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TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN WAQF REPORTING: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Waqf is an important instrument in Islamic finance with significant potential to support sustainable economic development and social welfare. However, the implementation of waqf governance across various countries continues to face major challenges, particularly regarding transparency and accountability in reporting practices. This study aims to analyze the development of research on transparency and accountability in waqf reporting using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach guided by the PRISMA protocol. Data were collected from five major academic databases (Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, DOAJ, and Emerald Insight) covering the period 2010–2024, resulting in 37 selected articles from an initial pool of 312 studies. The findings indicate that the main issues in the literature include waqf governance, financial reporting practices of nazhir (waqf managers), information disclosure to waqif (donors), the implementation of Islamic accounting standards, and the role of digital technology in enhancing transparency. The review also identifies a gap between regulatory frameworks and reporting practices, limited managerial capacity of nazhir, and the prevailing reliance on interpersonal trust within the waqf system. This study concludes that strengthening reporting standards, improving human resource capacity, and leveraging digital technologies are key factors in enhancing waqf transparency and accountability. In addition, the integration of Islamic ethical values such as amanah (trustworthiness) and mas'uliyyah (accountability) serves as a fundamental foundation for sustainable waqf management.

Keywords : Waqf; Transparency; Accountability; Systematic Literature Review

Introduction

Waqf represents one of the most significant instruments in Islamic finance, holding substantial potential to support sustainable economic development and social welfare. As an institution entrusted with managing community assets, waqf organizations are expected to operate professionally and remain accountable to all stakeholders. However, in many countries, waqf management continues to face considerable challenges, particularly in relation to good governance and transparent reporting systems. Weak transparency in waqf reporting has emerged as a major obstacle to strengthening public trust in waqf institutions. Therefore, an in-depth examination of transparency and accountability in waqf reporting is both highly relevant and urgently needed (Kahf, 1998).

Transparency, within the context of nonprofit and religious organizations, refers to openness in disclosing information related to resource management, program activities, and achieved outcomes. Organizations that demonstrate higher levels of transparency tend to gain greater trust from donors and the wider public, thereby encouraging increased contributions and participation. In the context of waqf, transparency serves as a critical foundation for building a healthy and sustainable management ecosystem. Empirical studies consistently show a strong positive correlation between institutional transparency and stakeholder trust. Accordingly, enhancing transparency in waqf reporting is a strategic imperative for the development of modern waqf institutions (Hasan, 2010).

Accountability constitutes a fundamental principle of organizational governance, requiring managers to justify their actions and decisions to relevant stakeholders. In Islam, accountability extends beyond horizontal responsibility to fellow human beings, encompassing a vertical dimension of responsibility to Allah SWT as the ultimate trustee. Waqf managers (nazhir) therefore carry dual responsibilities: safeguarding waqf assets and ensuring that their benefits are optimally delivered to society. Research indicates that waqf institutions that consistently uphold accountability principles tend to achieve superior financial and social performance. Strengthening accountability should thus be prioritized within national waqf governance reform agendas (Atan et al., 2017).

Financial reporting in waqf institutions possesses unique characteristics that distinguish it from conventional business entities. Unlike profit-oriented organizations, waqf institutions prioritize social impact over financial gain. Existing general accounting standards do not fully accommodate the specific reporting needs of waqf institutions, which encompass both social and spiritual dimensions. This mismatch often results in financial reports that are less comprehensive and fail to accurately reflect institutional performance. Although several Muslim-majority countries have initiated efforts to develop specialized waqf accounting standards, these initiatives remain fragmented and lack global standardization. The development of comprehensive, Shariah-compliant waqf reporting standards is therefore an urgent global priority (Ihsan & Ibrahim, 2011).

One of the critical issues in waqf management is the weakness of monitoring and auditing systems overseeing nazhir who manage substantial community assets. The absence of robust oversight mechanisms creates opportunities for misuse or mismanagement of waqf assets, whether intentional or unintentional, ultimately harming beneficiaries. Experiences across various countries demonstrate that such cases are more prevalent where oversight systems are inadequate. The implementation of independent and periodic external audits offers a practical solution to enhance accountability. Prior studies confirm that waqf institutions that consistently adopt external auditing practices tend to enjoy higher public trust and improved management performance (Raissouni, 2001).

