

Bibliometric Analysis of Islamic Criminal Law Research in the Modern Legal System

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ABSTRACT

This study conducts a bibliometric analysis of Islamic criminal law research within modern legal systems, using data exclusively from the Scopus database and analyzed with VOSviewer. The findings reveal that traditional principles such as hudud and qisas remain central to the discourse, while contemporary themes like human rights, criminal justice, and corruption are gaining prominence. The analysis highlights localized applications, particularly in regions like Aceh, Indonesia, where Sharia law is implemented within a pluralistic legal framework, showcasing both opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, the study underscores ongoing tensions between Islamic jurisprudence and international human rights norms, particularly regarding issues like the death penalty and gender equality. The co-occurrence and collaborative networks indicate an evolving academic landscape that seeks to harmonize traditional Islamic principles with the demands of modern governance and ethical frameworks. This study calls for future interdisciplinary research to address challenges and explore innovative applications of Islamic criminal law, particularly in restorative justice and governance, to ensure its relevance in addressing contemporary societal and legal issues.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The study of Islamic criminal law within the context of modern legal systems provides a critical intersection of traditional jurisprudence and contemporary legal frameworks. Islamic criminal law, rooted in the Sharia, embodies a combination of the Quranic teachings, the Hadiths (sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad), and centuries of jurisprudential interpretations. As global legal systems evolve, the incorporation of Islamic principles highlights

significant cultural and ethical dimensions that influence legal processes and judicial outcomes in countries with significant Muslim populations [1], [2]. In recent decades, the application of Islamic criminal law in modern states has been the subject of increased scrutiny and debate [2]. This is particularly evident in countries where legal systems are attempting to integrate Sharia-based criminal laws with civil and common law traditions. The coexistence of multiple legal systems poses unique challenges and opportunities for legal scholars, practitioners,

and policymakers [3]. For instance, in countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, Islamic criminal law operates alongside national legal statutes, leading to a complex legal landscape that reflects diverse socio-legal realities.

The relevance of Islamic criminal law is not only confined to Muslim-majority countries but also extends to international legal systems where issues of human rights, international law, and global justice intersect with religious laws. The discourse around Islamic criminal law often involves critical issues such as the rights of the accused, gender justice, and the compatibility of religious laws with international human rights standards [4]. Such discussions are pivotal in shaping the policies that govern multicultural interactions and the global governance of criminal justice. Moreover, the scholarly analysis of Islamic criminal law through bibliometric methods provides an empirical basis to understand its evolution, key themes, and scholarly impact [3]. Bibliometric analysis allows researchers to map out the academic landscape, identifying influential works, emerging trends, and gaps in the literature [5]. This approach is invaluable in comprehensively understanding how Islamic criminal law is studied, debated, and evolved in response to contemporary challenges [6].

Despite the critical importance of Islamic criminal law in modern legal systems, there remains a significant gap in systematic scholarly evaluations that employ bibliometric analyses to explore its dimensions and trajectories. Many studies focus on legal interpretations or case studies, but few utilize quantitative methods to assess the field's developmental trajectory and scholarly discourse globally. This gap hinders a holistic understanding of how Islamic criminal law integrates with or diverges from modern legal systems and its implications for justice and societal norms. The objective of this study is to perform a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of the literature on Islamic criminal law within modern legal systems. This analysis aims to identify key trends, principal authors, and foundational

papers, as well as to map the network of scholarly communication. Such insights are expected to provide a foundational understanding of the academic discourse surrounding Islamic criminal law, highlighting its evolution, areas of significant debate, and potential directions for future research.

Origins and Principles of Islamic Criminal Law

Islamic criminal law, or Hudud, is one of the most significant aspects of Sharia law, which prescribes fixed punishments for certain serious offenses. These laws are derived directly from the Quran and the Hadith, making them divine injunctions that are considered immutable. The offenses typically covered under Hudud include theft, fornication, false accusation of fornication, alcohol consumption, and apostasy [7]. Scholars like [8] argue that the application of Hudud punishments has varied significantly across different historical periods and cultures, reflecting the dynamic interpretation of Sharia in diverse socio-political contexts. The principles of Tazir (discretionary punishments) and Qisas (retaliation) are also crucial in understanding the full spectrum of Islamic criminal law. Tazir allows judges the discretion to impose punishments on lesser crimes not covered under Hudud, which can be tailored to the circumstances of the case and the offender. Qisas, on the other hand, refers to the law of equality in punishment, applicable in cases of murder or bodily injury, where the victim or the victim's guardian may choose to exact a punishment equivalent to the harm suffered, accept compensation (Diyah), or forgive the offender [9].

