

Research Trend in Halal Studies: A Bibliometric Analysis Using the Scopus Database

Siti Nurunnajwa Shamsudin^{1*}, Elistina Abu Bakar², Syuhaily Osman³, Nuradli Ridzwan Shah Mohd Dali⁴, Nusaibah Anuar Musaddad⁵

¹Halal Product Research Institute, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia, najwashams@gmail.com

²Halal Product Research Institute, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia, elistina@upm.edu.my

³Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia, syuly@upm.edu.my

⁴Faculty of Economic and Mualamat, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, 71800 Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, nuradli@usim.edu.my

⁵Halal Product Research Institute, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia, ibahanuar@gmail.com

*Corresponding Author: Siti Nurunnajwa, Shamsudin, Halal Product Research Institute, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia; najwashams@gmail.com

Abstract: Halal research started in the early 2000s and has been growing since 2015 until now. As the halal industry keeps developing and expanding, more research is needed to contribute ideas and findings to improve the halal industry. This study aims to examine previous studies on halal and find the gaps for future research. A sample of 879 articles published in the Scopus database from 1997 to 2020 was analysed using bibliometric analysis. The authors used Microsoft Excel and VOSviewer software to study information about journals, articles, authors, citations, keywords, and countries. The analysis reveals halal research trends according to the publication, authors, countries, subject area, journals, and theme by the topics and abstracts. This study also exposes gaps in halal research and gives suggestions for future studies.

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1. Introduction

The word halal originates from an Arabic phrase, which refers to anything that becomes permissible (Al-'Ayid *et al.*, 1989). In Arabic, it is spelt **حلال**. The root word is **ح-ل-ل** or **حلّ** in Arabic script, which means to be or become lawful, legal, licit, legitimate, permissible, permitted, allowable, allowed, admissible, unprohibited, and unforbidden (Al Jallad, 2008) From the Islamic point of view, halal means anything that is allowed and not being punished for doing so (Al-'Izzi, 1989) Al-Qardawi (1999) defined halal as something that is

permitted, with respect to which no restriction exists, and the doing of which Allah has allowed. In short, halal is anything permissible by Islamic law. For Muslims, consuming halal is essential as it is an order from Allah and part of the Islamic faith. Allah has emphasised the consumption of halal in His book, “O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth (that is) lawful and good”(Qur’an, 2011, p.23).

In recent years, the halal industry undeniably has developed and evolved all around the globe. As the halal industry expands, the need for new policies, regulations, and knowledge expansion is becoming more critical. Therefore, researchers must contribute their ideas and research into the halal ecosystem. Halal research has gradually gained a global foothold over the last 20 years. Although the number of researches on halal is increasing, to the best of the authors’ knowledge, only a few studies have reviewed and evaluated the subject area of halal using bibliometric and network analysis techniques. Hence, this paper examines the available literature in the broad area of halal dating back to 1997; identifies top contributing authors, countries, journals, and subject areas through the bibliometric analysis. It assesses the quality of the studies, analyses the critical areas of research, and predicts future studies’ direction. Using this method, the current trend in halal research and potential research gaps for future research are analysed.

2. Literature Review

Before initiating any research project, a literature review is an essential work that needs to be done to find out the possible research gaps that would help strengthen the body of knowledge. There have been multiple attempts to review halal research using bibliometric and bibliographic analyses in halal research. This literature review highlights eleven articles published within the past three years (2009–2021) and summarises them in Table 1.

Table 1. Studies related to halal research that used bibliometric and bibliographic analyses.

Authors	Title	Type of Study	Database	Search period	Total number of studies	Result & contribution
(Muhamad <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	Halal tourism: Literature synthesis and direction for future research	Literature review	Scopus	Mid-2000 onwards	29	Emergent themes and the knowledge gaps for halal tourism
(Naeem <i>et al.</i> , 2019)	Systematic literature review of halal food consumption-qualitative	Systematic literature review	Google Scholar, Clarivate Analytics, Web of	1990–2018	11	Bibliographic review of qualitative research in food consumption

Authors	Title	Type of Study	Database	Search period	Total number of studies	Result & contribution
	research era 1990-2017		Science & Journal list of Thomson Reuters			
(Ismail <i>et al.</i> , 2020)	Trend analysis on 13 years of halal research; investigation on halal food research	Bibliographic analysis	Scopus & Web of Science	2005– 2019	841	Bibliometric mapping (halal research trend)
(Secinaro & Calandra, 2020)	Halal food: Structured literature review and research agenda	Structured literature review	Scopus & Web of Science	1997– 2020	221	Review of halal food research and five research cluster in halal food
(Haleem <i>et al.</i> , 2020)	Research status in halal: A review and bibliometric analysis	Bibliometric analysis	Scopus & Web of Science	2006– 2019		Bibliographic analysis and research cluster
(Baran, 2020)	A literature review and classification of the studies on "halal" in Islamic business journals (2010- 2018)	Literature review	Clarivate Analytics & Scopus	2010– 2018	56	Comprehensive bibliography on halal studies
(Ab Talib <i>et al.</i> , 2020)	The role of government in promoting halal logistics: A systematic literature review	Systematic literature review	Scopus, ISI Web of Science, Google Scholar, Emerald Insight, Taylor and Francis	2014– 2020	16	Systematically accentuate the pivotal role of government in the halal logistics industry