In Indonesia, waqf is governed within a regulatory framework that has significantly evolved since the enactment of Law No. 41 of 2004 on Waqf and Government Regulation No. 42 of 2006. While these regulations provide a stronger legal foundation, their implementation continues to face complex challenges. Data from the Indonesian Waqf Board (BWI) indicate that most nazhir in Indonesia operate individually and lack formal legal status, making them vulnerable to governance issues. Limited human resource capacity, particularly in financial and accounting competencies, remains a major barrier to improving the quality of waqf reporting. Consequently, systematic and sustainable capacity-building programs for nazhir are essential to meet expected reporting standards (Rozalinda, 2015).

The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method is a highly effective research approach for synthesizing and analyzing existing studies in a comprehensive and methodologically rigorous manner. This method enables researchers to identify patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature, thereby generating well-informed recommendations for future research and policy development. Despite the growing volume of waqf-related studies in recent decades, the application of SLR in this field remains relatively limited. The need for systematic synthesis, particularly on issues of transparency and accountability, is becoming increasingly urgent as governance challenges in waqf institutions continue to evolve globally (Tranfield et al., 2003).

The development of productive waqf as a pillar of Islamic economics requires professional governance and accountable reporting systems. When managed effectively, productive waqf can generate sustainable income to finance social programs and economic empowerment initiatives. However, this potential can only be realized through transparent and accountable management practices. Studies indicate that donors and investors are more likely to support waqf institutions with strong transparency track records. Therefore, improving transparency in reporting is a fundamental prerequisite for mobilizing resources for sustainable productive waqf development (Çizakça, 2000).

Stewardship theory, in the context of religious organizations, emphasizes that waqf managers (nazhir) act as stewards entrusted with safeguarding assets on behalf of donors (wakif) and Allah SWT. Unlike agency theory, which assumes potential conflicts of interest, stewardship theory views managers as inherently motivated to act in the best interests of the organization. This perspective is particularly relevant to waqf institutions, where spiritual motivations play a significant role. Nevertheless, spiritual motivation alone is insufficient without structured reporting systems and clear accountability mechanisms. A balanced integration of spiritual values and modern governance practices forms a strong foundation for transparent and accountable waqf institutions (Davis et al., 1997).

The role of information technology in waqf reporting has gained increasing attention in the digital era. The adoption of digital systems can enhance information accessibility, accelerate reporting processes, and reduce administrative costs. Transparent and interactive digital platforms enable stakeholders to access financial and performance information in real time. Countries such as Malaysia have begun implementing integrated e-reporting systems linked with digital payment platforms. Emerging technologies such as blockchain are also being explored to enhance data security and transparency in waqf asset management (Hassan & Shahid, 2010).

Comparative studies of waqf management across countries reveal significant variations in regulatory frameworks, governance structures, and reporting practices. Countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Egypt offer valuable lessons for others still developing their waqf systems. Malaysia, through institutions such as JAWHAR and State Islamic Religious Councils, has established relatively advanced reporting standards. Singapore, through MUIS, demonstrates strong governance through rigorous external audits and comprehensive annual reporting. Comparative analysis of such practices is essential to identify best practices that can be adopted more broadly (Mohd Noor et al., 2014).

The Indonesian Waqf Board (BWI) plays a crucial role as regulator and supervisor in promoting transparency and accountability in waqf institutions. Since its establishment in 2007, BWI has introduced various initiatives to enhance nazhir professionalism, including improvements in financial reporting. However, limited resources and the vast number of nazhir across Indonesia pose challenges to effective oversight. More comprehensive and innovative strategies are required to expand BWI's supervisory reach and strengthen nazhir capacity. Institutional strengthening of BWI through increased funding, human resources, and technological support is therefore essential (Huda et al., 2014).

Shariah compliance represents an inseparable dimension of transparency and accountability in Islamic institutions. Transparent waqf reporting must include disclosures on adherence to Shariah principles, particularly in asset management and investment practices. The presence of an independent and competent Shariah supervisory board is a key mechanism for ensuring compliance and enhancing accountability. Research indicates that Islamic financial institutions with strong Shariah governance enjoy better reputations among Muslim communities. Integrating Shariah compliance reporting into annual waqf reports is thus a best practice that should be standardized (Chapra & Ahmed, 2002).

Gender issues in waqf governance and reporting also deserve greater attention. Female representation in leadership and management of waqf institutions remains limited in many Muslim-majority countries, despite evidence that gender diversity enhances governance quality and transparency. From a fiqh perspective, women have equal rights to act as both wakif and nazhir. Increasing women's participation in waqf governance can introduce diverse perspectives and improve reporting quality. Policies promoting gender inclusivity should therefore be incorporated into comprehensive waqf reform agendas (Sadeq, 2002).

