based on Sharia principles such as the prohibition of usury, risk sharing, and social justice. This system has significantly contributed to inclusive and sustainable economic development in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Financial inclusion has become increasingly crucial in the era of globalization, as access to financial services can serve as a catalyst for local and national economic growth by empowering low-income communities (Qadri & Ali, 2024). The principles of Islamic finance, particularly in microfinance services , enable the expansion of access to capital for groups of people who are traditionally underserved by the conventional banking system.(Hassan et al., 2021).

Islamic microfinance is a strategic sub-field within Islamic finance designed to provide access to ethical and sharia-compliant funding to marginalized groups, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Through specific instruments such as qard al-hasan (interest-free benevolent loans) and mudharabah (profit sharing), Islamic microfinance has great potential to overcome the constraints of limited capital which are the main obstacles for MSMEs in increasing their production capacity and business performance (Duhriah et al., 2025a). Scientific literature shows that Islamic financial practices have a positive impact on the sustainability and growth of small businesses, although their effectiveness varies depending on the national policy context, the demographic characteristics of business owners, and the financing institution model applied (Hartanto et al., 2023;Nurfarida & Sarwoko, 2019)

Despite the continued growth of empirical studies on Islamic microfinance, the actual impact of Islamic financing on MSME performance remains inconsistent in the literature. On the one hand, Islamic microfinance has been shown to increase working capital and productivity; on the other hand, financing institutions face structural challenges such as limited customer financial literacy, dynamic credit risk, and the inconsistency of Islamic contract schemes with the real needs of business actors in the field. (Gunawan et al., 2023).Furthermore, comprehensive reviews that systematically map intellectual developments, publication trends, collaborative networks among researchers, and the thematic structure of Islamic microfinance research post-COVID-19 remain limited (Hakim & Ab Rahim, 2024).

To fill the research gap , this study adopts a quantitative bibliometric approach combined with *a Systematic Literature Review.* (SLR) based on the PRISMA protocol to evaluate Islamic microfinance literature and SMEs Performance *in* the period 2020–2025. The selection of the 2020–2025 period represents a critical transformation phase marked by the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, the acceleration of the digitalization of Islamic financial services (*Islamic fintech), the strengthening of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* agenda , and the dynamics of global economic recovery.(Donthu et al., 2021).

Specifically, this study aims to analyze the development of *Islamic microfinance literature* for the 2020–2025 period by addressing four main aspects, namely: (1) identifying publication trends, growth patterns, and geographical distribution of *Islamic microfinance research* ; (2) identifying the most productive authors, institutions, and journals with the highest scientific impact *;* (3) mapping the structure of intellectual networks, keyword clusters, and thematic evolution *in* the development of literature; and (4) identifying the main research streams *and* projecting the direction of future research agendas . Through systematic bibliometric and content-based analysis, this study is expected to provide academic contributions through comprehensive mapping of the structure, development, and dynamics of knowledge in the field of *Islamic microfinance* , while generating practical implications for managers of Islamic microfinance institutions, Islamic banking, and policy makers in formulating inclusive and sustainable microfinance development strategies.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a combination of bibliometric analysis and systematic content analysis (Systematic Literature Review). Bibliometric analysis is applied to measure scientific performance, map co-authorship networks, and identify bibliographic coupling and co-citations. Meanwhile, qualitative content analysis is applied to indexed articles with the highest citations to explore the thematic substance and operational dynamics of Islamic microfinance (Paltrinieri et al., 2023.Passas, 2024).

The document search and screening process was carried out following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines presented in Figure 1.