Authors	Title	Type of Study	Database	Search period	Total number of studies	Result & contribution
(Vargas-Sánchez & Moral-Moral, 2020)	Halal tourism: Literature review and experts' view	Literature review	Online, Science Direct & Inderscience Online databases Scopus & Web of Science	2010–2019	58	Clarifying the conceptualisation of halal tourism. It takes a theoretical review and experts' view as a preliminary step to study this topic in more depth.
(Maulina <i>et al.</i> , 2020)	Consumer behaviour in halal food: A systematic mapping study	Systematic mapping study	Emerald, ScienceDirect, ProQuest, and Taylor & Francis Online	2015–2020	33	Mapping analysis on halal food studies
(Iranmanesh <i>et al.</i> , 2021)	Customer behavior towards halal food: A systematic review and agenda for future research	Systematic literature review	Scopus & Web of Science	-	96	A systematic literature review of halal food provides gaps and directions for future studies.

Halal food is the main topic of study by the previous authors. There are a total of four published articles related to halal food written by Iranmanesh *et al.* (2021), Ismail *et al.* (2020), Maulina *et al.* (2020), and Naeem *et al.* (2020). Other topics that the previous authors have reviewed are related to halal tourism (Muhamad *et al.*, 2019; Vargas-Sánchez & Moral-Moral, 2020) and halal logistics (Ab Talib *et al.*, 2020). Another article by Baran (2020) took a different approach to study halal literature review by focusing only on Islamic business journals. Meanwhile, an article published by Haleem *et al.* (2020) covered all topics related to halal but was only limited to articles published between 2006–2019.

From the previous literature reviews, it can be concluded that most of them discussed specific topic areas except for Haleem *et al.* (2020). A general view of the halal research trend is needed to explore the most important topic that needs to be focused on for further research. Therefore, this study examines all halal research articles, including the earliest publications. This study also focuses on only one database, Scopus, to be more specific and concise. In contrast to Haleem *et al.* (2020), this study used VOSviewer instead of Gephi to interpret and present the data.

3. Methodology

The primary focus of this study is to analyse and categorise the body of the literature published in halal research using bibliometric analysis. Bibliometric analysis is a common research technique to determine the state of the art of a certain topic. The method can describe patterns of publications within a given period or body of literature by utilising quantitative analysis and statistics. This research method is also used to gain a one-stop overview, identify knowledge gaps, derive novel ideas for investigation, and position their intended contribution to the research field (Donthu *et al.*, 2021).

This review uses databases taken from Scopus and Dimensions that are extracted using statistical analysis by Microsoft Excel and bibliometric analysis by VOSviewer. VOSviewer is a computer program usually used to create maps based on network data. The method of bibliometric analysis used in this study follows the guideline by Donthu *et al.* (2021). The procedure to carry out the analysis is structured in three phases, as shown in Figure 1.

3.1. Step 1

In the first step, the techniques that need to be used in the bibliometric analysis are finalised. According to Donthu *et al.* (2021), two main techniques must be used in a bibliometric study: performance analysis and science mapping. The performance analysis is used to examine the contributions of research constituents to a given field, and science mapping is used to examine the relationship between research constituents.

3.2. Step 2

In this step, the keywords and criteria used to select the documents are identified. This study uses the keyword “halal” in the Scopus database because it is the largest bibliographic database of peer-reviewed articles. In this study, we limit our search to 2020 and exclude the articles published in 2021 and 2022. The results are refined by excluding conferences, book chapters, short surveys, and magazine articles. We only evaluated scientific publications, articles and reviews, published in peer-reviewed journals because they are also considered “certified knowledge.” The result leads to 879 relevant documents after removing the duplicate data.

3.3. Step 3

The data are analysed using Microsoft Excel for performance analysis and VOSviewer for science mapping.

3.4. Step 4

The result is analysed by reviewing the growth pattern of halal research and the overview of halal research topics since 1997. The gap in halal research is identified and presented.