Existing nonprofit accounting standards, such as PSAK 45 in Indonesia and IFRS for NPOs, provide a basic framework for financial reporting.

However, the unique characteristics of waqf require more specialized standards that integrate spiritual, social, and economic dimensions. Although efforts have been made by professional bodies such as the Indonesian Institute of Accountants (IAI), implementation challenges remain. Harmonizing Shariah-based principles with conventional accounting standards represents both an academic and practical challenge. Developing comprehensive and standardized waqf reporting frameworks will greatly benefit the global waqf ecosystem (Abd. Wahab & Abd. Rahman, 2011).

The relationship between transparency in waqf reporting and public trust is a central theme in contemporary literature. Public trust is a critical asset, as it directly influences the willingness of individuals to contribute to waqf. Empirical studies show that perceptions of transparency and accountability significantly affect waqf participation behavior. Key factors include accessibility of financial reports, clarity of fund utilization, and effective communication with stakeholders. Building a strong trust ecosystem requires continuous and strategic communication efforts integrated into governance practices (Osman et al., 2015).

Cash waqf represents an important innovation that requires more sophisticated reporting frameworks compared to immovable waqf assets. Unlike land or buildings, cash waqf involves complex financial transactions that demand structured accounting systems. In Indonesia, cash waqf has been formally recognized since the 2002 fatwa and Law No. 41 of 2004, enabling broader participation. As the volume of cash waqf increases, transparent and accountable reporting becomes even more critical. Developing user-friendly and comprehensive reporting systems will support the sustainable growth of cash waqf (Obaidullah, 2008).

The role of waqf in poverty alleviation and social development has attracted increasing scholarly attention. However, its effectiveness depends on efficient asset management and proper targeting of beneficiaries. Transparency in social impact reporting is essential to ensure that waqf-funded programs deliver tangible benefits. Developing standardized frameworks for measuring and reporting social impact will enable stakeholders to evaluate effectiveness more accurately. Integrating financial and social reporting into a single comprehensive document is considered best practice in modern waqf management (Ahmed, 2004).

Research on good governance in Islamic institutions highlights the strong relationship between governance quality and organizational performance. Principles such as transparency, accountability, responsibility, independence, and fairness (TARIF) must be consistently applied. Beyond managerial considerations, these principles carry ethical and spiritual significance in waqf institutions. Strong governance enhances competitiveness and credibility, particularly in attracting international donors. Investment in governance improvement thus represents a long-term strategic benefit (Sarea & Hanefah, 2013).

In the era of globalization, international standardization of waqf reporting is increasingly important to facilitate cross-country comparisons.

Organizations such as the OIC and AAOIFI have initiated efforts to develop global frameworks, although comprehensive waqf-specific standards are still evolving. Harmonization of reporting standards will enable broader international collaboration and cross-border waqf development. Active participation by Indonesia in these initiatives will provide strategic advantages for its national waqf ecosystem (Hamber & Haneef, 2017).

The relationship between financial and social performance of waqf institutions and their reporting practices remains underexplored. Empirical research in this area is limited, particularly in developing countries. Data constraints and lack of transparency hinder such studies. Establishing centralized and publicly accessible waqf reporting databases would greatly support empirical research. Investment in data infrastructure is therefore a critical priority for regulators and stakeholders (Pitchay et al., 2014).

The literature on Islamic philanthropy positions waqf, alongside zakat and sadaqah, as a cornerstone of the Islamic social safety net. Historically, well-managed waqf institutions played a significant role in advancing civilization, particularly during the Ottoman era. Revitalizing waqf today requires integrating traditional Islamic values with modern management practices. Historical and comparative studies provide valuable insights for developing contemporary reporting systems (Singer, 2008).

Higher education institutions play a crucial role in developing human capital in waqf governance and accounting. Academic curricula should incorporate specialized training in waqf reporting to produce competent professionals. Collaboration among universities, waqf institutions, and regulators is essential to strengthen the ecosystem. Academic research also contributes to evidence-based policy development. Building a vibrant community of scholars and practitioners represents a valuable long-term investment (Alias, 2012).

