

## GLOBAL BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF FATWA RESEARCH INDEXED IN SCOPUS (1944-2025)

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### ABSTRACT

*Fatwas have become a rapidly expanding field of scholarly inquiry, functioning not only as religious guidance but also as a key social and legal instrument for addressing contemporary issues in Muslim societies. This bibliometric study maps the structure and evolution of fatwa research indexed in Scopus, focusing on publication trends, collaborative networks, leading contributors, and the dominant thematic clusters of the field. Using 532 documents retrieved with the title keyword “fatwa” and analyzed through VOSviewer, Biblioshiny, and Microsoft*

*Excel, the study identifies a steady growth of publications, increasing international collaborations, and diversification from classical jurisprudential debates to themes such as digital fatwas, Islamic finance, social media ethics, and governance of religious authority. The findings highlight how fatwa studies are increasingly shaped by digitalization, transnational scholarly networks, and emerging socio-legal challenges, providing a comprehensive evidence base for future research agendas and policy formulation related to fatwa institutions and practices.*

**Keywords:** *fatwa, bibliometric, scientific publication, scopus, VOSviewer*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Fatwa, as a product of scholars' or religious institutions' *ijtihad*, plays a crucial role in various aspects of Muslims' lives. The position of fatwa institutions is very important in Islam because the fatwa is one of the solutions to solve problems and differences that occur among Muslims (Alam et al., 2025; Nofandrillah, 2014). On the other hand, the *ulama's* fatwa can also serve as a guide for Muslims in fulfilling religious obligations imposed on them (Ikhwandy & Apriantoro, 2017; Martunis, 2017). A fatwa is the answer to Islamic law on a problem, based on the *shari'i* postulates from the Qur'an, Sunnah, *Ijma'*, and *Qiyas*. The importance of a fatwa can be seen in three main dimensions: religious, social, and legal. In the religious context, a fatwa not only applies as advice but also as a guide for Muslims in living their lives in accordance with religious values (BPKH, 2024; Siregar & Alam, 2018). Nowadays, especially with the emergence of new problems that have never existed before, which are of course not explicitly addressed in the Qur'an, Muslims must have the courage to formulate ways and methods to address these problems (Huda, 2019; Iqbal, 2018). This consideration is where the role of fatwa becomes vital. From a social perspective, fatwas have a strong impetus in shaping ethics, morality, and social cohesion in Muslim society.

Fatwa is a product of Islamic legal thought, where Islam not only regulates the relationship between humans and God, but also the relationship between humans and the environment (Mustofa et al., 2024). In some Muslim-majority countries or legal systems that adopt Islamic law, fatwas have significant legal implications. Although fatwas are not binding, in fact, fatwas play an important role and occupy a strategic position in the treasure trove of Islamic legal dynamics globally, especially in various parts of the Islamic world (Muhammad, 2016). Thus, fatwas are not just religious opinions, but vital

instruments that play a multifaceted role in guiding the ummah, maintaining social order, and even influencing the legal framework, especially in societies that make Islam the main foundation of life.

In the modern era, the institution of fatwa is no longer limited to religious offices or places of worship. However, it has entered the digital realm through websites, applications, and social media. This shift brings several new challenges. The main challenge is to ensure information security and understanding in conveying religious messages. In the same space as the presence of new media, the role of Islamic authorities in cyberspace is becoming increasingly important. They must actively participate in online platforms to provide guidance and oversight of the spread of fatwas. Strong Islamic authority can help in reducing the risk of fatwas appearing that are not in accordance with Islamic teachings (Dhora et al., 2023). In addition, technological advances and easier access to religious information can lead to the emergence of various and possibly conflicting fatwas. This phenomenon can cause confusion among Muslims and even the potential for the division of Muslim society.

On the other hand, there are also tests on the accuracy and quality of online fatwas, as well as the potential for the spread of false or distorted information (Asmar et al., 2023). Digital fatwas now play a dual role; on the one hand, as a source of religious legitimacy (Zulmia, 2020), and on the other hand, they also created a new discourse on the limits of religious authority and the dissemination of information (Hamdani, 2021). It is important to highlight the principle *Al-jarhl wa Al-ta'dil*; science that studies the defects of the narrator, such as in justice and dwellness (Srifariyati, 2020), in filtering digital fatwas spread on social media, both in terms of the credibility of the mufti and the accuracy of the content (Fikri et al., 2024). In addition, Fatwa No. 24/2017 concerning the law and guidelines for muamalah through social media by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) emphasizes how formal fatwas need to adjust digital regulations and ethics in order to create peace of communication in the online realm. To support the development of science and knowledge related to fatwa, modern scientific analysis approaches, such as bibliometric studies, have begun to be used as an important tool in mapping and assessing existing literature and research.

Bibliometric studies offer a wide range of tools and techniques that can be used to evaluate research productivity, identify emerging topic trends, and analyze collaborative relationships and networks among researchers and institutions (Mukhlisa & Hasan, 2024). This method helps researchers and research institutions to map the scientific literature and provide a

comprehensive picture of the academic contributions of a field or discipline (Kurdi & Kurdi, 2021). By analyzing the frequency of keywords or headlines, we can see new issues that are starting to attract the attention of scholars and researchers, a shift in focus from classical issues to modern ones, and topics that are consistently becoming the main concern. Bibliometric studies help identify who is most productive and influential in fatwa research. This method includes the individual authors who publish their work the most, the institute or institutions that lead in the production of fatwa research, as well as collaborative networks between authors or institutions, which show how knowledge is shared and developed together.

Through citation analysis, bibliometric studies can study the publication patterns, authorship, and impact of journals in certain fields (Mokhtari et al., 2021). The number of citations a fatwa or research article receives indicates how often the work is referenced by other researchers, indicating its significance and influence in scientific discourse. In essence, bibliometric studies provide objective and measurable data that allow researchers, scholars, and policymakers to understand the fatwa research landscape in more depth. This study helps in better decision-making regarding the direction of research, resource allocation, and future scientific development strategies.