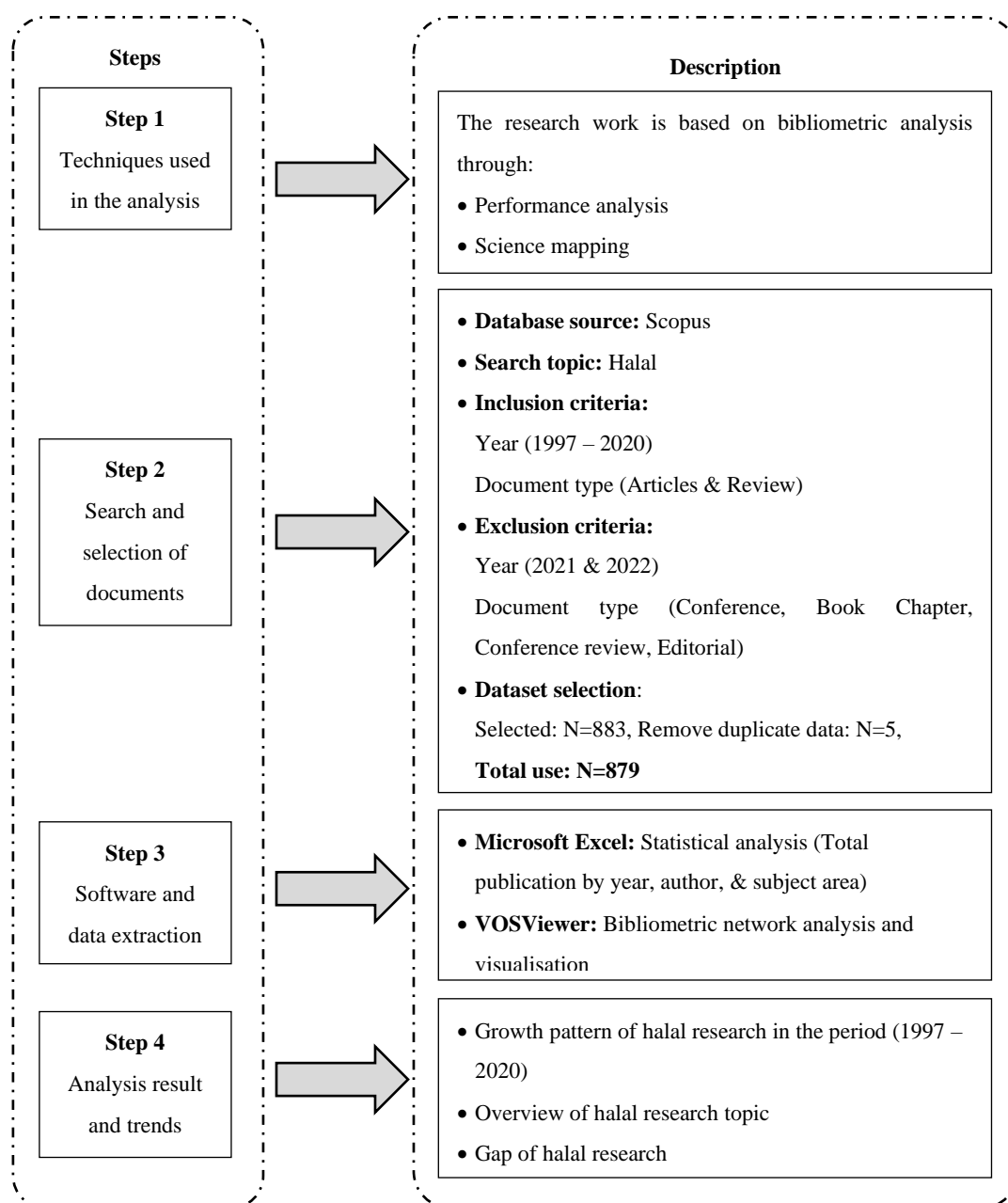


Figure 1. The developed method in this study.

4. Performance Analysis

4.1. The Growth of the Halal Publication from 1997–2020

The analysis of scientific production is carried out using the content and number of publications published in the Scopus database per year. Based on Figure 2, the trend of halal publications keeps increasing by the year. The halal publication started its journey in 1997 by Wilson (1997) whose research focused on Islamic finance and Mohsin and Ryan (1997) who discussed business study. As shown in Figure 3, the total number of citations also increased by year. It started to increase in 2007 when Bonne *et al.* (2007), who conducted a study related to halal meat, has been cited more than 200 times. Based on the trend line shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3, the publication and citation on halal will keep increasing by the year and have a great future to be explored.

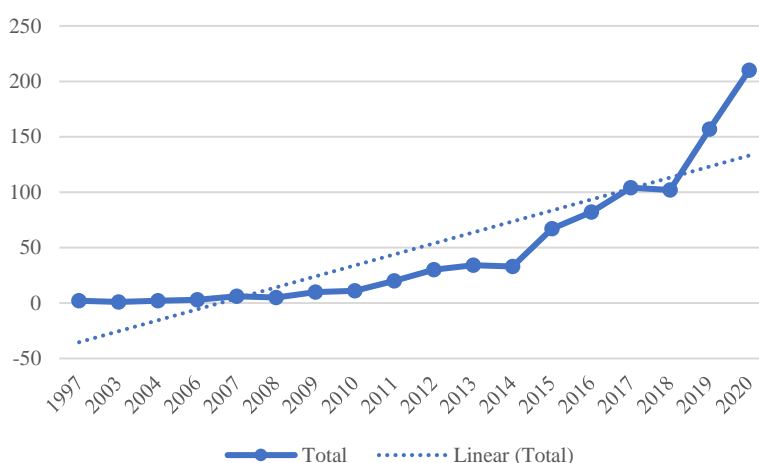


Figure 2. Total publication by year.

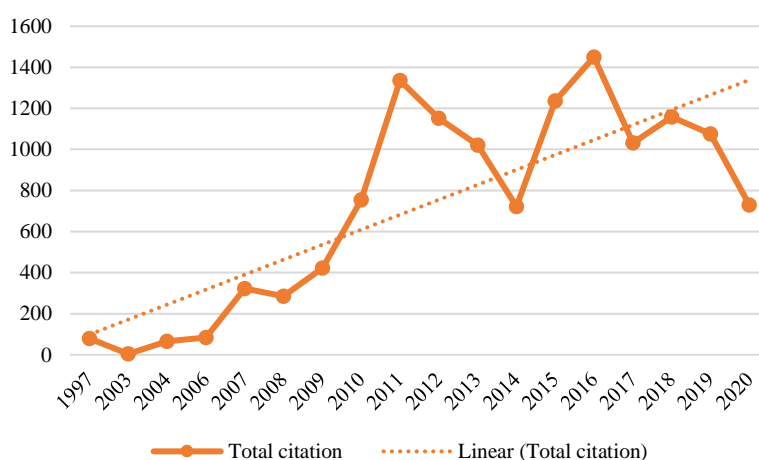


Figure 3. Total citation by year.