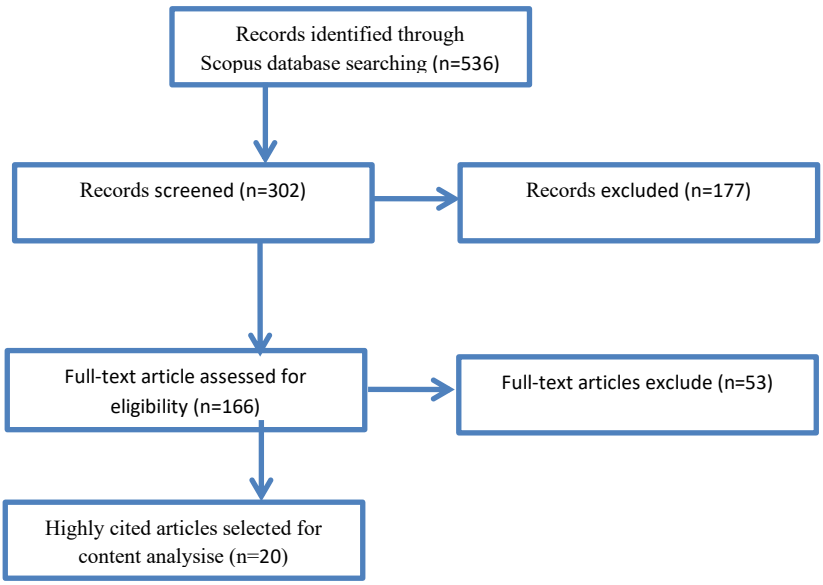


Figure 1. Prism Diagram

The search query syntax used in the Scopus database is designed as follows: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("islamic microfinance") AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "j"))

From an initial search that identified 166 articles related to Islamic microfinance across broad categories, the screening process was further refined by examining keyword relevance in titles and abstracts. An independent manual review yielded a final sample of 53 articles that met substantive criteria for in-depth analysis using bibliometric software. Furthermore, the 20 articles with the highest citation rates were specifically selected for qualitative content analysis.

The 2020–2025 timeframe for this study was selected based on academic considerations and the relevance of recent developments in the Islamic microfinance ecosystem. This period was chosen to capture *the state of the art* in research by reflecting the latest developments in Islamic microfinance, while simultaneously identifying paradigm shifts post-COVID-19, particularly regarding the resilience of MSMEs, strengthening the role of zakat, infaq, and

sadaqah (charity), and business sustainability. Furthermore, the 2020–2025 period reflects the acceleration of digital transformation through the increasing adoption of *Islamic fintech* and innovation in digital-based financial services. From a policy perspective, limiting the research period to the latest literature also aims to minimize the risk *of literature obsolescence* and ensure that the analysis represents the latest developments in thinking, practice, and policy, which are increasingly oriented towards inclusive and sustainable development and aligned with the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) framework.

This research utilizes three main tools to support the processing, analysis, and visualization of bibliometric data. RStudio, through the *Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny package* , is used to perform statistical and descriptive analysis, calculate publication impact indicators such as *the H-index, G-index,* and *M-index* , and map the evolution and development of research themes through *the Thematic Map* . VOSviewer is used to build and visualize bibliometric networks, including *co-authorship analysis* , *bibliographic coupling* at the document and source level, *co-citation* , and *keyword co-occurrence* to identify patterns of interrelationship and intellectual structure in the literature. Meanwhile, Microsoft Excel is used to support the processing and validation of numerical data, data manipulation and tabulation, and the presentation of results in tables and descriptive graphs. The integrated use of these three tools allows literature analysis to be carried out systematically, comprehensively, and is able to produce a more informative mapping of research developments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research data was obtained from the Scopus database due to its extensive international literature coverage, standardized bibliographic metadata, and peer *-reviewed publications* . The search was conducted systematically using the keyword "Islamic Microfinance" in the *title, abstract,* and *author keywords* for the period 2020–2025, limiting documents to English-language journal articles. The selection process was carried out in stages through filtering based on the relevance of keywords, titles, and *author keywords* , followed by manual examination of titles, abstracts, and article content to ensure substantive suitability with the research focus. This stage was carried out to obtain a relevant and high-quality dataset as a basis for analysis of authors, institutions, countries, and leading journals in the *Islamic Microfinance literature* .

Tabel 1. Strateti Pemilihan Data

Query wording	**Scopus search appearances**		
	Title-ABS-Key	**Title**	**Key**
(islamic microfinance) AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j"))	166 166 53	92	160

#1 TITLE OR #1 KEYWORD After manual filtration	

Note : The Title–Abstract–Keywords column shows the number of articles containing at least one keyword in that section, while the Title and Keywords column shows articles that included the keyword in the title or keywords only. In the second stage, articles were selected if they contained at least one keyword in the title or keywords. Next, each article was manually reviewed to ensure its suitability to the research focus.

