

# Decoding the Economic Future: Insights from I-*i*ECONS 2023

**Nurul Adilah Hasbullah, Muhammad Iqmal Hisham Kamaruddin, Amalina Mursidi,  
Norfhadzilahwati Rahim, Suhaida Herni Suffaruddin**

Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Economics and Muamalat, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia,  
Bandar Baru Nilai, 71800 Nilai, Negeri Sembilan.

Corresponding author: [iqmalhisham@usim.edu.my](mailto:iqmalhisham@usim.edu.my)

**Abstract:** This paper analyses 98 articles from the 10<sup>th</sup> International Islamic Economic System Conference (I-*i*ECONS2023) e-proceedings, covering themes, types, authorships, contributions, and keywords. Key themes include Islamic Social Finance, Zakat, Wakaf, Takaful, Business, Management, and Leadership. Most articles are extended abstracts, primarily multi-authored, with Abdul Rauf Ridzuan as the top contributor. Malaysian authors and USIM researchers dominate the contributions. Articles are short, mostly in English, with a higher proportion of female authors. Popular keywords are “Malaysia,” “Waqf,” “Environmental,” “Sustainable Development,” and “Fintech.” The paper provides valuable insights for researchers and policymakers in Islamic economics and social finance.

**Keywords:** I-*i*ECONS2023, e-proceedings, bibliometric analysis

## Introduction

It is undeniable that a digital manuscript including proceedings articles is important. Printed manuscripts normally tend to require physical care and large storage space, which leads to high maintenance costs and limited physical access. It could be worse without specialised preservation as physical manuscripts are exposed to deterioration and become unusable. In this case, the data or information written on these manuscripts are lost forever. Therefore, digitalising manuscripts provides easier access to the information stored on manuscripts and reduces the need for physical storage space and maintenance cost (Londhe et al., 2011).

The International Islamic Economic System Conference (I-*i*ECONS) proceedings has been introduced in 2005 and being continuously conducted every two years. In the beginning, all the I-*i*ECONS proceedings articles were published physically while electronically stored on compact discs. However, due to the increasing interest especially in the information from I-*i*ECONS proceedings articles, there is an initiative to digitalise these articles and make them available online. Starting 2023, I-*i*ECONS proceedings articles were made available online.

As I-*i*ECONS conference has gained international present, it has also become a prominent platform to highlight current issues, challenges and practices especially in Islamic economic field. Therefore, a lot of important information and findings from academic research on Islamic economy have been published as I-*i*ECONS proceedings. Thus, this paper aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis specifically on the I-*i*ECONS 2023 e-proceedings to provide a comprehensive overview of the landscape in Islamic economics and finance research presented at this conference. Results of this study prove as an invaluable resource for researchers, policymakers, and academics seeking to understand and further delve into the field of Islamic economics and social finance.

## Background of I-iECONS

I-iECONS is one of the conferences organised by the Faculty of Economics and Muamalat, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) every two years. The objective of organising I-iECONS is to promote and discuss Islamic economic principles, concepts, and practices. This conference significantly contributes to the advancement of information, research, and discussions about the Islamic economic system. It also serves as a platform for scholars, professionals, and postgraduate students to exchange ideas and information, thereby contributing to the growth and development of the field in a larger global context. It is noteworthy that I-iECONS 2023 has reached its 10th edition since its inception.

Since this conference is at the international scope, it brings together participants from various backgrounds both within and outside of the country. Taking up on a new initiative to digitalise all I-iECONS proceedings series, all proceedings articles have been collected and uploaded to a dedicated I-iECONS proceedings website. The available e-proceedings articles cover all I-iECONS proceedings articles published from 2007 until the latest conference in 2023, making it easier for readers to search for papers of their interest.

I-iECONS proceedings consist of original articles, research notes, and case studies that address significant issues in the following areas including Islamic economics, Islamic finance, Islamic banking, Islamic capital market, Islamic social finance (*zakat, waqf, infaq*, philanthropy and etc.), Islamic accounting & corporate governance, Islamic entrepreneurship and social enterprise, Islamic management and administration, Islamic marketing, *Muamalat* (Islamic business), Shariah auditing, and other related fields.