Thus, this study aims to identify and analyze the trends of developing topics in fatwa research, including new issues that attract the attention of scholars and researchers, identify the top sources, authors, institutions, and countries that contribute the most to the research, analyze the main research topics and themes that are developing in fatwa studies, as well as uncover popular keyword trends and thematic networks, and provide measurable and objective data on the publication of fatwas, to assist researchers and policymakers in making decisions.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the scope of Islamic studies, especially research related to fatwa, bibliometric analysis is very relevant to find out the extent of academic attention to fatwa issues, the tendency of the topics discussed, and the main actors, both institutions and individuals, who play a role in the development of this study. Previous studies have shown that bibliometric analysis of fatwa research can provide an overview of publication trends, collaborative networks, and popular topics that develop in a given period, such as research conducted by (Chasan & MN, 2024) in conducting a bibliometric analysis of 1,663 research documents related to the MUI fatwa stored in 38 repositories of State Islamic Religious

Universities (PTKIN) for a period of 21 years (2002-2023). This study identifies publication patterns, types of documents, publication languages, institutional affiliations, and influential authors in the field of MUI fatwa studies. Through the mapping of knowledge (*science mapping*), this study visualizes the network of keywords that often appear, so that it can reveal the interaction between topics and research trends that develop in the study of fatwa in the academic environment of PTKIN. These findings provide a comprehensive overview of the development of fatwa science in Indonesia and are an important basis for the development of more targeted and impactful fatwa research. This research makes a significant contribution to understanding the evolution and focus of MUI fatwa studies in state Islamic universities, as well as strengthening the importance of bibliometrics as a tool for evaluation and research planning in the field of fatwa.

Bibliometric studies conducted by Mu'adzah (2022) reveal research trends related to the principles of fiqh, which include the position of fiqh principles in Islamic law, the application of fiqh principles in DSN-MUI fatwa, and the important role of fiqh principles in muamalah. This research also highlights the relationship between the rules of fiqh and ushul fiqh as a basic methodology in the determination of Islamic law, becoming the basis for mujtahids in issuing fatwas based on shari'i evidence. In the context of the application of *al-qawa'id (al-qawa'id al-fiqhiyyah)*, other research shows that these rules serve as a tool to group similar legal issues to facilitate the process of ijtihad and fatwa decision-making by the mufti (Omar & Hussin, 2018). Ushul Fiqh, as a methodological science of Islamic law, focuses on the way of taking the law from the postulates of shari'i and provides a framework for ijtihad, which is very relevant in the development of fatwa studies and the application of fiqh rules in contemporary fatwas (Kazemi Moussavi & Mavani, 2023).

Salisu and Saniff (2023) identify gaps where Islamic fatwas have not been fully integrated into the current Shariah compliance mechanism. The study specifically highlights that the Shariah Regulatory Framework (SRFW) is designed to ensure that the transactions of Islamic financial institutions (IFIs) are free from non-halal elements such as riba and gharar. Although SRFW has set strict standards for Shariah compliance, they argue that Islamic fatwas have not been fully embedded in the framework. Therefore, this study aims to identify the relationship between SRFW and Islamic Fatwa (IF), as well as show how Shariah compliance mechanisms can be fully achieved through the effective use of IF. By conducting a systematic review of articles from databases such as Scopus and Google Scholar, Salisu & Saniff (2023) found that the integration of fatwas can effectively improve the regulation of IFIs in accordance with Shariah principles. They also recommended specific research

areas that need to be focused on in the future, related to optimizing the role of fatwa in Shariah regulation.

Hussain et al. (2024) also conducted a bibliometric analysis of theses and dissertations related to fatwas stored in Malaysian Thesis Online (MyTO) for four decades, from 1979 to 2022. This study provides a comprehensive overview of the development of fatwa research in Malaysia, which covers various fields of study and languages, such as Malay, Arabic, and English. The results of the study show a dynamic trend in the writing and development of fatwa studies, reflecting the changing focus and approach of research over time. These findings are important to identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for the development of fatwa research in the future. Using statistical and bibliometric methods, this study helps to uncover the patterns of collaboration, types of research, and topics that are most discussed in the fatwa literature in Malaysia, which can be an important foothold in the development of fatwa studies at the national and international levels.

This study will examine the study of fatwa using a collection of relevant literature. Some previous studies have only examined fatwas in a narrow scope and a specific field, so there have not been many bibliometric studies that discuss this topic widely. This study will fill the research gap regarding the growth and development of fatwa study publications in general, in a global scope that has not been studied much by researchers before.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses the Bibliometric analysis method to explore and analyze large amounts of scientific data (Donthu et al., 2021). The concept of bibliometrics was proposed by Pritchard in 1969. The term bibliometrics comes from another term, namely “statistical bibliography,” which was used in 1942 by Raisig (Putri et al., 2023). Bibliometrics is a research method used to analyze and map developments and trends in a field of science through quantitative data from scientific publications. This method involves the collection and analysis of bibliographic data such as the number of publications, citations, author collaborations, and the geographical and temporal distribution of research (Hyland & Jiang, 2021). Data were collected from the Scopus database using the keyword “fatwa” to obtain a collection of articles relevant to the study.

Bibliometric analysis was performed by utilizing the VOSviewer software to identify co-authoring analyses (co-authorship analysis), co-writing analysis (co-authorship analysis), as well as the analysis of the common word (co-word analysis) (Donthu et al., 2021), which describes the main themes in the

fatwa literature. This study uses five stages of bibliometric analysis, including keyword determination, initial search reduction, initial search total reduction, initial statistical image compilation, and data interpretation in the analytical narrative (Dewi et al., 2021).

## **1. Data Collection**

The data in this study were obtained based on the analysis of the Scopus-indexed database. Scopus stands out as one of the best databases for conducting a literature review because it offers very broad, multidisciplinary coverage of high-quality, peer-reviewed journals, books, and conference proceedings, all in a single integrated platform (Alam et al., 2022, 2023). The initial process is carried out by searching for previous literature related to fatwa studies in the search field with the query: TITLE (“fatwa”). This keyword aims to collect published articles that are directly related to the research focus (Farooq et al., 2020). From the search, a total of 532 documents were obtained to be used as further bibliometric reference.