The results of bibliometric data extraction present a comprehensive picture of the structure of Islamic microfinance knowledge production during the 2020–2025 period, as summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive overview of selected Islamic microfinance publications

Description	Criteria	Results
Main information about data	Timespan	2020–2025
	Sources (Journals)	166
	Documents	284
	Average years from publication	27.6
	Average citations per documents	12.27
	Average citations per year per doc	4.75
	References	1.234
Document types	Article	166
Document contents	Keywords Plus (ID)	85
	Author's Keywords (DE)	150
Authors	Authors	416
	Author Appearances	123
	Authors of single-authored documents	122
	Authors of multi-authored documents	416
Author's collaboration	Single-authored documents	26
	Documents per Author	0.40
	Authors per Document	6.42
	Co-Authors per Documents	2.49
	Collaboration Index	1.18

Table 2 shows that 166 articles were spread across 49 scientific journals. Most of the publications were compiled through group collaborations (collaboration index 1.18), with only 26 articles written by a single author. This indicates that Islamic microfinance research is driven by an intensive network of academic collaborations.

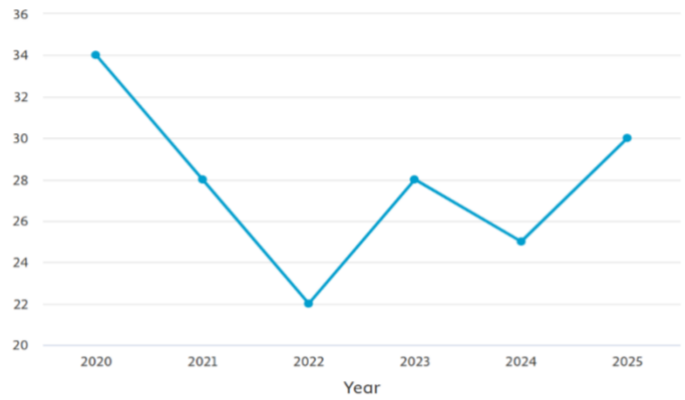


Figure 2. *Annual distribution of Islamic microfinance papers* .

Figure 2 shows the trend in the number of scientific publications per year for the period 2020–2025. It appears that publications gradually declined from 2020 until reaching a low point in 2022, indicating a weakening of academic attention during that period. Subsequently, there was a significant recovery in 2023, although there was another moderate decline in 2024. In 2025, the number of publications again increased quite sharply, indicating a resurgence of research interest. Overall, this pattern reflects the fluctuating dynamics in research development, with indications of a recovery trend and increased academic interest towards the end of the observation period.

Distribution Productivity Authors , Institutions , and Countries

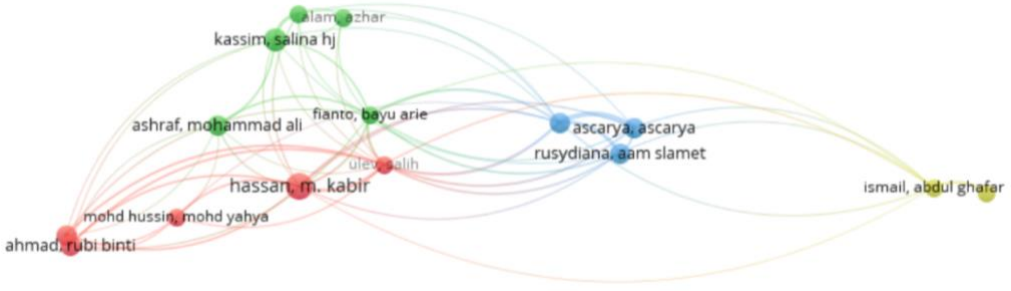
Bibliometric analysis identified a group of core authors who dominate publications in this field. Hassan, M. Kabir emerged as the most productive and influential researcher, followed by Ascarya, Rusydiana, Aam Slamet, Ahmad, Rubi Binti, Islam, Reazul, Sukmana, Raditya, and Kassim, Salina Hj.

In terms of institutional affiliations, the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) tops the list as a center of excellence for Islamic microfinance research, followed by Airlangga University (Unair), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), and Universiti Malaya (UM). The presence of international institutions such as the University of New Orleans (United States) and Sakarya University (Turkey) demonstrates global academic engagement, although Southeast Asia remains the dominant region.

Geographically, Indonesia significantly dominates the volume of scientific publications, followed by Malaysia in second place. Indonesia and Malaysia's dominance is due to their large Muslim populations, mature Islamic financial ecosystems (including a network of Islamic banks (BMT) and Islamic People's Economic Banks (BPRS), and government regulatory support. Contributions from other countries such as Nigeria, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and India demonstrate the gradual spread of research interest across the MENA region and South Asia.