## Methodology

Analysis on this study was conducted manually on 98 articles published in the I-iECONS 2023 e-proceedings, using a combination of methodologies including bibliometric analysis, thematic exploration, and demographic study. These analytical techniques are essential to provide valuable insights into the trends, patterns, and characteristics of scholarly publications (Rahman et al., 2022; Shayegan & Mohammad, 2021; Mejía et al., 2021; Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020). The analysis considers various variables, including the theme of the articles, types of articles, authorship patterns, main author contributions, the most prolific contributor, authors by geographical affiliation, the most productive institution, number of pages, language used, genders of authors and authorship, number of keywords, and number of references.

## Summary of Key Points

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the articles published in the I-iECONS 2023 e-proceedings. The main points of this study are as follow:

### 1. Thematic Distribution of Articles:

- Most articles are themed around Islamic Social Finance, Zakat, Wakaf, and Takaful (25 articles).
- Business, Management, and Leadership (19 articles), and Banking, Finance, and Investment (12 articles) follow.

- Other themes include Accounting and Corporate Governance, Halal Management, Marketing, Arabic, and Economics, each with 8-9 articles.
2. Types of Articles Published:
    - Most articles are extended abstracts (44 articles, 45%).
    - Research papers (38 articles, 39%) and concept papers (16 articles, 16%) make up the rest.
  3. Authorship Patterns:
    - Articles are mostly multi-authored, with 21 articles co-authored by four persons, and 26 articles had more than five authors.
    - Single-authored articles (16 papers).
    - A large pool of 88 authors contributed to the conference, with many authors contributing only one article each.
  4. Most Prolific Authors:
    - 280 authors contributed through 98 articles.
    - Abdul Rauf Ridzuan is the most prolific author with 15 articles.
    - Several other authors contributed between 3 to 5 articles each, while other authors contributed one or two papers.
  5. Geographical Affiliation of Authors:
    - Most articles were contributed by Malaysian authors (75 articles, 76.6%).
    - Other contributors were from Indonesia, UAE, and other countries.
  6. Institutional Contributions:
    - Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia is the top contributing institution (28 articles).
    - Other significant contributors include Universiti Teknologi MARA and Universitas Indonesia.
  7. Article Length Distribution:
    - Most articles (60) are between 1 – 10 pages.
    - Articles beyond 15 pages are significantly fewer in number.
  8. Language of Articles:
    - English is the predominant language (80 articles).
    - Other languages include Malay (9 articles), Arabic (8 articles), and Indonesian (1 article).
  9. Gender of Authors:
    - The authors are predominantly female (186 out of 280).
    - Articles are mostly co-authored comprising both genders within one paper.
  10. Keywords Usage:
    - The keyword "Malaysia" was most frequently used (13 times).

- Other frequently used keywords include “Waqf”, “Environmental”, “Sustainable Development”, and “Fintech”.

## Conclusion and Implications

The I-iECONS 2023 e-proceedings reveal a strong emphasis on Islamic economics and social finance, with significant contributions from Malaysian authors and institutions. English-language articles are prevalent and often co-authored. Key themes include Islamic Social Finance, Zakat, Wakaf, and Takaful, followed by Business, Management, and Leadership. The collaborative nature of research is evident through multi-authored works, with Abdul Rauf Ridzuan as the most prolific contributor. Geographically, Malaysian authors dominate the participation with vast majority came from Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia. Most articles tend to be shorter, predominantly in English with a higher proportion of female authors. Frequent keywords such as “Malaysia,” “Waqf,” “Environmental,” “Sustainable Development,” and “Fintech” highlight prevalent research themes. The paper’s implications span from research mapping, collaborative insights, regional focus, and core research themes, making it a valuable resource for scholars, policymakers, and academics in Islamic economics and social finance knowledge horizon.

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