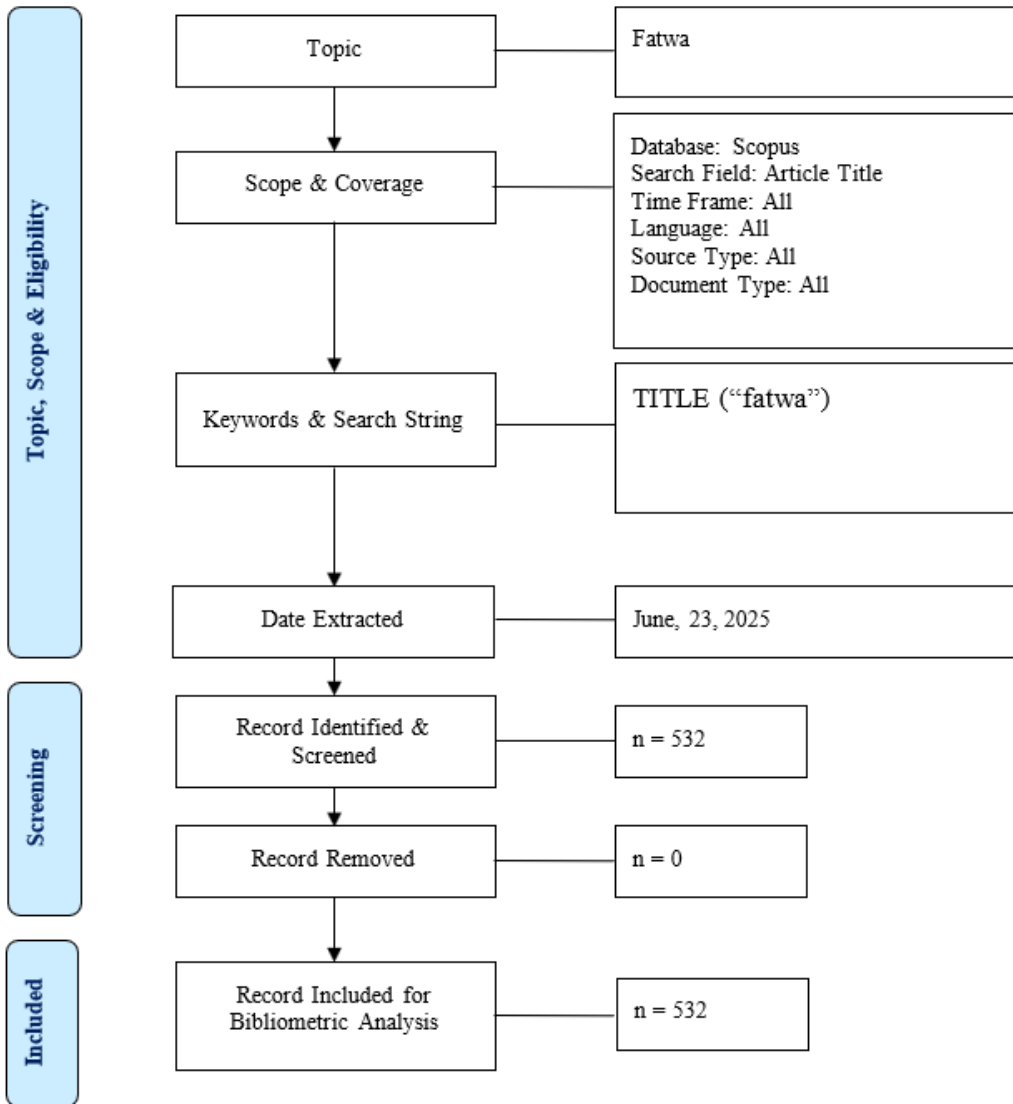


Figure 1. Flow diagram of the search strategy

## 2. Analysis Tools

This bibliometric study uses a database obtained from Scopus, then exported in Comma Separated Values (.csv) and Research Information Systems (.ris)

formats, which contain complete metadata, such as author information, article title, year of publication, article source, volume, page, number of citations, affiliation, keywords, language, and others. Then the data is processed using several software, including VOSviewer, Microsoft Excel, and Biblioshiny.

VOSviewer is a computer program that can be used to observe and build bibliometric mapping. VOSviewer has a text-mining function that is useful for building and displaying visualizations on relationships or networks (correlation) in citations or citations of articles (Putri et al., 2023). VOSviewer also offers text mining functionality that can be used to build and visualize co-appearing networks (co-occurrence) from important terms taken from a collection of scientific literature. VOSviewer can present as well as represent specific information about bibliometric graphical maps. Simply put, VOSviewer can be used to display large bibliometric maps in an easy way to interpret a relationship (Eck & Waltman, 2010).

Biblioshiny R is a web-based application that allows users to manage, browse, and share their literature collection easily. One of its main advantages is its ability to present literature data with interactive visualizations. Users can view statistics about their literature collection, such as the distribution of the year of publication, the type of publication, or the frequency of a particular author, in the form of attractive and easy-to-understand graphs (LPPM Tazkia, 2024).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This research was analyzed using several aspects of scientific work to answer research questions that had been developed previously, including document profiles, publication trends, publications by institution, publications by country, publications by source titles, widely cited documents, and emergence analysis.

### **1. Document Profile**

Based on Table 1, 532 research documents were found regarding the study of fatwa in the range of 1944 to 2025, with a total of 3,502 citations. During this period, there were 1,078 authors who had contributed and 383 papers cited. It can be seen that the ratio of citations per year obtained is 43.23.

Table 1: Citation Metrics

<b>Main Information</b>	<b>Data</b>
Publication Years	1944 - 2025
Total Publications	532
Citable Year	82
Number of Contributing Authors	1078
Number of Cited Papers	383
Total Citations	3,502
Citation per Paper	6.60
Citation per Cited Paper	9.14
Citation per Year	43.23
Citation per Author	3.25
Author per Paper	2.03
Citation sums within h-Core	2,799
h-index	28
g-index	41
m-index	0.341

## 2. Publication Trends

Figure 2 presents the development of the number of publications and citations regarding fatwa studies. From this data, it can be seen that there has been an increase and a decrease from 1944 to 2025. The beginning of the period occurred in 1944, when only one publication with two citations was recorded. The trend of publications continues to increase until it reaches its peak in 2021, with as many as 66 publications. Then the second highest total of publications, namely 60 publications, occurred in 2024, and the third highest total in 2022 to 2023, with the same number of publications, namely 52.

Meanwhile, the highest number of citations occurred in 2010 with a total of 299 citations, 250 citations in 2021, and 249 citations in 2011. In addition, there was a sharp spike in the number of publications from 2020, with a total of 36 publications, to 2021, with a total of 66 publications. For 2025, provisional data show as many as 22 publications with 1 citation, and this number will still increase in the future. The visualization of the data shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of publications and citations over a period of 81 years, with fluctuations. This trend indicates an increase in publication activities, allowing research activities and scientific development.