4.2. Contribution by Author

In the proposed field of research, 158 authors are presented. The figure shows the top 15 influential authors based on their occurrence in the number of documents (

Figure 4) and several citations during the 1997 to 2020. According to the number of scientific documents, Zailani leads the top 10 of the production with 17 publications, followed by Tieman, Ali, and Khan with 11 articles published. Of the 879 documents analysed, the following shown (Table 2) are the top 10 most cited articles from 1997 to 2020, where the article “The challenges of Islamic branding: Navigating emotions and halal” (2011) by Wilson and Liu tops the list with 311 citations. Even though Wilson is not listed as one of the top 15 most productive authors by the number of publications and only published five articles related to halal, he wrote an excellent research article in this field. He is also the most cited author with 801 citations (

Figure 5), followed by Liu (762 citations) and Tieman (583 citations).

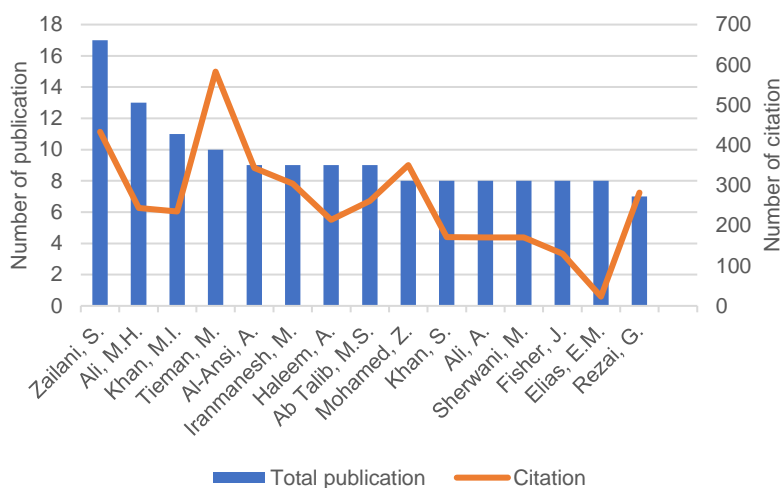


Figure 4. Top 15 most productive authors by the number of publications.

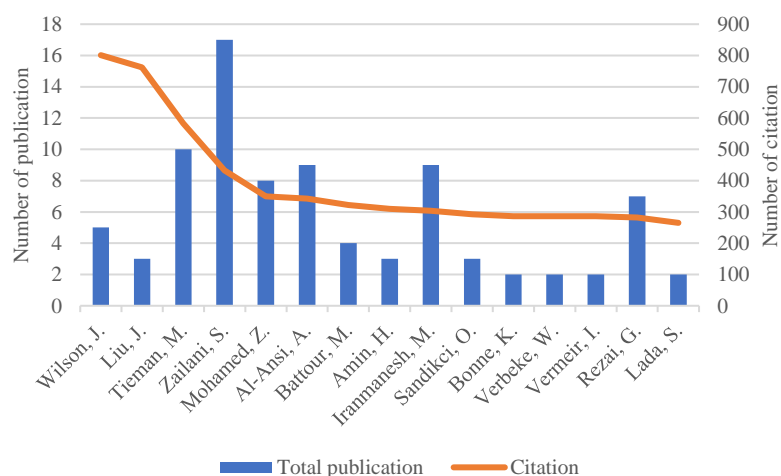


Figure 5. Top 15 most productive authors by the number of citations.**Table 2.** Top 10 most cited documents.

Title	Authors	Journal	Citation
The challenges of Islamic branding: Navigating emotions and halal	(Wilson & Liu, 2011)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	313
Shaping the halal into a brand?	(Wilson & Liu, 2010)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	308
Applying the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in halal food purchasing	(Shah Alam & Mohamed Sayuti, 2011)	International Journal of Commerce and Management	303
Predicting intention to choose halal products using the theory of reasoned action	(Lada <i>et al.</i> , 2009)	International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management	264
Determinants of halal meat consumption in France	(Bonne <i>et al.</i> , 2007)	British Food Journal	232
Intention to choose halal products: The role of religiosity	(Mukhtar & Butt, 2012)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	203
The role of halal awareness, halal certification, and marketing components in determining halal purchase intention among non-Muslims in Malaysia: A structural equation modelling approach	(Abdul Aziz & Chok, 2013)	Journal of International Food and Agribusiness Marketing	160
The application of halal in supply chain management: In-depth interviews	(Tieman, 2011)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	156
Halal tourism: Concepts, practises, challenges and future	(Battour & Ismail, 2016)	Tourism Management Perspectives	156
Crescent marketing, Muslim geographies and brand Islam: Reflections from the JIMA senior advisory board	(Wilson <i>et al.</i> , 2013)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	141

4.3. Contribution by Country

According to the affiliation obtained from each author in the database, the top 15 countries that contributed to halal research were identified based on the number of documents published by the country (Figure 6). Malaysia has the highest contribution to halal research with 405 publications and 6044 citations, followed by Indonesia with 132 publications and the United Kingdom with 74 publications. However, compared to Indonesia, the United Kingdom has more citations, with 2316, while Indonesia only has 882 citations.