Network and content analysis using mapping tools

This section examines co-authorship patterns, bibliographic linkages, co-citations, keyword analysis, thematic evolution, and hierarchical clustering to identify four main streams of research and formulate directions for future research development.



Picture 3. Co- authorship.

Figure 3 shows a collaborative network among researchers, with dots representing individuals, lines indicating collaborative relationships, and colors distinguishing clusters. The green cluster centers on Kassim Salina Hj, the red cluster on Hassan M. Kabir and Mohd Hussin/Mohd Yahya, and the blue cluster on Ascarya and Rusydiana Aam Slamet. Meanwhile, Ismail Abdul Ghafar is in a peripheral position with limited connections. Overall, this network shows several interconnected centers of collaboration, with certain researchers acting as liaisons between clusters.

Bibliographic coupling

We utilized VOSviewer to perform bibliographic linkage analysis with the aim of identifying core items that have a central role in the analyzed dataset. (Boyack & Klavans, 2010).

Table 3. Frequency of Islamic microfinance publications, by journal .

No	Sources	Articles
1	International journal of ethics and systems	14
2	International journal of Islamic and middle eastern finance and management	11
3	Journal of economic cooperation and development	9
4	Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research	7
5	Journal of islamic marketing	8
6	Journal of islamic monetary economics and finance	5
7	Qualitative research in financial markets	5
8	International journal of islamic finance and sustainable development	4
9	isra international journal of islamic finance	4

Table 4. Authors' impact.

Author name	H_index	G_index	M_index	Total quotes	Number or papers
Hassan, M. Kabir	3	3.4	0.600	313	7
Ascariasis, Ascariasis'	4	3.1	0.62	69	4
Rusydiana, Aam Slamet.	3	5	0.375	68	4
Ahmad, Rubi Binti	3	5	0.300	42	4
Islam, Reazul	3	3	0.429	42	4
Sukmana, Raditya	2	3	0.250	25	4
Kassim, Salina Hj	1	3	0.333	18	5
Ashraf, Mohammad Ali	1	1	0.200	7	4

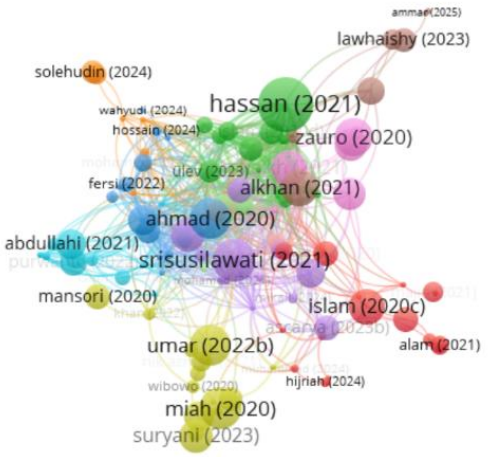
Note: Authors are ranked based on the total number of citations they have received. The H-index, as available in Google Scholar Citation, emphasizes the accumulation of citations from previous publications. The G-index evaluates an author's performance by considering their overall publication track record, while the M-index combines the H-index value with a time dimension, specifically the year of publication.

Table 5. Journal impact.

Source	**H-index**	**G-index**	**M-index**	**Total associations**	**No**	**Year**
Journal of economic cooperation and development	23	13	0.69	78	13	2009
International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management	3	6	0.23	44	7	2008
Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research	2	3	0.33	13	5	2010
International journal of ethics and systems	2	3	0.33	9	5	2018
Isra international journal of islamic finance	1	1	0.14	3	4	2017
Journal of islamic marketing	2	3	0.25	10	4	2010
Journal of islamic monetary economics and finance	3	4	0.37	16	4	

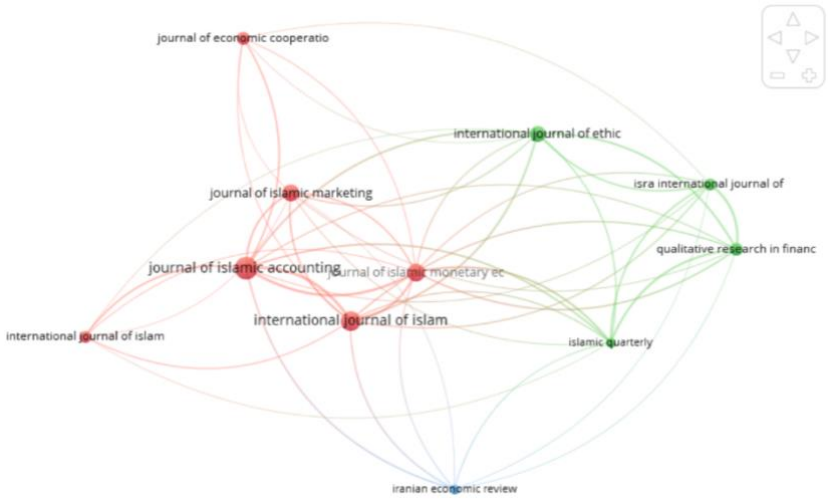
Qualitative research in financial markets	2	3	0.25	10	3	2018 2009
International journal of islamic finance and sustainable development	3	4	0.37	16	4	200 9