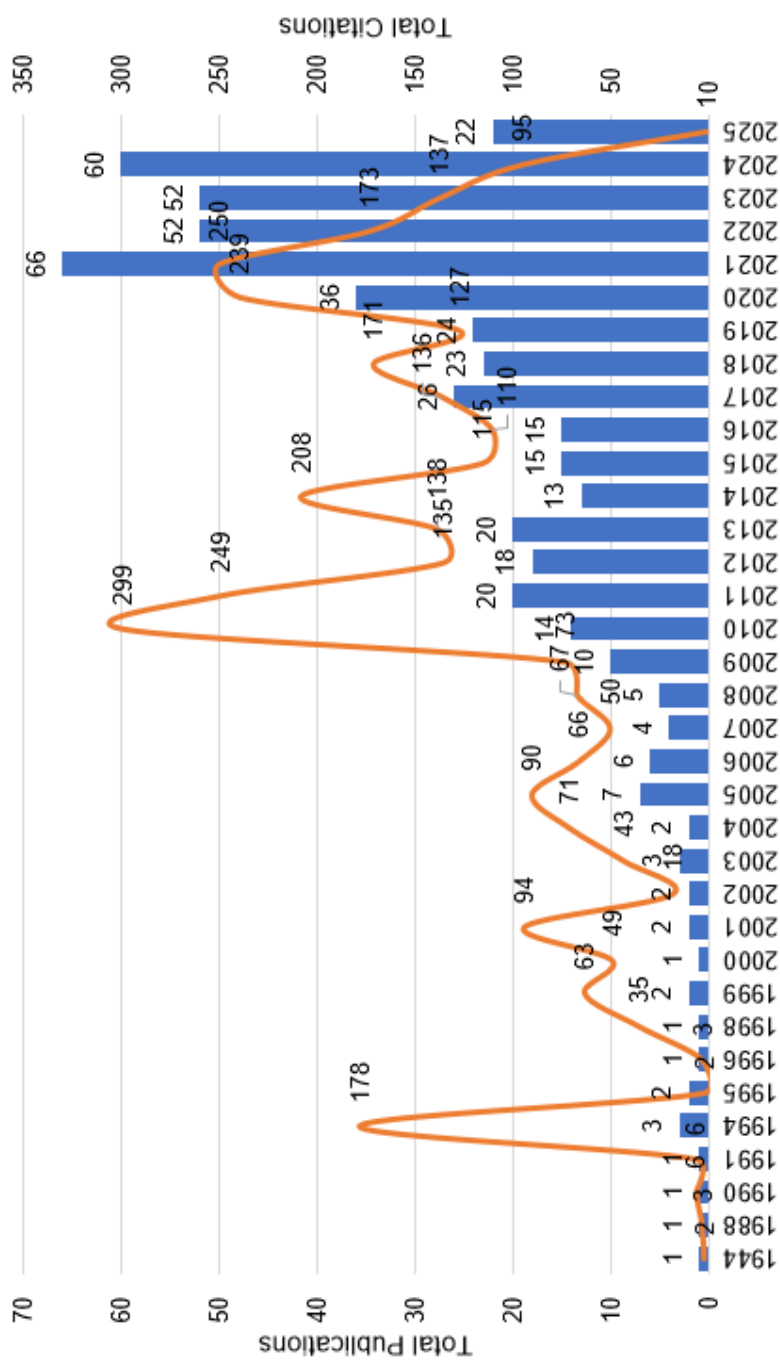


Figure 2: Total Publication and Citations by Year

Figure 3 shows the growth of publications from 1944 to 2025. In 1944, there was only one publication. In the following years, the number of publications began to increase in 1991, reaching as many as four publications, and continued to increase until reaching a peak in 2025 with a total of 531 publications. With this number, publications will continue to grow in the future.

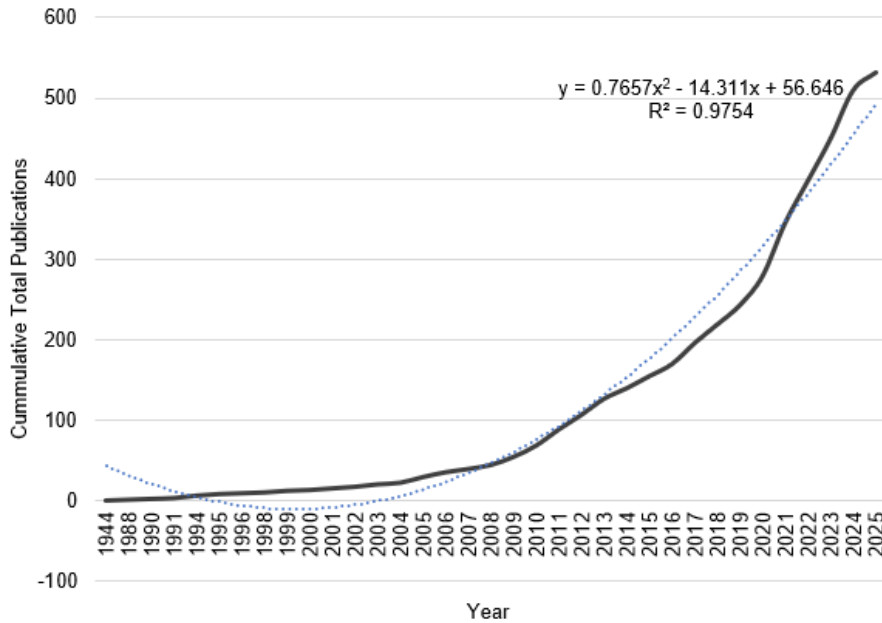


Figure 3: Publication Growth

### 3. Publications by Institution

Table 2 shows the distribution of higher education institutions in the publication of fatwa studies, with the number of publications of 6 or more. It can be seen that Malaysia and Indonesia dominate almost the entire data. Universiti Malaya occupies the top position with a total of 22 publications of 22 documents. Followed by Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia with 20 publications and Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University with 18 publications. State Islamic University of North Sumatra with 16 publications, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and International Islamic University Malaysia with 15 publications, State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga with 13 publications, Universiti Sains Malaysia and State Islamic University Sunan Gunung Djati with nine publications, Universiti Teknologi MARA with eight publications, Syarif

Hidayatullah State Islamic University with seven publications, and Al-Azhar University, Kiai Haji Achmad Shiddiq State Islamic University, Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, and Sultan Zainal Abidin University with the same total of 6 publications. Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin produced the highest citation per publication (C/P) ratio of 9.83. The highest total citation (TC) was occupied by Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University with a total of 130 citations.