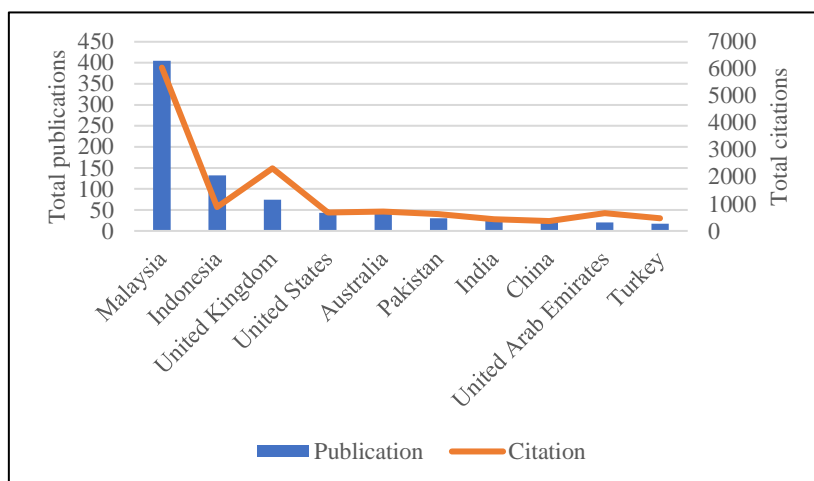


Figure 6. Total publication and citation by country.

4.4. Contribution by Subject Area and Journal

Out of 879 documents analysed, 583 are published within the business, management, and accounting subject area (Figure 7). About 352 documents are listed in the social sciences and 170 in the arts and humanities. Figure 8 shows that the Journal of Islamic Marketing published most research articles related to halal (179 documents), followed by the International Journal of Supply Chain Management (60 documents) and the British Food Journal (32 documents).

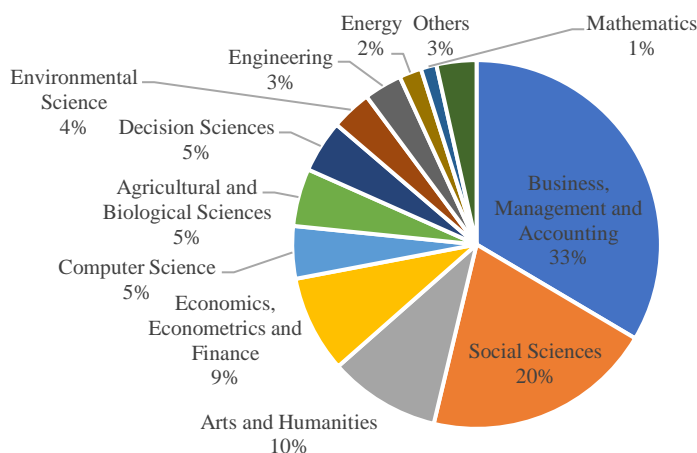


Figure 7. Total publication by subject area.

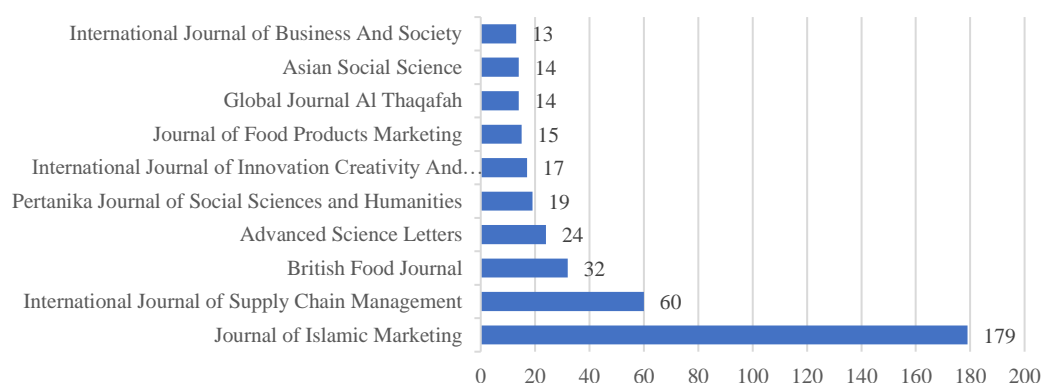


Figure 8. Top 10 journals published on halal research.

5. Science Mapping

Different software packages are available for science mappings, such as Gephi, Graph Maker, HistCite, Pajek, and VOSviewer. VOSviewer is a free application that allows users to create and view bibliometric maps. Unlike SPSS and Pajek, which are commonly used for bibliometric mapping, VOSviewer pays special attention to the graphical representation of bibliometric maps. The functionality of the VOSviewer is beneficial for displaying large bibliometric maps in an easy-to-interpret way (van Eck & Waltman, 2010). The upcoming sub-section presents the co-occurrence analysis of keywords, author co-citation analysis, and analysis of themes and topics.

5.1. Co-Occurrence Analysis of Keywords

Keywords provided by authors of the published paper that occurred more than ten times in Scopus are enrolled in the final analysis. Of the 2442 keywords by the author, 38 meet the threshold. The keywords that appeared most are "halal" (total link strength 165) and Islam (total link strength 102), which has a solid link to "Malaysia," "halal food," and "halal tourism." These keywords are distributed into five clusters. Halal is the centre of this study within the analysed research field and the most prominent cluster. Based on Figure 9, the five clusters in the analysis of the keyword are halal supply chain (yellow), halal tourism (blue), halal industry (green), halal market (purple), and halal studies in Malaysia (red).