Note: Journals are ranked based on the total number of citations they receive. The H-index, G-index, and M-index are used to measure the impact of authors. The H-index is an author-level metric available in Google Scholar Citation and focuses on the accumulation of citations from previous publications. The G-index evaluates impact by considering the entire publication track record, while the M-index combines the H-index value with a temporal dimension, specifically the publication year.



Picture 4 . *Bibliographical coupling of documents* .

This commonly used method applies automatic clustering to large-scale datasets and identifies instances when two documents simultaneously cite the same third work in their bibliography. Figure 4 displays the results of this analysis on *Islamic microfinance* documents contained in this research database, identifying seven main clusters. The findings indicate that the most frequently cited documents are articles Hassan et al., (2021)reviewing *Islamic Microfinance: A Bibliometric Review* and Srisusilawati (2021) discussing *Biblioshiny R Application on Islamic Microfinance Research* . Based on these results, it can be concluded that most Islamic microfinance research references and focuses on the issues raised in these two works.



Gambar 5. Bibliographical coupling of sources.

Figure 5 shows three clusters: the red cluster dominated by *the Journal of Islamic Marketing* , *Journal of Islamic Accounting* , *Journal of Islamic Monetary Economics* , and *International Journal of Islam* , reflecting a strong focus on Islamic economics, marketing, and accounting; the green cluster encompassing *the International Journal of Ethics* , *Qualitative Research in Finance* , *Islamic Quarterly* , and *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance* , demonstrating an interdisciplinary approach with an emphasis on ethics, Islamic finance, and qualitative methodologies; and the relatively small blue cluster represented by *the Iranian Economic Review* as a peripheral connecting node. The linkage pattern shows that the red cluster has strong but relatively limited internal connectivity with other clusters, while the green cluster exhibits more intense cross-cluster connections, signifying its role as a conceptual bridge between Islamic economics and ethical and qualitative finance perspectives. Overall, this visualization indicates a segmented yet interconnected knowledge structure, with certain journals serving as key reference centers within the analyzed research landscape.

Co-citation

Co-citation analysis, which examines pairs of articles cited together in the same source (Shiau et al., 2017), allows for the mapping of research streams based on the strength of their interconnections. The author co-citation analysis in Figure 5 maps intellectual connections between researchers based on the frequency of co-citations within the same source document, thus enabling the identification of research streams and structures within the field under study. By applying a specific citation threshold, four color-coded clusters of authors are formed. The red cluster represents a group of authors with strong internal citation links but relatively limited connections to other clusters, reflecting a more specific research focus. The green and blue clusters exhibit more intense cross-cluster connections, indicating a strong exchange of ideas and thematic proximity between the two groups. Meanwhile, the yellow cluster appears more peripheral with weaker connectivity to other clusters, indicating a limited bridging role or a

more specific research theme. Overall, this network structure suggests that the research landscape is composed of several relatively segmented scholarly groups, but nevertheless interconnected through key authors who play a role in bridging research streams.