Table 2: Most productive institutions with a minimum of five publications

Affiliation	Country	HCMC	NCA	NCP	TC	C/P	C/CP	<i>h</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>m</i>
Universiti Malaya	Malaysia	22	38	18	120	5.45	6.67	7	10	0.500
Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia	Malaysia	20	55	7	19	0.95	2.71	3	4	0.333
Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah	Indonesia	18	39	16	130	7.22	8.13	7	11	1.000
Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara	Indonesia	16	44	8	76	4.75	9.50	3	8	0.600
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	Malaysia	15	41	10	48	3.20	4.80	4	6	0.286
International Islamic University Malaysia	Malaysia	15	30	9	65	4.33	7.22	4	8	0.250
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga	Indonesia	13	21	8	55	4.23	6.88	5	7	0.833
Universiti Sains Malaysia	Malaysia	9	12	6	40	4.44	6.67	3	6	0.333
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati	Indonesia	9	13	8	45	5.00	5.63	4	6	0.571
Universiti Teknologi MARA	Malaysia	8	17	6	8	1.00	1.33	2	2	0.167
Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University	Indonesia	7	13	6	32	4.57	5.33	3	5	0.125

Affiliation	Country	HCMC	NCA	NCP	TC	C/P	C/CP	<i>h</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>m</i>
Al-Azhar University	Egypt	6	7	6	46	7.67	7.67	4	6	0.160
Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Shiddiq	Indonesia	6	6	5	22	3.67	4.40	3	4	0.750
Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry	Indonesia	6	10	5	21	3.50	4.20	3	4	0.333
Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin	Malaysia	6	13	6	59	9.83	9.83	5	6	0.556

Note: TP=total number of publications; NCA=number of contributing authors; NCP=number of cited publications; TC=total citations; C/P=average citations per publication; C/CP=average citations per cited publication; *h*=*h*-index; *g*=*g*-index; *m*=*m*-index

#### 4. Publications by Country

Table 3 presents publication data from the top 20 countries that published four more papers; it can be seen that the Asian Continent dominated the research contribution with a total of 343 publications. Led by Indonesia in first place with 195 publications, Malaysia with 88 publications, Israel with 17 publications, Saudi Arabia with 12 publications, Pakistan with seven publications, Qatar and Japan with six publications, and Iran, India, and Brunei Darussalam with four publications. Meanwhile, the European continent also dominates the scientific publications on this list after Asia, with a total of 68 publications, including the United Kingdom with 32 publications, the Netherlands with 14 publications, Germany with 10 publications, France with eight publications, and Belgium with four publications.

There is also the United States with 60 publications and Canada with nine publications, so the total publications from the Americas is 69. Australia also contributed 15 publications. In addition, Egypt, as the only representative of the African Continent on this list, contributed as many as 10 publications. Turkey, which is dubbed a transcontinental country or a country of two continents, because it is located mostly on the Asian continent but a small part of its territory is on the European Continent, contributes to this list of publications as many as 19 documents. The data shows that Asia dominates scientific publications in the context of this list, followed by Europe, America, and Australia, proving the trend of increasingly active research development, especially in the Asian region.

Table 3: The top 20 Countries contributed to the publications

<b>Country</b>	<b>HCMC</b>	<b>NCA</b>	<b>NCP</b>	<b>TC</b>	<b>C/P</b>	<b>C/CP</b>	<b><i>h</i></b>	<b><i>g</i></b>	<b><i>m</i></b>
Indonesia	195	449	147	954	4.89	6.49	14	30	0.467
Malaysia	88	256	55	336	3.82	6.11	11	18	0.688
United States	60	67	46	708	11.80	15.39	15	26	0.556
United Kingdom	32	34	26	292	9.13	11.23	9	17	0.290
Turkey	19	20	11	26	1.37	2.36	3	5	0.333
Israel	17	19	13	150	8.82	11.54	6	12	0.171
Australia	15	17	12	128	8.53	10.67	5	11	0.278
Netherlands	14	14	14	203	14.50	14.50	7	14	0.219
Saudi Arabia	12	18	11	130	10.83	11.82	4	11	0.160
Egypt	10	21	9	80	8.00	8.89	5	8	0.061
Germany	10	10	6	87	8.70	14.50	4	9	0.167
Canada	9	9	8	211	23.44	26.38	5	9	0.156
France	8	9	2	15	1.88	7.50	2	3	0.095
Pakistan	7	9	4	11	1.57	2.75	2	3	0.118
Qatar	6	14	5	19	3.17	3.80	2	4	0.167
Japan	6	7	4	19	3.17	4.75	3	4	0.188
Iran	4	8	2	32	8.00	16.00	1	4	0.091
India	4	7	2	4	1.00	2.00	1	2	0.056
Brunei Darussalam	4	5	4	63	15.75	15.75	4	4	0.333
Belgium	4	6	4	78	19.50	19.50	3	4	0.200

Note: TP=total number of publications; NCA=number of contributing authors; NCP=number of cited publications; TC=total citations; C/P=average citations per publication; C/CP=average citations per cited publication; h=h-index; and g=g-index.

## 5. Publications Based on Source Titles

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of publications on fatwas based on the title of the source. From the data above, it can be seen that the “Journal of Fatwa Management and Research” occupies the top position with a total of 25 publications. It was followed by “Ahkam: Journal of Sharia Science” with 21 publications, “Islamic Law and Society” with 15 publications, “Muslim World” with 12 publications, as well as “Al-Manahij: Journal of Islamic Law Studies” and “Al-Istinbath: Journal of Islamic Law” with 10 publications. The data shows the top source titles on this list. In addition, the bottom position is occupied by “Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities”, “El-Mashlahah”, “Journal of Indonesian Islam”, “Al-Adalah”, and “Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi” with the same number of publications, namely five documents. This data shows the variation and distribution of research focus in the field of fatwa in various academic journals.

Table 4: Most Active Source Titles that have Published 20 or More Documents

Source Title	HCMC	NCA	NCP	TC	C/P	C/CP	<i>h</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>m</i>
Journal of Fatwa Management and Research	25	74	10	17	0.68	1.70	2	3	0.400
Ahkam: Journal of Sharia Science	21	46	18	115	5.48	6.39	6	9	0.429
Islamic Law and Society	15	15	15	385	25.67	25.67	8	15	0.250
Muslim World	12	15	11	123	10.25	11.18	7	11	0.259
Al-Manahij: Journal of Islamic Law Studies	10	16	10	51	5.10	5.10	4	6	0.667
Al-Istinbath: Journal of Islamic Law	10	28	10	43	4.30	4.30	4	6	0.571
Journal of Islamic Law	9	24	7	30	3.33	4.29	3	5	0.500
Samarah	9	27	8	43	4.78	5.38	5	6	0.556
Studia Islamika	8	10	7	43	5.38	6.14	4	6	0.133

Source Title	HCMC	NCA	NCP	TC	C/P	C/CP	<i>h</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>m</i>
Mizani Scientific Journal	7	18	2	7	1.00	3.50	1	2	0.200
Religions	6	10	5	66	11.00	13.20	3	6	0.429
Al-Ihkam: Journal of Law and Social Institutions	6	13	6	29	4.83	4.83	3	5	0.375
Journal of Islamic Law	6	16	3	6	1.00	2.00	2	2	0.667
Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities	5	21	5	16	3.20	3.20	3	3	0.273
El-Mashlahah	5	11	4	37	7.40	9.25	4	5	0.571
Journal of Indonesian Islam	5	8	5	54	10.80	10.80	4	5	0.267
Al-'Is	5	14	4	9	1.80	2.25	2	2	0.333
Cumhuriyet Journal of Theology	5	5	2	2	0.40	1.00	1	1	0.111

**Note:** TP=total number of publications; NCA=Number of contributing authors; NCP=number of cited publications; TC=total citations; C/P=average citations per publication; C/CP=average citations per cited publication; h=h-index; g=g-index; m=m-index.