Contemporary Application in Modern Legal Systems

In modern states, the implementation of Islamic criminal law intersects with civil law systems, leading to a hybrid legal framework. For example, Saudi Arabia and Iran apply Islamic criminal law extensively, influencing their criminal justice systems profoundly. In contrast, countries like Indonesia and Malaysia have incorporated elements of Sharia in their national laws to

varying degrees, particularly in personal status and family law [10]. Researchers like [11] and [1], [12] highlight the challenges and controversies surrounding the application of Islamic criminal law, especially regarding international human rights norms. Issues such as the rights of women and non-Muslims, the implementation of corporal punishments, and the interpretation of religious texts in a legal context remain contentious. The integration of Sharia with statutory laws has sparked debates on legal pluralism and the adaptability of religious laws within secular jurisdictions [6].

Bibliometric Analyses of Islamic Criminal Law Scholarship

Bibliometric studies offer valuable insights into the academic discourse surrounding Islamic criminal law. Recent bibliometric analyses by scholars like [7] have utilized databases such as Scopus and Web of Science to track publication trends, citation patterns, and thematic evolutions within the field. These studies reveal a growing interest in topics such as the comparison of Islamic law with Western legal systems, the impact of globalization on religious jurisprudence, and the scholarly debate over the interpretation and reform of Sharia [13]. Additionally, network analysis of author collaborations and institutional affiliations indicates a significant scholarly exchange between researchers in the Middle East and those in Western universities, reflecting a global scholarly dialogue on Islamic criminal law. This is further evidenced by thematic clusters in the literature that focus on reconciling traditional Islamic principles with contemporary challenges in criminal justice systems [14].

2. METHODS

This study utilizes a bibliometric analysis approach based exclusively on data retrieved from the Scopus database, a comprehensive repository of peer-reviewed literature. Bibliometric analysis enables the systematic evaluation of publication trends, influential works, authors, and research networks within a specific field. Using precise keywords such as "Islamic criminal law,"

"Sharia," "Hudud," and "modern legal systems," the search was conducted within Scopus to gather relevant publications. The inclusion criteria focused on documents published between 2000 and 2025, ensuring a focus on contemporary scholarship. Only journal articles and conference papers written in English were included to maintain consistency and accessibility in the analysis. The data were analyzed using VOSviewer, a powerful tool for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks. Key analyses included co-authorship networks to identify collaborative relationships among authors and country, co-citation analysis to highlight influential works, and keyword co-occurrence to map thematic clusters.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Co-authorship Network

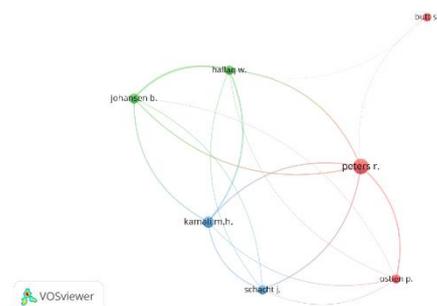


Figure 1. Authorship Network

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The co-authorship network visualization illustrates the relationships among key scholars in the field of Islamic criminal law. The clusters, represented by different colors, indicate groups of authors frequently cited together or collaborating on similar research themes. For example, the red cluster, prominently featuring "Peters, R." and "Ostien, P.," highlights a strong collaborative and citation relationship, indicating their central influence within the field. The green cluster, led by "Hallaq, W." and "Johansen, B.," suggests another influential group focusing on related but distinct aspects of the subject. Meanwhile, "Kamali, M. H." and "Schacht, J." in the blue cluster reflect another significant academic focus. The isolated positioning of "Butt, S." in the red cluster suggests a specialization or niche contribution, which

connects to the broader field through limited direct collaboration.