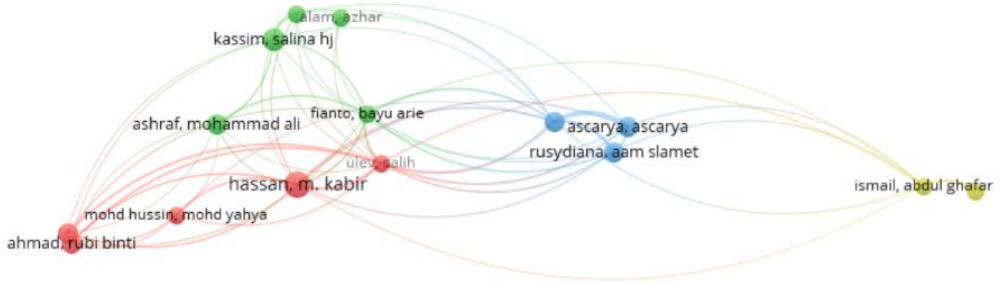


Figure 6. Citation with references

Keywords

Based on the results of the keyword analysis visualized in Figure 6, with a minimum threshold of three occurrences, four main clusters were identified that represent the thematic focus of Islamic microfinance research. The first cluster emphasizes the general study of Islamic microfinance, centered on the terms *Islamic microfinance* and *microfinance* as core concepts. The second cluster describes the role of Islamic financial institutions and instruments, including Islamic banking, *Baitul Maal wat Tamwil* (BMT), and Islamic financing schemes. The third cluster focuses on the contribution of Islamic microfinance to poverty alleviation and entrepreneurship, as reflected in the interconnectedness of keywords such as *poverty alleviation* , *entrepreneurship* , and *Islamic finance* . Meanwhile, the fourth cluster reflects supporting issues and methodological approaches, including empowerment, sustainability, and bibliometric analysis, which demonstrates the diversification of research directions and approaches in the field of Islamic microfinance.

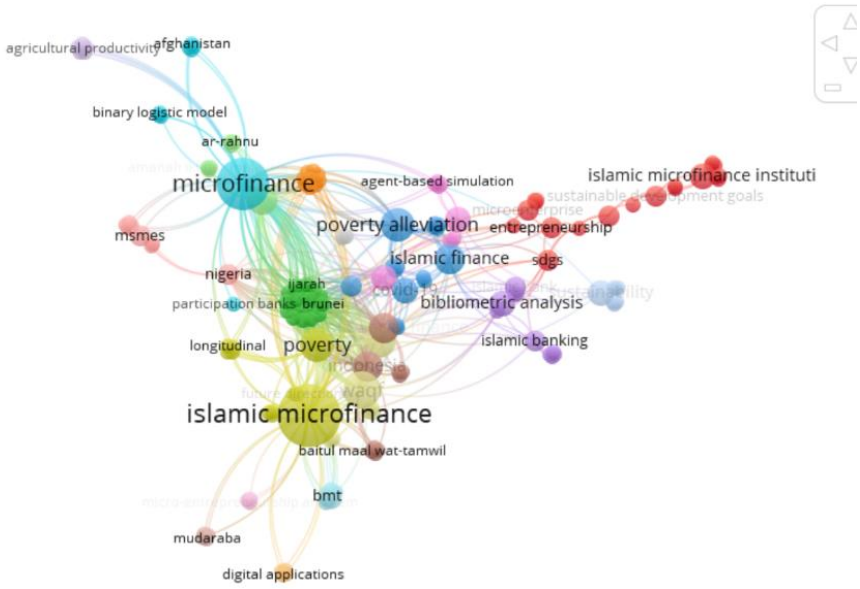
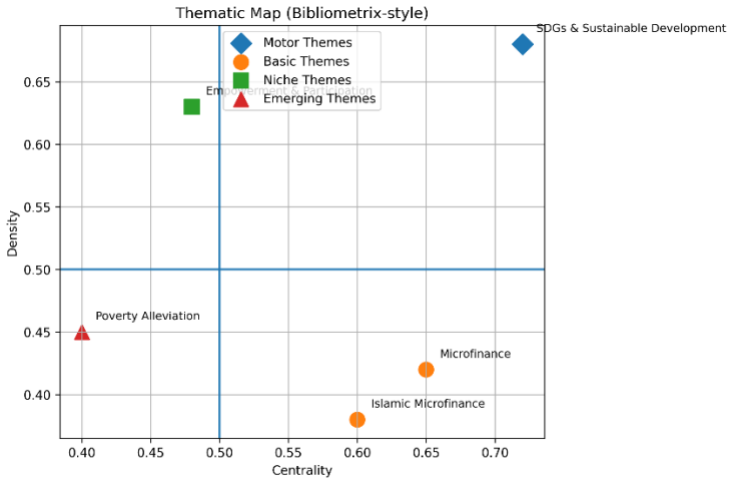


Figure 7. Co-occurrence of keywords

The *thematic map* shows that microfinance and Islamic microfinance are *the basic themes* that form the core of the research. The SDGs and sustainable development are *the driving themes* driving the study of Islamic microfinance. Empowerment and participation are *niche themes , while poverty alleviation is an emerging/declining* theme , indicating a shift in focus toward sustainable development and the SDGs.