## 6. Widely Cited Documents

In the bibliometric context, the widely cited document is the most influential scientific work. Therefore, the identification of these documents allows the detection of the most influential authors, topics, research methods, and sources of all time (Martin-Martin et al., 2017). Citations show the number of times all documents in the database cite an article. The average number of citations per paper for all articles clearly increases with the number of years since publication (Tian et al., 2008). The number of citations comes from the Scopus database, which is then extracted via Mendeley into the format Research Information Systems (.ris) and analyzed using the VOSviewer application. Table 5 shows the top 10 documents regarding fatwa studies that have 35 or more citations. “From Fatwās to Furū’: Growth and Change in Islamic Substantive Law” (Hallaq, 1994) occupies the top position as the most cited document, with a total of 165 citations and 5.16 citations per year.

Research conducted by Hallaq (1994) aims to establish a strong relationship between fatwas and their social background, determine the methods and procedures used to incorporate fatwas into positive law, and analyze the reasons why fatwas are selectively inserted. The findings suggest that the juridical genre of fatwas is responsible for the growth and change of legal doctrine in schools, and that the current perception of Islamic law as the foundation of legal scholars should now be further defined as the law of the mufti. Any subsequent investigation of the historical evolution and development of substantive legal doctrine must take into account the mufti and his fatwas.

Ali Agrama (2010) criticizes the general approach that views fatwas primarily as an instrument for the change and reform of Islamic doctrine, which serves to bridge the gap between the past of established doctrine and a future full of novelty. This approach is based on questionable assumptions about temporality, imitation, creativity, and tradition, which obscures the integral ethical dimension of fatwa as well as our understanding of its pervasive authority. Through ethnography at the Al-Azhar Fatwa Council in Cairo, this article provides a different perspective on fatwas, which helps to understand their ethical authority and, at the same time, challenges conventional opposition between ethical authorities and agencies. The findings explain that fatwas are not just an instrument of changing Islamic doctrine, but an ethical practice that connects individuals with Islamic traditions dynamically and contextually. Through the ethnography of the Al-Azhar Fatwa Council in Cairo, it was found that the mufti gave different answers depending on the situation and the context of the individual who asked, intending to facilitate the affairs of the ummah. Fatwās have strong ethical authority although they are not legally binding, and the relationship between the mufti and the fatwa recipient is reciprocal and flexible. This research challenges traditional views that separate ethical authority and agency, as well as critiques common assumptions about time, imitation, and tradition in understanding fatwas.

Anshelm & Hultman (2014) analyze how skepticism of climate change in Sweden is linked to masculinity identities rooted in the now declining industrial modernity. The study highlights a small group of climate skeptics, the majority of whom are older men with influential positions in academia and large corporations, who feel marginalized for defying scientific and political consensus on climate change. They maintain the values of an industrial society, such as a belief in the free market, a distrust of government regulation, and a belief in the rationality of science and engineering. The authors argue that this climate skepticism is closely related to the declining masculinity of modern industry, and that this skeptical effort is a way of defending the values of such industrial societies from eco-modern hegemony. This gender analysis

goes beyond the view of skepticism as a mere ideological rejection of science and politics by highlighting the identities, historical structures, and emotions involved.

The results of the study show that climate skepticism in Sweden is not only a political or ideological attitude, but is also linked to a crisis of masculinity identity rooted in industrialization and modernity. This skepticism reflects resistance to social and environmental changes that challenge the values and social positions of the male group that has been dominant in industrial society. Thus, climate change is seen as a threat to traditional masculinity that deals with the power and control over nature through technology and industrial economics. In summary, this study links the dynamics of climate change to gender social constructions, specifically how modern industrial masculinity contributes to skeptical attitudes towards climate change and how these changes create an identity crisis for the group. This approach opens up new perspectives in the study of climate change by including gender and social identity analysis as important factors in understanding attitudes and responses to global environmental issues.

Table 5. Top 10 Highly Cited Articles

No.	Authors	Title	Source title	Cites	Cites per Year
1.	Hallaq (1994)	From Fatwās to Furū: Growth and Change in Islamic Substantive Law	Islamic Law and Society	165	5.16
2.	Ali Agrama (2010)	Ethics, tradition, authority: Toward an anthropology of the fatwa	American Ethnologist	135	8.44
3.	A n s h e l m & Hultman (2014)	A green fatwā? Climate change as a threat to the masculinity of industrial modernity	NORM	106	8.83
4.	Alkuraya & Kilani (2001)	Attitude of Saudi families affected with hemoglobinopathies towards prenatal screening and abortion, and the influence of religious ruling (Fatwa)	Prenatal Diagnosis	74	2.96

No.	Authors	Title	Source title	Cites	Cites per Year
5.	Ullah et al. (2018)	'Fatwa Repositioning': The Hidden Shari'a for Shari'a Compliance Within Islamic Financial Institutions	Journal of Business Ethics	59	7.38
6.	Caeiro (2010)	The power of European fatwas: The minority fiqh project and the making of an Islamic counterpublic	International Journal of Middle East Studies	51	3.19
7.	Weiman (2011)	Cyber-fatwas and terrorism	Studies in Conflict and Terrorism	51	3.40
8.	Miller (2000)	Muslim minorities and the obligation to emigrate to Islamic territory: Two Fatwās from fifteenth-century Granada	Islamic Law and Society	49	1.88
9.	Sirry (2013)	Fatwās and their controversy: The case of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI)	Journal of Southeast Asian Studies	46	3.54
10.	Adinugraha et al. (2021)	Halal Tourism in Indonesia: An Indonesian Council of Ulama National Sharia Board Fatwa Perspective	Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business	44	8.80

## 7. Co-occurrence Analysis

Author keywords are crucial for academics who are looking for research trends. Wen and Huang (2012) said that keyword analysis is essential to assess the growth of a research topic. Table 6 shows the keywords that appear most often in this study. The keyword "Fatwa" dominated with a frequency of 202 times. It is followed by "Islamic Law" with 33 mentions, meaning research on fatwas related to the context of Shariah law. There are also other keywords such as "Covid-19", "Indonesian Ulema Council", and "Islam" which show

that this study does not only explore fatwas in general but also with regard to the institution that issued the fatwa and its relation to Islam.