Figure 10 presents a map with a bibliographic network of 402 authors connected by a co-citation link grouped into five clusters. The proximity between each node reveals the relationship of each author and the number of authors' citations in the document references represented by circles that vary in size. Tieman is the most cited author with a total link strength of 26,011, followed by Verbeke (20,145) and Zailani (19,523). This result shows that Tieman is the most influential author in the halal research field, as majority of the authors in this research field have cited his work.

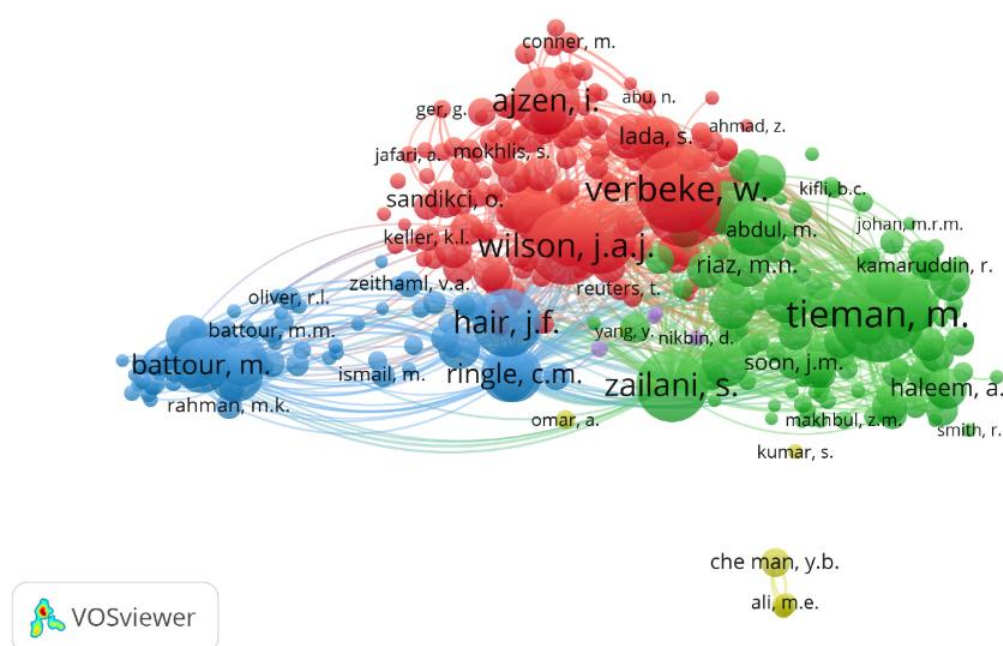


Figure 10. The co-citation maps of authors.

5.3. Co-Authorship Analysis

This analysis provides the relationship between authors who collaborate with the research field. Of the 1909 authors extracted using VOSviewer, only 354 meet the threshold for the minimum number of two articles per author. Figure 11 shows the correlated group of the 337 authors, with 63 related to each other. The largest number of connected items (authors) is Zailani, followed by Tieman, Ali, and Khan. His main collaborators are Iranmanesh, Aziz, Rahman, and Kanapathy. Of the 66 countries analysed, 35 countries meet the threshold with a minimum of five documents per country. Figure 12 shows that Malaysia has the highest collaboration with other countries. The number of collaborators with Malaysia is 15 and the total link strength is 106 with 405 publications and 6044 citations. The main partners of Malaysia are Indonesia, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

Table 4. The top 10 most active authors and countries collaborated for halal research.

Subject	Number of publications	Count of citations	Total link strength
Authors			
Zailani, S.	17	433	33
Ali, M.H.	13	244	31
Khan, M.I.	11	235	24
Iranmanesh, M.	9	304	22
Mohamed, Z.	8	350	22
Ali, M.E.	6	232	21
Mustafa, S.	6	229	19
Elias, E.M.	8	23	18
Rezai, G.	7	282	18
Haleem, A.	9	214	17
Countries			
Malaysia	405	6044	106
United Kingdom	74	2316	45
Indonesia	132	882	41
Australia	41	714	35
Pakistan	30	618	27
United Arab Emirates	20	654	25
United States	43	686	22
Canada	9	206	15
Turkey	17	464	15
Egypt	13	574	12

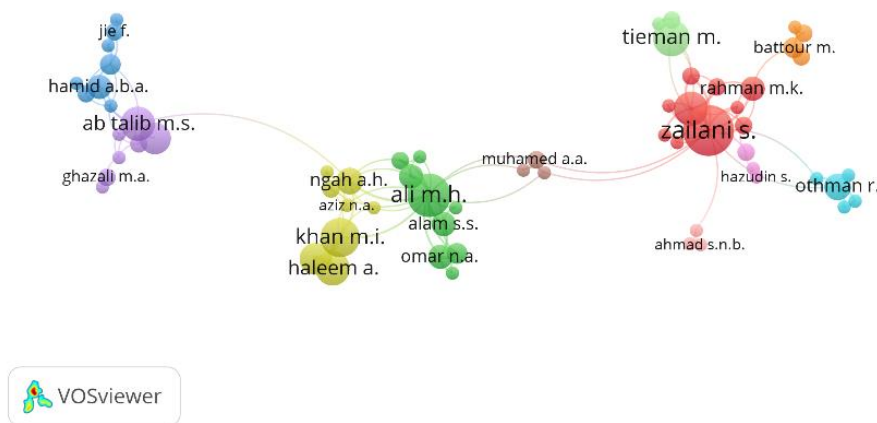


Figure 11. The co-authorship map of authors, which indicates the authors that cooperate in the field of halal studies.