Picture 8. Thematic evolution.

Synthesis Four Main Research Streams

Based on qualitative content analysis of key articles, Islamic microfinance literature for the 2020–2025 period is synthesized into four main research streams, as shown in Figure 9.

ISLAMIC MICROFINANCE LITERATURE LANDSCAPE (2020–2025)

■ **FLOW 1: Principles, Performance & Institutions:** Focus on BMT/BPRS, sharia compliance, credit risk from donation funds, and the dynamics of Islamic banking competition.
■ **STREAM 2: Microfinance & SDGs:** Contribution to SDGs 1, 8, and 10, determinants of poverty alleviation, and trade-offs between outreach and sustainability.
■ **STREAM 3: Business & MSME Empowerment:** Use of the Qardh al-Hasan model, BMT at the local level, formation of entrepreneurial character, and women's empowerment.
■ **STREAM 4: The Role of the Islamic Banking Sector:** Innovation of social banking products (eg, BangKIT Bank Islam), Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV), and adoption of micro-fintech.

Figure 9. Synthesis Framework of Four Main Research Streams of Islamic Microfinance.

Flow 1: Principles , Performance, and Problems Institutional Islamic Microfinance

This research stream focuses on strengthening the conceptual foundation and evaluating the operational performance of Islamic microfinance institutions (LKMI) such as Baitul Maal wat Tamwil (BMT) and BPRS. Research in this stream emphasizes the importance of adherence to sharia principles such as fairness, profit sharing (mudharabah/musyarakah), prohibition of usury, and distribution of social funds (zakat, infaq, sedekah, waqf/ZISWAF) as key differentiations from conventional microfinance. (Alkhan & Hassan, 2021; Duhriah et al., 2025b; Ma & Sukmana, 2025a)However, empirical studies reveal several critical issues; Credit Risk and Donations, Disli & Jalaly, (2024); Fersi & Boujelbène, (2022)found that Islamic Financial Institutions (LKMIs) receiving higher levels of social donations tend to face increased credit risk (default risk). This contrasts with conventional institutions where donations actually increase operational efficiency. Donations expand the reach of Islamic Financial Institutions (LKMIs) to the poor, but often reduce the depth of outreach and repayment discipline if not balanced with strict risk management. Competitive Pressures in Islamic Banking **,** (Hossain et al., 2024)shows that the expansion of commercial Islamic banking can cause an erosion effect (mission drift) on Islamic Financial Institutions (LKMIs). Competition from Islamic banks encourages Islamic Financial Institutions (LKMIs) to increase financing ceilings and shift focus from very poor customers to more affluent customer segments in order to maintain profitability. Revenue Diversification **,** Ben Salem & Ben Abdelkader, (2023)found that revenue diversification strategies and a focus on rural areas have a positive non-linear impact on the financial performance of Islamic Financial Institutions (LKMIs) in the MENA region, in contrast to conventional MFIs which actually experience a decline in performance when undertaking similar diversification.

Flow 2: Financing Islamic Micro for Sustainable Development (SDGs *)*

The second research stream positions Islamic microfinance as a strategic instrument to achieve the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG 1 (No

Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequality (Pattnaik & Hassan, 2025)). The main findings in this stream include; Determinants of Poverty Alleviation, Shikur & Akkas, (2024)identified that income level, education, household size, and age of customers are the main determinants that influence the effectiveness of Islamic microfinance in reducing poverty levels. Trade-off Between Outreach and Financial Sustainability , The literature shows a latent tension between social *outreach* and financial sustainability . When LKMIs pursue financial sustainability, there is a tendency to limit financing to the most vulnerable groups. Customer Switching Behavior, Wulandari et al., (2025)This study evaluated the decision-making process of ultra-micro MSMEs in selecting financing institutions. The study results showed that commercial aspects (such as convenience and cost rationality) negatively influenced the intention to switch from Islamic to conventional financing. Conversely, social influence from peers drove the switching decision, while religious factors did not show a statistically significant effect on actual switching behavior.