Table 6. Top 10 Keywords

Keyword	Frequency
Fatwa	202
Islamic Law	33
Covid-19	29
Indonesian Ulema Council	29
Islam	26
Malaysia	17
MUI Fatwa	17
<i>Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah</i>	16
Indonesia	13
Mufti	10

Figure 4 presents a network visualization of the author's keywords most often used in the co-occurrence of fatwa research. A total of 31 keywords were applied to 532 documents in the dataset. This study used VOSviewer software to analyze keyword mapping. Key variables that affect a topic can be identified by mapping keywords, countries, or other study-specific elements as nodes, with their connections as edges in a network. These visualizations help to systematically uncover core themes, influential factors, and interactions among the various elements of the research (Dwyer, 2016). In the network visualization below, each color indicates a cluster. This cluster is categorized into four themes: Fatwa on the issue of bioethics and Islamic social ethics (green - 8 items), fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council on Islamic finance issues (red - 8 items), digital transformation in the dissemination of fatwas (yellow - 7 items), and the role of fatwa in handling public health issues (blue - 8 items).



Figure 5 shows a visualization of the author's keyword overlay that determines the trend of the research topic regarding fatwa. The keywords that appear are grouped by year. In the period 2019-2020, topics that emerged on Islam, Malaysia, religion, bioethics, organ donation, European Council for fatwa, Shariah, fiqh al-aqalliyat, Ahmadiyah, ijtihad, fiqh, and mufti, showed the interconnectedness of fatwa and bioethics in contemporary Islamic law. These keywords reflect the relationship between Islamic law, bioethical issues, socio-religious dynamics, and the role of fatwa institutions and authorities in responding to contemporary challenges, both in Malaysia and in the global Muslim community.

In the 2020-2021 period, topics that emerged were related to fatwas, Islamic law, online fatwa, Shariah compliance, MUI, and dsn fatwa, which showed aspects of the development and implementation of fatwas in contemporary Islamic law. Moreover, in 2021-2022, topics about halal, masalah, ethics, Islamic finance, Indonesian Ulema Council, covid-19, MUI fatwa, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, Indonesia, Muhammadiyah, women, social media, and zakat appeared. Reflecting the role of fatwa issued by the MUI in regulating halal aspects, Shariah finance, and the use of zakat with the principles of masalah and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*. In addition, these fatwas also regulate social ethics, the role of women, and the use of social media as a means of disseminating fatwas and education to the public.

In addition, the strong relationship between the keywords fatwa and Islamic law that is at the center of the map shows the urgency of the linkage between the two themes. Subtopics such as *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and organ donation show a more specific focus. There is also a geographical focus on a specific region, as seen in the keywords Malaysia and Indonesia, which highlight the cultural and regulatory context regarding fatwas in those regions. Overall, the visualization below shows the evolution of the research from basic themes depicted in blue to new themes in red. The image shows how the trend of research on fatwa has evolved.



## 8. Discussion of the Further Research Direction

Digitalization is a challenge in the dissemination of fatwas. In addition, the diversity of fatwas can confuse the Muslim community, which has the potential to cause divisions in society or even become a source of conflict (Ikhwan, 2023) if there is no explanation, clarification, or supervision from religious authorities. Content accuracy is also a challenge in ensuring the quality of online fatwas, because anyone can issue fatwas on social media without any guarantee of knowledge and authority, so the principle of *al-jarḥ wa al-ta'dīl*, as conveyed by Fikri et al. (2024), is used to select the credibility of the mufti and the content disseminated in cyberspace.

In this study, the limited number of special bibliometric research on fatwas in general is a challenge as well as an opportunity in conducting this research. Coupled with the technical challenges of collecting and sorting through hundreds to thousands of literature, especially in terms of data standardization, validity, and relevance of literature. Another challenge is the limited collaboration between authors or institutions related to fatwa studies, so that the transfer of knowledge and innovation in this field is not optimal. Research topics tend to be divided between classical and contemporary issues, so there is a need for more systematic mapping of theme trends.

Figure 6 shows a thematic map containing key data sets grouped into several color clusters, and organized into seven main themes: Authority of fatwa institutions and responses to current issues, Islamic law and religious authorities, approach to *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and halalism issues, Shariah economic fatwa and compliance standards, minority issues and fatwas against certain groups, fatwas on freedom issues, blasphemy, and civil rights, as well as the standardization and harmonization of fatwas.

The upper right quadrant, labeled motor themes, shows the first theme, discussing the authority of fatwa institutions and responding to current issues that highlight the role of fatwa institutions in Indonesia, such as the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) in issuing fatwas on actual issues. Examples are fatwas on handling the Covid-19 pandemic, vaccinations, worship procedures in times of crisis, and fatwas that respond to technological developments and social changes. The authority of fatwa institutions is central in providing relevant religious guidance for the community. In addition, the second theme, which is marked with a blue circle in the quadrant labeled basic themes regarding Islamic law and religious authority, focuses on the dimensions of Islamic law (*fiqh* and Shariah) and the role of muftis and scholars as authorities in the determination of law. This theme also includes *ijtihad*, online fatwas, and the

dynamics of religious authorities in responding to contemporary challenges, both at the national and global levels.

The third theme with a green circle discusses the approach of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and the issue of halal. This theme highlights the importance of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (the purposes of Islamic law), halal, and maslahah in the determination of fatwa. This theme also discusses how fatwas are used to assess new issues such as food, medicine, halal tourism, and public policies that impact the ummah. Then the fourth theme in the purple circle discusses Shariah economic fatwas and compliance standards, discussing the role of the National Shariah Council (DSN) and Islamic financial institutions in the preparation of fatwas related to Islamic economics, banking, and finance. This theme includes fatwas on financial products, Shariah compliance standards, and risk management in the Shariah-based economic sector.

The fifth theme in the lower left quadrant is related to minority issues and fatwas against certain groups. This theme discusses fatwas related to minority groups such as Ahmadiyah and al-Washliyah. This theme highlights the dynamics, challenges, and controversies surrounding fatwas issued against groups that are considered different in religious beliefs or practices. Then, the sixth theme discusses fatwas on issues of freedom, blasphemy, and civil rights. This theme includes fatwas related to issues such as blasphemy, apostasy, freedom of speech, transgender, and intersex. This theme highlights how fatwas respond to issues of civil rights, religious freedom, and social change that spark debate in society. Moreover, the last theme is the standardization and harmonization of fatwa, which focuses on efforts to standardize fatwa, the role of national committees, and Islamic financial institutions in harmonizing fatwas at the institutional level. This theme is important to ensure consistency, legitimacy, and coordination in the implementation of fatwas in various sectors. These last two themes are located in the upper left quadrant.