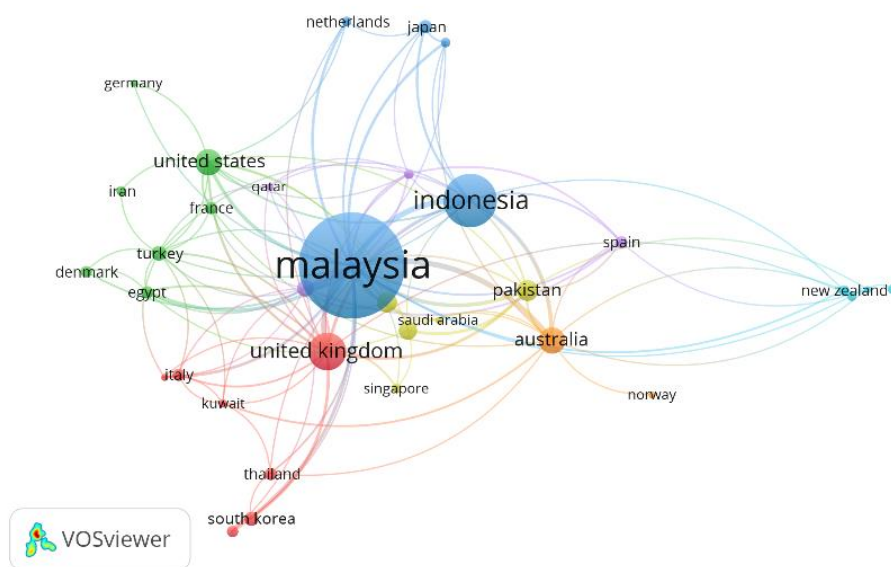


Figure 12. The co-authorship map of countries.

5.4. Analysis by Theme and Trend Topics

This analysis provides the main topic discussed in the halal research field based on the text data in the title and abstract. Of the 16484 terms extracted using VOSviewer, only 223 meet the threshold for the minimum number of occurrence terms is 30. Based on this score, the most relevant terms are selected. The number of selected terms is 105. After being analysed

using VOSviewer, four clusters (red, green, blue, and yellow) showed the relationship between one topic and another (Figure 13).

The first cluster (red) is categorised as halal industry and management. Among the topic areas discussed in this cluster are halal certification, halal logistics, halal supply chain, halal integrity, halal market, halal standard, halal practice, issues and challenges in halal market, implementation of halal and halal principles, regulation, and guidelines. The second cluster (green) is labelled as halal consumerism. Generally, this cluster discusses the issues of consumers' attitude, trust, loyalty, religiosity, purchase intention and behaviour, halal awareness, halal food, halal cosmetics, halal logo, halal meat, and halal brand. The third cluster (blue) is related to halal tourism, and this cluster discusses Muslim tourists, their destinations, customer satisfaction, tourism, place, hotel, and experience. The last cluster (yellow) only consists of two items which are Islamic bank and Islamic marketing.

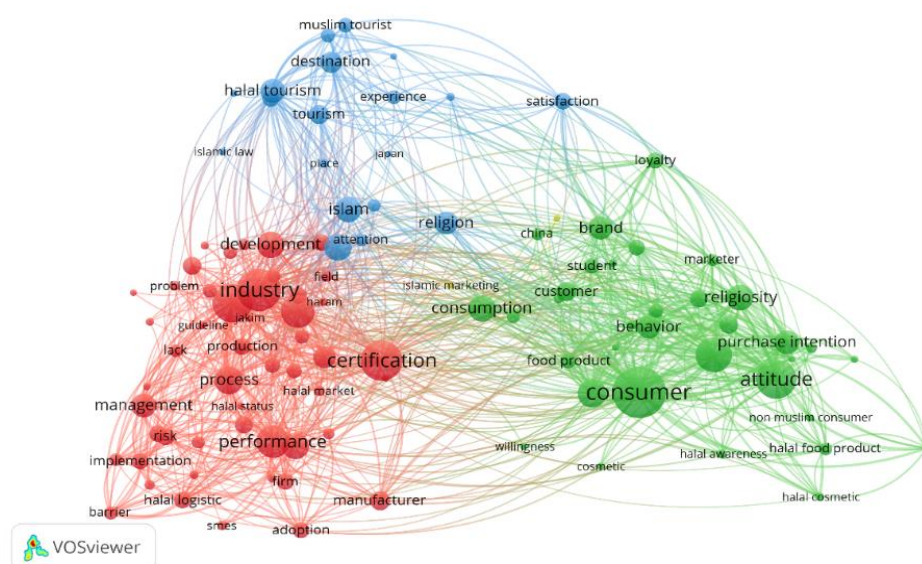


Figure 13. Network visualisation of the main cluster with the terms of the titles and abstracts using VOSviewer.

Figure 14 shows the trend related to halal research topic areas from year to year. It is worth noting that the current studies focus more on halal tourism and consumer behaviour than on the halal industry and management, which discussed earlier in 2016. Meanwhile, Figure 15 shows the cluster density visualization, indicates that the more concentrated the colours that appear, the more research related to that topic in the cluster. Among the most discussed topic areas are industry, certification, performance, consumer, attitude, and Islam.