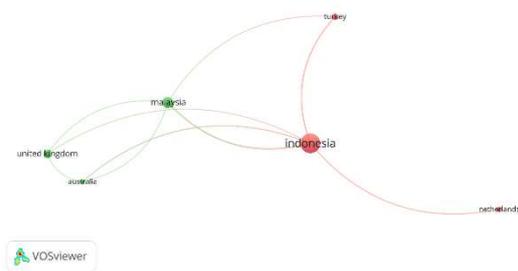


Figure 2. Country Network
Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The co-authorship network visualization based on countries shows Indonesia at the center of the network, indicating its pivotal role in Islamic criminal law research. The red cluster links Indonesia strongly to Turkey and the Netherlands, suggesting collaboration or shared research interests among scholars or institutions in these countries. The green cluster highlights Malaysia's connection with the United Kingdom and Australia, reflecting another collaborative network, likely focusing on regional or comparative studies. Indonesia also serves as a bridge between the red and green clusters, connecting research efforts between Southeast Asia and broader international collaborations. This visualization underscores Indonesia's centrality in the global discourse on Islamic criminal law, with active research links to other key countries in the field.

3.2 Keyword Co-Occurrence

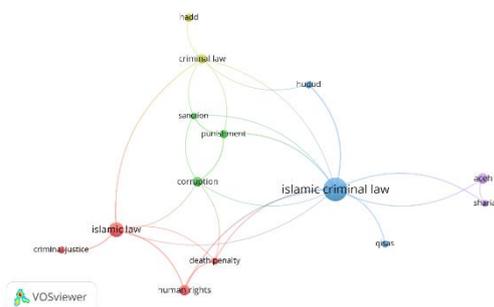


Figure 3. Network Visualization
Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The co-occurrence network visualization highlights the thematic structure surrounding the term "Islamic criminal law." Positioned at the center, "Islamic criminal

law" forms the primary focus of research, with multiple clusters representing distinct yet interconnected themes. The blue cluster connects terms like "hudud," "qisas," and "Aceh," indicating research themes centered on specific Islamic criminal law principles and their applications, particularly in regions like Aceh. This cluster suggests scholarly interest in the legal frameworks and implementation of Sharia-based criminal laws in localized contexts. The red cluster emphasizes the relationship between "Islamic law," "criminal justice," "death penalty," and "human rights." This cluster likely reflects critical debates on the compatibility of Islamic criminal law with modern criminal justice systems and human rights principles. The inclusion of "death penalty" within this cluster underscores ongoing discussions about the ethical, legal, and human rights implications of corporal punishments prescribed under Islamic law. The green cluster connects terms like "punishment," "corruption," "sanction," and "criminal law," reflecting broader discussions on the application of Islamic criminal law in addressing crimes beyond Hudud and Qisas. This cluster suggests an intersection of Islamic criminal law with issues of governance, anti-corruption measures, and the broader implications of punishment and sanctions within a modern legal framework. The yellow cluster, which includes terms such as "hadd" and "criminal law," focuses on specific legal terminologies and principles of Islamic criminal jurisprudence. This cluster suggests an academic focus on the theoretical underpinnings of Islamic criminal law, exploring its doctrinal origins and their practical implications. Collectively, the visualization reveals a multidisciplinary scholarly effort, bridging doctrinal studies, practical applications, and critical debates on Islamic criminal law's role within modern legal systems and human rights frameworks.