The use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in waqf reporting is essential for effective accountability. KPIs should capture financial performance, social impact, Shariah compliance, and long-term outcomes. Developing comprehensive KPI frameworks tailored to waqf characteristics remains a key challenge. Standardized KPIs will facilitate benchmarking and sector-wide evaluation. Their implementation will enhance performance and accountability (Budiman, 2011).

Government commitment is a critical factor in fostering a transparent and accountable waqf ecosystem. Supportive policies, including tax incentives, regulatory frameworks, and capacity-building programs, can stimulate growth. Strategic partnerships among government, private sector, and civil society are essential. Experiences from successful countries demonstrate that active government involvement is a key driver of progress. Synergy among stakeholders will accelerate the transformation of waqf management toward a more transparent, accountable, and impactful future (Mohsin, 2013).

Methods

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework. This approach was selected because it enables the systematic, transparent, and reproducible process of identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing scientific evidence, thereby minimizing bias in both literature selection and interpretation. The study aims to identify patterns and trends in transparency and accountability in waqf reporting across different countries, explore the drivers and barriers of effective waqf governance, and formulate evidence-based recommendations for the development of policy frameworks and waqf accounting standards.

Data sources were obtained through a systematic search of five major academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and Emerald Insight, covering publications from 2010 to 2024. The search was conducted between January and March 2024 using keywords developed based on an adapted PICO framework for non-clinical contexts, including terms such as “waqf,” “wakaf,” “transparency,” “accountability,” “financial reporting,” “governance,” and “disclosure.” These keywords were combined using Boolean operators to both broaden and refine the search results according to relevance.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were established at the outset of the study to ensure objectivity in the literature selection process. Included studies consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly conference proceedings that addressed transparency, accountability, or financial reporting in waqf, published in Indonesian, English, or Arabic, and available in full text. Conversely, studies that were not relevant to waqf management, not accessible in full-text form, or published before 2010 were excluded from the review.

The study selection process followed the PRISMA flow, consisting of four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. From an initial total of 312 records identified, 247 studies remained after duplicate removal. Following title and abstract screening as well as full-text eligibility assessment, 37 articles ultimately met the inclusion criteria and were included in the final synthesis. The screening process was conducted independently by two reviewers to reduce selection bias, with disagreements resolved through discussion or consultation with a third reviewer.

Data from the selected studies were extracted using a standardized form covering author information, publication year, research methodology, geographical context, key findings, and policy implications. Data analysis was conducted using a narrative thematic approach combined with content analysis to identify patterns, trends, and research gaps across the studies. In addition, the methodological quality of each study was assessed using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT) 2018 version. Studies with low methodological quality were not included in the main synthesis but were still considered in sensitivity analysis.

Results And Discussion

Characteristics of Included Studies

Of the 37 articles that met the inclusion criteria, most originated from countries with predominantly Muslim populations, particularly Indonesia (n=14, 37.8%), Malaysia (n=10, 27.0%), Saudi Arabia (n=5, 13.5%), Bangladesh (n=4, 10.8%), and other countries (n=4, 10.8%). In terms of methodology, qualitative research dominated the literature corpus (n=19, 51.4%), followed by quantitative studies (n=11, 29.7%), and mixed-methods approaches (n=7, 18.9%). Publication trends indicate a significant increase since 2015, reflecting growing academic attention to waqf governance issues.

In terms of thematic distribution, the 37 articles were categorized into five main themes, as presented in Table 1. The most frequently examined theme was waqf governance and regulatory frameworks, highlighting the fundamental need for strong institutional foundations in waqf management.

Table 1. Thematic Distribution of Included Literature

No.	Main Theme	Number of Studies	Percentage
1	Waqf governance and regulatory frameworks	12	32.4%
2	Financial reporting practices of nazhir	9	24.3%
3	Information disclosure to waqif and the public	7	18.9%
4	Challenges in implementing Islamic accounting standards	5	13.5%
5	Role of technology (waqf fintech) in transparency	4	10.8%
Total		**37**	**100%**

Waqf Governance and Regulatory Frameworks

Twelve studies (32.4%) focused on institutional and regulatory dimensions of waqf governance. The findings consistently indicate that weak regulatory frameworks represent one of the most significant barriers to transparency and accountability in waqf management (Sairally, 2013; Hasan & Siraj, 2017; Ibrahim et al., 2020). Countries such as Malaysia and Singapore are recognized as having relatively comprehensive legal frameworks, supported by Islamic administration enactments at the state level and the establishment of MUIS (Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura). In contrast, although Indonesia has enacted Law No. 41/2004 on Waqf and Government Regulation No. 42/2006, its implementation continues to face significant challenges, particularly in relation to asset certification, nazhir competency, and supervisory mechanisms (Fauziyyah et al., 2022; Rozalinda, 2019). These studies also emphasize the importance of independent regulatory bodies with sufficient authority and capacity to enforce reporting standards and conduct audits of nazhir institutions. Hasan & Siraj (2017), in their comparative study, argue that countries with centralized and integrated waqf supervisory systems tend to exhibit higher levels of transparency compared to countries with decentralized systems lacking clear coordination mechanisms.