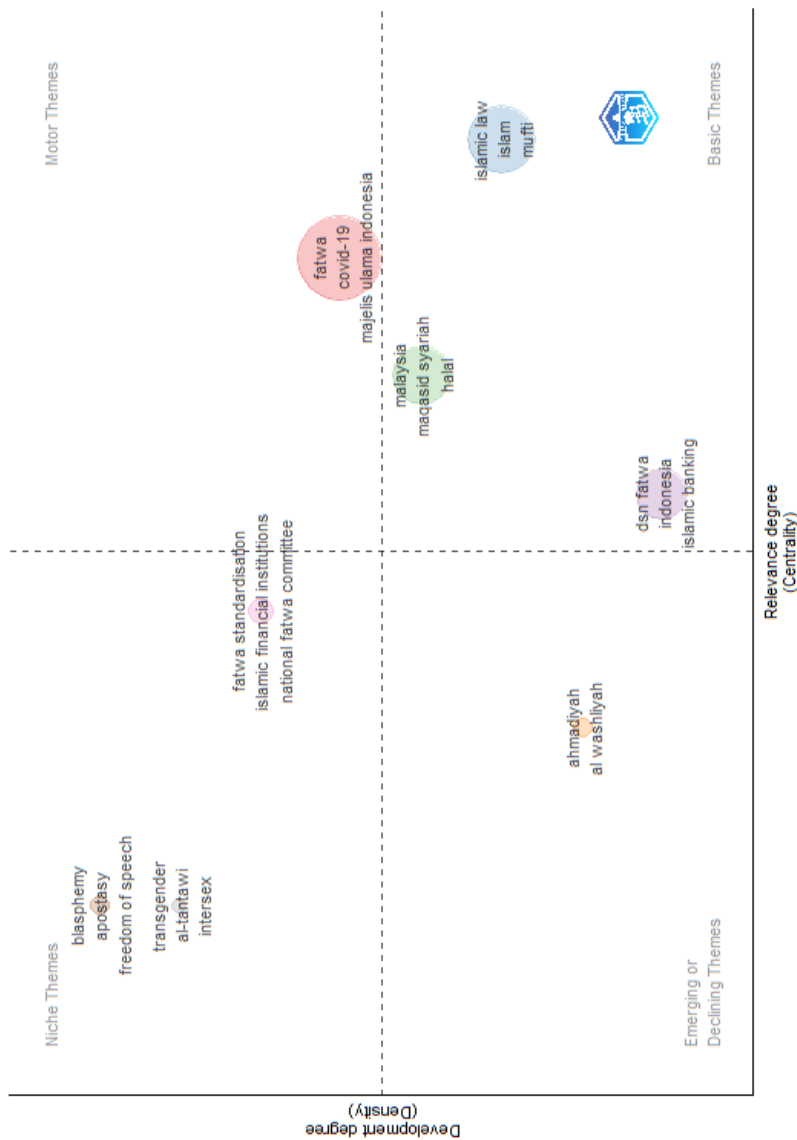


Figure 6. Thematic Map

The overall theme describes how fatwas not only function as an instrument of Islamic law but also as a dynamic social and cultural adaptation tool, providing direction for the ummah in facing contemporary challenges. The role of fatwa institutions such as MUI and DSN has become very vital in maintaining the relevance of fatwa through the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* approach and response to the latest issues, including the pandemic and the digitization of fatwas. Moreover, attention to minority issues and civil rights shows the complexity of the relationship between fatwa and social plurality. Efforts to standardize and harmonize fatwas are strategic steps to ensure that fatwas have strong legitimacy and are widely accepted. These findings are in line with various studies that show fatwas as an important instrument in shaping public policy and strengthening religious authority in Indonesia and the Islamic world in general.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study aims to analyze the gap in research on fatwa, reviewing in more depth the related literature on the growth and development of fatwa studies. From the results of the bibliometric analysis of fatwa studies, it was found that scientific studies on fatwa have undergone significant development in the last eight decades. The number of publications and citations related to fatwas has been steadily increasing, especially in the last two decades, signaling the relevance and urgency of this theme in contemporary Islamic academic, social, and legal discourse. Research contributions are dominated by institutions and countries in the Asian region, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, which occupy the top positions in publication productivity. This dominance is also reflected in the role of institutions such as the Universiti Malaya, the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, and the Indonesian Ulema Council as the main actors in the development of the fatwa research ecosystem.

The study of fatwas not only discusses aspects of Islamic law, but also develops into the realm of bioethics, Islamic finance issues, digital transformation, public health, as well as contemporary social issues such as minorities, blasphemy, civil rights, women, and diversity. The keyword analysis shows that the theme of fatwa research has transformed from classic issues to new and dynamic themes, for example, the linkage of fatwa with medical bioethics, Islamic finance, and the response of fatwa authorities to emergency issues such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

Digitalization is a challenge and opportunity for the dissemination of fatwas, with the risk of fragmentation of authority and the potential for the

dissemination of uncredible fatwas. This digitalization requires religious authorities to have an active role in clarifying, standardizing, and harmonizing fatwas, including through the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* approach to maintain the relevance and legitimacy of fatwas in modern society. In addition, the challenges in research collaboration, data validation, and the need for integration between academic approaches and practical authorities underscore the importance of developing more systematic and multidisciplinary fatwa research.

Overall, this bibliometric study shows that fatwas function not only as an instrument of Islamic law but also as a tool for dynamic social and cultural adaptation, providing direction in dealing with contemporary challenges. The authority of fatwa institutions such as MUI and DSN is vital in maintaining the relevance of fatwa through responses to bioethics, economic, social, and digitalization issues. Efforts to standardize and harmonize fatwas are a strategic step in strengthening the legitimacy and influence of fatwas at the national and global levels, in line with the increasingly complex and diverse needs of Muslim communities.

The urgency of this research is very important for the future, because it is able to map the development, trends, and contributions of fatwa research objectively and measurably, so that it can identify research *gaps* that have not been explored much. With a bibliometric approach, this study not only provides a comprehensive picture of who the authors, institutions, and topics are most influential, but also assists researchers and policymakers in determining the direction of more strategic and impactful research in the future. In the midst of the rise of contemporary issues and the digitization of fatwas that present new challenges, the results of this bibliometric analysis are an important basis for the development of fatwa science that is relevant to the needs of the times, as well as encouraging the integration of fatwas in a more effective Shariah regulatory framework. Thus, this research is very important to ensure the sustainability, relevance, and quality of future development of fatwa studies.

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