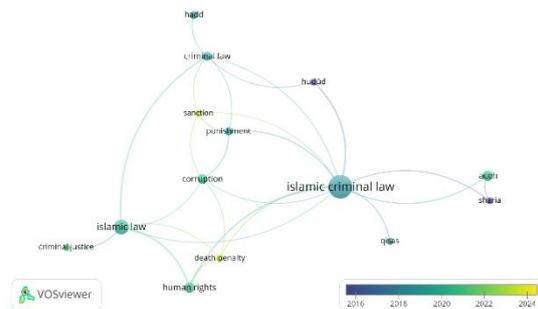


Figure 4. Overlay Visualization

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The temporal co-occurrence network visualization of "Islamic criminal law" reveals the evolution of scholarly focus over time, as represented by the color gradient from 2016 (purple) to 2024 (yellow). The centrality of "Islamic criminal law" in the network underscores its role as the core subject, with diverse thematic connections branching out. Terms like "hudud," "qisas," and "sharia," located in the blue cluster (earlier time periods), reflect foundational discussions on Islamic jurisprudence and its doctrinal principles. This suggests that earlier research primarily focused on exploring traditional concepts and their jurisprudential foundations within Islamic criminal law. In contrast, more recent themes (represented in green and yellow) indicate an increasing focus on contemporary issues. Terms such as "human rights," "death penalty," and "criminal justice" in the red cluster highlight the growing attention to the compatibility and tensions between Islamic criminal law and modern legal systems. These themes align with ongoing debates about the application of Islamic law in contexts where international human rights frameworks are emphasized. The inclusion of "corruption" and "punishment" within the green cluster reflects the rising interest in broader applications of Islamic criminal law, such as addressing governance issues and creating deterrent mechanisms. The specific connection between "Aceh" and "sharia" in the visualization indicates a localized focus on the implementation of Islamic criminal law in Aceh, Indonesia. The temporal representation suggests that this area of study has gained prominence in more recent years, reflecting

growing academic interest in regional applications of Sharia law.

Figure 5. Density Visualization

Source: Data Analysis, 2025

The heatmap visualization of the term "Islamic criminal law" highlights areas of high concentration and interconnectedness among key themes in the research field. The brightest area around "Islamic criminal law" suggests it is the central focus of scholarly discourse, with significant attention paid to related terms like "hudud," "qisas," "punishment," and "sanction." These terms, forming clusters of high density, indicate a strong academic interest in the foundational principles of Islamic criminal law and their application in modern legal contexts. The proximity of "hudud" and "qisas" reflects their critical role as doctrinal elements, while terms such as "punishment" and "corruption" suggest an exploration of broader implications in governance and criminal justice. Another notable area of focus lies around "Islamic law" and its connections to "criminal justice," "death penalty," and "human rights." This cluster reflects critical debates on the alignment of Islamic legal principles with global human rights frameworks, especially concerning issues like the death penalty. The separate but prominent cluster linking "Aceh" and "Sharia" indicates localized studies on the implementation of Islamic criminal law, particularly in Aceh, Indonesia, where Sharia law operates within a distinct socio-legal context.

DISCUSSION

Centrality of Islamic Criminal Law Research

The bibliometric analysis clearly identifies "Islamic criminal law" as the central focus of scholarly activity in this domain. Its connections with terms like "hudud," "qisas," "punishment," and "sanction" underscore the ongoing scholarly interest in understanding and applying core principles of Islamic jurisprudence. The prominence of these themes reflects the foundational importance of hudud (fixed punishments) and qisas (retaliatory justice) within Islamic law. However, the interconnectedness with

contemporary concepts like "corruption" and "criminal law" highlights an evolving discourse that seeks to contextualize traditional principles within modern governance and legal systems. The co-occurrence of terms like "sanction" and "punishment" with "corruption" suggests a growing recognition of Islamic criminal law's potential to address broader societal issues, such as corruption and accountability. This alignment reflects an expanding focus beyond the doctrinal foundations to explore how Islamic criminal principles can contribute to contemporary governance challenges. Such research is particularly relevant in Muslim-majority countries where corruption undermines societal trust and legal integrity.

Integration with Modern Legal Systems

A critical theme emerging from the analysis is the integration of Islamic criminal law within modern legal frameworks. The co-occurrence of "Islamic law," "criminal justice," and "human rights" highlights the tension between traditional Islamic jurisprudence and contemporary international legal standards. The inclusion of "death penalty" in this cluster underscores the contentious debates surrounding the compatibility of Islamic criminal law with global human rights frameworks. Scholars have long debated whether practices like hudud punishments align with international human rights principles, especially in terms of corporal and capital punishments (An-Na'im, 2020). The heatmap visualization also revealed localized studies, particularly around "Aceh" and "Sharia." This focus on Aceh, Indonesia, reflects its unique legal context as a region with formalized implementation of Sharia law within a modern state framework. Studies in this area have explored the practical challenges of balancing traditional Islamic principles with national and international legal norms, particularly in areas such as gender rights, due process, and proportionality of punishments. These findings highlight the need for further research on how localized applications of Islamic criminal law can coexist with broader

legal frameworks, providing a model for other regions seeking similar integrations.