Financial Reporting Practices of Nazhir

Nine studies (24.3%) examined actual financial reporting practices implemented by nazhir institutions, both individual and corporate. The findings reveal a substantial gap between formal accounting standards (such as PSAK 112 in Indonesia or FRS 102 in Malaysia) and actual reporting practices on the ground (Ramli et al., 2021; Wulandari & Kassim, 2016). Shukor et al. (2019), using content analysis of 45 institutional nazhir annual reports in Malaysia, found that only 38% provided complete financial statements that were externally verifiable. Most reports were limited to simplified balance sheets, without accompanying notes, cash flow statements, or information on the distribution of waqf benefits to beneficiaries (mauquf 'alaih). Similarly, Fauziyyah et al. (2022) found that most nazhir in Indonesia still rely on basic cash-basis accounting rather than the more informative accrual basis. Furthermore, Lubis et al. (2021) identified three levels of reporting practices within Indonesia's waqf ecosystem: (1) nazhir without any formal bookkeeping (mostly individual nazhir), (2) nazhir with simple bookkeeping not aligned with accounting standards, and (3) professional nazhir adopting PSAK 112. This disparity highlights the need for differentiated capacity-building programs tailored to the capability and operational scale of nazhir.

Information Disclosure to Waqif and the Public

Seven studies (18.9%) examined disclosure practices toward stakeholders, particularly waqif (donors), mauquf 'alaih (beneficiaries), and the general public. This theme is closely related to the principle of the right to information as part of public accountability in waqf institutions. Mauro et al. (2013), in a survey of 120 waqif in Indonesia, found that only 23% of respondents reported receiving periodic reports from nazhir regarding the use and development of the endowed assets they had contributed. This finding is consistent with Nadzri et al. (2012), who reported low levels of voluntary disclosure by waqf institutions, particularly regarding program performance, social impact, and asset conditions. Interestingly, several studies highlight differences in expectations between faith-oriented (ibadah-oriented) waqif and investment-oriented waqif. Younger and more highly educated waqif tend to expect greater transparency and accountability from nazhir institutions (Hamber & Haneef, 2017). This suggests that communication and disclosure strategies should be tailored to different waqif profiles and expectations.

Challenges in Implementing Islamic Accounting Standards

Five studies (13.5%) specifically address technical challenges in implementing relevant accounting standards for waqf institutions, including PSAK 112 (Indonesia), MFRS 112 (Malaysia), and standards issued by the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI). The main challenges identified include: (1) the complexity of valuing non-monetary waqf assets, which vary significantly in value and often lack observable market prices; (2) limited human resource capacity within nazhir institutions in understanding Islamic accounting standards; (3) high compliance costs for small-scale nazhir; and (4) ambiguity in accounting treatment for innovative waqf instruments such as cash waqf, waqf shares, and waqf sukuk (Mohsin, 2013; Yusuf & Derus, 2013). Ramli et al. (2021) propose a simplified reporting model for low-capacity nazhir that still meets the minimum information needs of stakeholders. This model integrates the concept of Islamic accountability, which emphasizes responsibility not only to human stakeholders but also to Allah SWT.

The Role of Technology in Enhancing Waqf Transparency

Four recent studies (10.8%) explore the potential of information and communication technologies—particularly waqf fintech, blockchain, and digital platforms—in improving transparency and accountability in waqf management. This represents one of the fastest-growing research themes in the last decade, reflecting academic responses to ongoing digital transformation in the Islamic finance sector. Mohd Thas Thaker et al. (2021) found that technology-based waqf crowdfunding platforms equipped with real-time reporting features significantly enhance donor trust and encourage participation in cash waqf among millennials. Platforms such as Wakaf Selangor Muamalat in Malaysia and the Indonesian Waqf Board's digital platform illustrate how technology-driven transparency can effectively address trust deficits in traditional nazhir institutions. Meanwhile, Rusydiana et al. (2022) discuss the potential application of blockchain technology in waqf asset recording and tracking. Due to its immutable, transparent, and decentralized characteristics, blockchain offers a promising solution to issues such as asset ownership disputes, record manipulation, and unclear asset status. However, the authors also acknowledge significant challenges related to digital literacy among nazhir, technological infrastructure, and enabling regulatory frameworks.