Flow 3: Financing Micro in Context Empowerment of Micro Enterprises and MSMEs

The third research stream positions Islamic microfinance as a catalyst for strengthening the capacity, resilience, and performance of MSMEs. Access to profit-sharing structured Islamic financing has been shown to reduce fixed financial burdens and the risk of bankruptcy during economic crises (Hussein Kakembo et al., 2021). Case studies and empirical evidence in this stream highlight; The Qardh al-Hasan Model and Character Building, (Hasnita et al., 2025)conducted a qualitative study at Baitul Misykat in Aceh and found that qardh al-Hasan financing effectively increased the economic capacity of small traders. The success of this non-profit model is determined by strict recipient selection, continuous business monitoring, non-monetary incentives, and the integration of ethical-spiritual education that builds discipline and entrepreneurial values. Women's Empowerment , Islam, (2020)and Rahayu, (2023). noted that *Islamic Microfinance Services* (IMFS) can encourage a shift in rural women's livelihoods from subsistence agriculture to retail micro-enterprises, ultimately increasing household income, savings, and health expenditures. However, (Aisyah et al., 2024)it cautions that microfinance inclusion for women must be balanced with adequate Islamic financial literacy to avoid creating new debt dependency.

Stream 4: The Role of the Islamic Banking Sector in Operationalizing Microfinance

The fourth research stream examines the involvement of commercial Islamic banks in supporting the microfinance ecosystem. Islamic banking has the advantage of liquidity and technological infrastructure, but faces operational efficiency and regulatory barriers in reaching micro customers (Anwar et al., 2023;& Junaidi, 2024).Innovation and operational challenges identified include; Social Financial Product Innovation , Wahab et al., (2023)examining the BangKIT microfinance product launched by Bank Islam Malaysia Berhad. This product utilizes charitable funds to provide working capital for micro entrepreneurs who are not reached by commercial banking (*unbankable*). Use of *Special*

Purpose Vehicle (SPV), (Junaidi, 2024b)proposes the use of SPV by Islamic banks to channel microfinance to separate the risks of commercial portfolios from social portfolios. Micro-Fintech Integration **,** Ascarya & Sakti, (2022)designing a micro-fintech model for BMTs in Indonesia that combines digital banking, p2p payment systems, and *e-commerce* with an *offline-to-online* (O2O) approach to channel financing and ZISWAF funds.

Agenda and Future Research Directions

Based on the gaps found in contemporary literature, the future research agenda of Islamic microfinance is projected on several strategic domains: (1) Maqasid al-Shari'ah Based Evaluation **:** Quantitative empirical testing is needed to measure the performance of LKMI not only from conventional financial ratios (such as ROA/ROE), but using a comprehensive index based on Maqasid al-Shari'ah (protection of religion, soul, mind, descendants, and property) (Alkhan & Hassan, 2021). (2) Empirical Testing of Poverty Alleviation Model: The conceptual model of integrating Islamic social finance (zakat and waqf) with microfinance needs to be tested through experimental studies or Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT) to prove its impact on the economic mobility of mustahik (Zauro et al., 2020). (3) Green Initiatives and Sustainable Finance (Green Microfinance **):** Empirical evidence regarding the application of green financing principles by LKMI is still very limited. Future research needs to explore the role of microfinance in supporting climate change adaptation and rural sanitation (Pattnaik & Hassan, 2025). (4) Governance and the Role of the Sharia Supervisory Board (SSB): An in-depth study is needed on how the effectiveness of institutional governance, the board's political connections, and SSB supervision affect operational efficiency and sharia compliance in LKMI.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Study This synthesize literature *Islamic microfinance* 2020–2025 period using approach bibliometrics and *systematic literature review* PRISMA based . Mapping results show growth dynamic publications , especially in Southeast Asia, with Indonesia and Malaysia as contributor main . Landscape study covers four theme main , namely principles and performance of LKMI; financing micro Islam for development sustainable and SDGs; empowerment business micro and MSMEs through *qardh al- hasan* , mentoring , and empowerment women ; and role Islamic banking through innovation *social finance* , SPV, and *micro-fintech* . Research This limited to Scopus database and articles speak English so that potential exclude publication speaking local and proceedings and books .

Findings study indicates the need strengthening research empirical based on primary and longitudinal data for test effectiveness *Islamic microfinance* . In addition , it is necessary institutional model development hybrid that integrates institution Islamic finance , BMT, and zakat and waqf institutions to balance mission social and sustainability financial . Financing micro is also necessary integrated with training business , literacy Islamic finance , and mentoring , accompanied by acceleration digital transformation through *Islamic micro-fintech* For increase efficiency , transparency , and access financing for MSMEs.

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