Human Rights and Ethical Challenges

The relationship between Islamic criminal law and human rights emerged as a critical area of focus, with terms like "human rights," "death penalty," and "criminal justice" forming a distinct cluster. This reflects the ongoing scholarly discourse on the ethical and legal implications of Islamic criminal law in a globalized world where human rights are increasingly emphasized. Critics often argue that certain punishments prescribed under hudud and qisas conflict with international human rights standards, particularly in relation to corporal punishments and gender equality (Saeed, 2019). However, proponents of Islamic criminal law highlight its ethical and restorative dimensions, emphasizing justice, deterrence, and societal harmony. The visualization underscores the importance of contextualizing these debates within specific socio-political environments. For instance, while the death penalty remains a contested issue globally, its application under Islamic law must be analyzed within the broader framework of Sharia, which includes provisions for forgiveness, restitution, and judicial discretion. These complexities necessitate a nuanced understanding that goes beyond binary arguments for or against Islamic criminal law and instead focuses on its adaptability and relevance in diverse contexts.

Localized Applications and Regional Trends

The specific focus on "Aceh" and "Sharia" within the analysis highlights the significance of localized studies in understanding the practical applications of Islamic criminal law. Aceh serves as a unique case study for examining the implementation of Sharia law within a modern legal and political framework. Research in this area has explored issues such as judicial processes, enforcement mechanisms, and public perceptions of Sharia-based governance. These studies provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of integrating Islamic criminal law in a pluralistic legal system. The findings also

indicate the growing importance of regional collaborations and comparative studies. For example, the network visualization suggests strong research ties between Indonesia, Malaysia, and countries in the Middle East. These collaborations can provide a broader perspective on how different regions adapt Islamic criminal law to their specific legal, cultural, and political contexts. Future research should continue to explore these regional dynamics, focusing on how shared challenges and innovations can inform the global discourse on Islamic criminal law.

Emerging Themes and Future Directions

The inclusion of terms like "corruption," "punishment," and "sanction" in the analysis points to emerging themes that are expanding the scope of Islamic criminal law research. The application of Islamic principles to contemporary governance challenges, such as combating corruption and promoting accountability, reflects the growing recognition of their relevance in addressing modern societal issues. These themes suggest a shift toward a more applied approach to Islamic criminal law, moving beyond theoretical debates to explore its practical implications. Moreover, the increasing use of bibliometric methods in Islamic criminal law research represents an important methodological advancement. By mapping the academic landscape, bibliometric analyses can identify gaps in the literature, highlight influential works, and guide future research priorities. For instance, while the current analysis underscores the dominance of traditional themes like hudud and qisas, it also reveals opportunities for further exploration of underrepresented topics, such as restorative justice, gender perspectives, and comparative legal studies.

Challenges in Research and Implementation

Despite these promising trends, significant challenges remain in both the research and implementation of Islamic criminal law. One of the primary challenges is the lack of consensus among scholars and practitioners on the interpretation and

application of Sharia principles. This is particularly evident in areas such as gender justice, where traditional interpretations often conflict with contemporary understandings of equality and human rights. Bridging these gaps requires interdisciplinary approaches that combine legal, theological, and social perspectives. Another challenge is the integration of Islamic criminal law into pluralistic legal systems. The coexistence of multiple legal frameworks often leads to conflicts and inconsistencies, particularly in areas such as procedural fairness and judicial independence. Future research should focus on developing models for harmonizing Islamic and secular legal principles, ensuring that justice and equity are upheld in diverse contexts.

4. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the evolution and current state of Islamic criminal law research within modern legal systems through a bibliometric analysis. While traditional principles such as hudud and qisas remain foundational, contemporary themes like human rights, corruption, and criminal justice are increasingly prominent, reflecting efforts to align Islamic jurisprudence with modern governance and ethical standards. Localized studies, such as those in Aceh, illustrate the practical challenges and opportunities of integrating Sharia into pluralistic legal frameworks. However, tensions persist between Islamic principles and international human rights norms, necessitating interdisciplinary approaches and innovative models for harmonization. Future research should delve into emerging themes, including restorative justice and anti-corruption efforts, to expand the practical applications of Islamic criminal law. Ultimately, this study underscores the potential of Islamic criminal law to address contemporary legal and societal challenges while maintaining its foundational values.

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