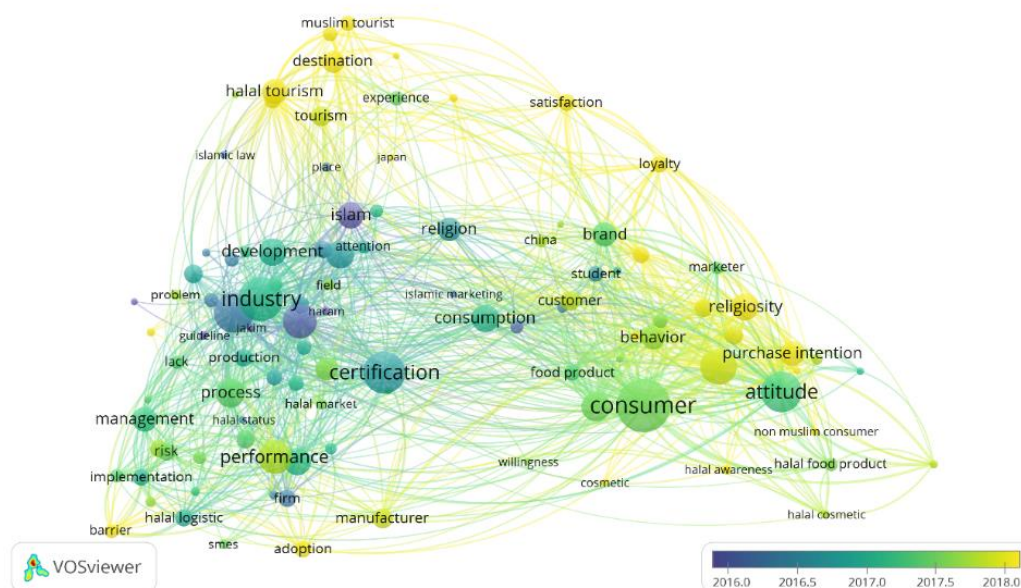


Figure 14. Overlay visualisation of the main cluster with the terms of the titles and abstract using VOSviewer.



Figure 15. Density visualisation of the main cluster with the terms of the titles and abstract using VOSviewer.

6. Discussion and Suggestion

Even though halal research has been discovered for more than 20 years, many more aspects need to be explored. In the social sciences area, the broad research area seems to be consumer studies, tourism, and management. Halal appears to be a sub-category of these main research

areas. The most contribution is from Islamic countries, which are Malaysia and Indonesia. The halal industry keeps expanding over time and has new issues that need to be solved, which leads to demands for new research studies.

The most important keywords identified in this study are halal, Malaysia, halal food, halal tourism, Islam, and purchase intention, which show that researchers are more interested in halal food, halal tourism, and halal purchase. Other subject areas, such as halal pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals, and natural products remain untouched. In Islam, the word halal is always associated with *tayyiban* (good). Not all halal food can be considered as *tayyib*. The *tayyiban* concept connotes good, pure, healthy, safe, and best quality. However, the *tayyiban* aspects of halal are rarely discussed in previous studies.

Most of the previous authors focused on halal certification, regulation and standards, halal supply chain, and market practice in the halal management topic area. Earlier studies overlook halal integrity and accountability among manufacturers and halal enforcement officers. The level of integrity is crucial because it may influence consumers' trust to purchase halal products in the market. Therefore, future research may develop a new framework to extend the halal integrity from farm to fork and develop measures to analyse the level of halal integrity. Risk analysis related to halal supply chain may also be an exciting topic area to explore. Apart from halal integrity and halal supply chain, we also suggest that future studies should examine the performance of halal companies compared to non-halal and the implementation of halal assurance systems in the industry.

Most studies concentrated on consumer behaviours toward halal products in the halal consumerism topic area. So far, the research on this topic focuses on the following aspects: religiosity, attitude, and intention. Future research may explore other determinants influencing halal consumerism, like Islamic values, halal literacy, and *Maqasid al-Shariah* perception. Future research should also focus on developing new frameworks to increase consumers awareness of halal certification. Consumer awareness of halal products is vital to ensure that halal products remain relevant in the market and thus become a driving force to increase the number of halal products in the market.

Halal tourism has become the latest topic highlighted by previous research. Since this area is still new, we suggest that upcoming research focus on developing new standards and regulations to control the halal tourism industry and help consumers, especially Muslims, comply with the Shariah needs. Instead of studying the factors contributing to halal tourism, future research may also measure the demand for halal tourism among non-Muslim travellers. This is particularly important because if there is demand from non-Muslim travellers, this halal tourism concept has enormous potential to expand. Halal tourism industry needs to be monitored by specific authorities.

7. Conclusion

This study examines 879 articles in halal research using bibliometric analysis. The result reveals valuable insights. Halal research can be divided into three main clusters: halal management, halal consumerism, and halal tourism. It is also a heavily discussed topic among Muslim and non-Muslim authors, and Malaysia is the top country contributing to this research field. The publication has increased over the years, and this field keeps expanding since 2015.

The limitation of this study is the usage of Scopus as the sole research database, and it is not specific to any area. The keyword used is too general, as this study only used one keyword, halal. As a result, too many articles are extracted and need to be analysed. Future research may use specific keywords to extract fewer articles, allowing researchers to examine all related articles thoroughly.

In conclusion, even though halal research has been done for more than 20 years, the amount of research in this field is still inadequate. Various issues and problems in the halal industry need to be examined and solved. Therefore, more research is needed in this field to fill the gap and contribute to halal industry development.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest in this work.

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