Cross-Thematic Discussion: Critical Synthesis

Based on a comprehensive analysis of the 37 included studies, several cross-cutting patterns emerge. First, there is a persistent implementation gap between macro-level regulations and standards and micro-level practices within nazhir institutions. This gap is further exacerbated by weak enforcement mechanisms and limited sanctions for non-compliance with reporting obligations. Second, the review identifies a paradox of trust within the waqf ecosystem: while waqif and the broader public increasingly demand transparency, relational trust based on personal relationships remains dominant in decision-making, particularly in rural communities and traditional nazhir institutions such as mosques and Islamic boarding schools. This creates a distinct challenge in transitioning toward more formal, documentation-based accountability systems. Third, the literature implicitly demonstrates that transparency and accountability in waqf are not merely technical accounting issues, but are deeply rooted in Islamic normative and ethical values. Concepts such as amanah (trustworthiness), ‘adl (justice), and mas’uliyyah (accountability) constitute the moral foundation that should encourage nazhir to proactively disclose information and account for waqf management, beyond mere regulatory compliance. Fourth, this review identifies a geographical imbalance in waqf research, with Indonesia and Malaysia dominating the literature corpus. This raises concerns regarding the overgeneralization of findings from these two contexts to other regions with significantly different institutional, legal, and socio-cultural characteristics, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and non-Gulf Arab countries.

Conclusion

This systematic literature review successfully identified, evaluated, and synthesized 37 empirical and conceptual studies on transparency and accountability in waqf reporting published between 2010 and 2024. Based on the comprehensive analysis of this literature corpus, several main conclusions can be drawn. First, transparency and accountability in waqf management remain inadequate in most studied contexts. This weakness is driven by a combination of institutional factors (weak regulation and enforcement), capacity constraints (limited accounting and reporting expertise among nazhir), and cultural factors (dominance of personal trust over institutional, documentation-based trust). Second, regulatory frameworks and dedicated waqf accounting standards are indispensable prerequisites for establishing a transparent and accountable waqf reporting ecosystem. The experiences of Malaysia with MFRS 112 and Indonesia with PSAK 112 demonstrate that accounting standardization improves the quality and comparability of nazhir financial reporting, although implementation challenges remain substantial. Third, information technology and digital platforms have strong transformative potential in accelerating waqf transparency. Waqf fintech platforms based on crowdfunding models with real-time reporting features have been shown to enhance donor trust and expand public participation in waqf, while blockchain technology offers promising long-term solutions to asset disputes and record manipulation. Fourth, Islamic ethical and normative values form an essential foundation for sustainable transparency and accountability in waqf systems. Approaches that rely solely on conventional accounting frameworks without incorporating values such as amanah, ‘adl, and mas’uliyyah risk resulting in ceremonial compliance that does not substantially transform nazhir behavior.

Contributions and Implications

This study contributes theoretically by providing a comprehensive mapping of the research landscape on waqf transparency and accountability over the past decade, serving as a reference for future research. Practically, the findings have important policy implications for governments, regulators, and waqf institutions, including the need for nazhir certification programs that incorporate accounting competencies, strengthened supervision and sanction mechanisms for reporting violations, and increased investment in technological infrastructure to support efficient and transparent waqf reporting systems.

Limitations and Future Research Agenda

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, restricting the search to three languages (Indonesian, English, and Arabic) may have excluded high-quality studies published in other languages such as Malay, Turkish, or Urdu. Second, most included studies are descriptive and qualitative in nature, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Third, no quantitative meta-analysis was conducted due to the heterogeneity of study designs and reported measures. Based on the identified gaps in the literature, future research is recommended to focus on: (1) longitudinal studies on the impact of waqf accounting standardization on public trust and waqf asset growth; (2) experimental studies on the effectiveness of different disclosure formats and communication channels in improving waqif understanding; (3) cross-country comparative studies including under-researched waqf jurisdictions; and (4) in-depth exploration of blockchain and artificial intelligence applications in waqf management and reporting.

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