

Islamic Inheritance Law: A Recent Comprehensive Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Islamic inheritance law has emerged as a significant area of scholarly inquiry in response to legal reforms, socioeconomic transformations, gender-related debates, and the increasing interaction between Islamic legal principles, customary norms, and state regulatory frameworks across Muslim societies. Despite the growing body of scholarship, existing studies remain fragmented across doctrinal, socio-legal, and legal-pluralistic perspectives, underscoring the need for a comprehensive synthesis of recent developments in the field. This study systematically reviews contemporary scholarship on Islamic inheritance law to examine prevailing research themes and emerging directions within the literature. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, data were retrieved from the Scopus and Web of Science databases using the keywords “inheritance,” “succession,” “faraid,” and “Islam.” The review process resulted in the inclusion of 34 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2023 and 2025 for qualitative synthesis. The findings reveal three dominant themes in contemporary Islamic inheritance scholarship: contemporary reform and legal development, encompassing legal reform, maqasid al-shariah-oriented interpretation, judicial reasoning, and the contextual adaptation of inheritance principles within modern legal frameworks; legal pluralism, customary practices, and sociological dimensions, examining the interaction between Islamic law, customary norms, and state legal systems in plural societies; and gender, rights, and socioeconomic perspectives, exploring issues of distributive justice, gender equity, women’s inheritance rights, and the socioeconomic implications of inheritance distribution. Overall, the review demonstrates a growing shift towards interdisciplinary and context-sensitive approaches in addressing the evolving complexities of Islamic inheritance law. This review contributes to the existing literature by providing a systematic synthesis of recent scholarly developments and highlighting emerging research directions in Islamic inheritance law.

Keywords: inheritance, succession, faraid, estate, muslim

INTRODUCTION

Islamic inheritance law (al-faraid) is a central pillar of Islamic family law, governing how a deceased person’s property is transferred to surviving relatives in a way that reflects both religious obligation and social order [1][2][3]. The foundations of Islamic inheritance law are rooted in the inheritance provisions of Surah An-Nisa’ and the Sunnah and have been further refined through juristic scholarship to form a comprehensive legal framework that upholds justice, protects family interests, and promotes social order [4]. Contemporary scholarship indicates that this classical legal framework operates within increasingly complex social realities, generating ongoing debates concerning gender justice, legal pluralism, and the

need for legal reform. [5][6][7].

Classical Islamic inheritance law is grounded in the notion that Allah alone determines the shares of heirs, making compliance a religious duty rather than a matter of personal preference [8][9]. The Qur'an and Sunnah specify fixed fractional shares for defined heirs, supplemented by juristic rules such as 'asabah (residuary heirs) and adjustment mechanisms to handle surplus or deficit estates [10]. The detailed inheritance provisions set out in the Qur'an are widely regarded as distinctive within the Islamic legal tradition, reflecting their central role in protecting vulnerable heirs, preventing familial disputes, and promoting social stability. [2][3]. Research on Malaysian and broader Muslim contexts highlights institutionalization of faraid through state law and courts, while also noting jurisdictional limits and overlapping authority among religious courts, administrative bodies, and private experts in managing inheritance cases [1][11]. At the same time, empirical work from Sri Lanka and Indonesia shows gaps between formal doctrine and community practice, driven by limited knowledge, competing customary norms, and perceptions that economic life is distinct from religious law [9] [12].

Gender justice remains one of the most contested issues in contemporary scholarship on Islamic inheritance law. Although the Qur'an granted women legally recognized inheritance rights in societies where such entitlements were previously absent, the provision allocating male heirs a share generally twice that of female heirs has become a focal point of modern academic debate. Many scholars contend that this distribution was historically linked to the financial responsibilities borne by men, rendering the allocation proportionate to social obligations rather than inherently discriminatory [13][14]. Contemporary social and economic realities, in which women increasingly contribute to household income and occupy broader public roles, have prompted some scholars to advocate a contextual reinterpretation of inheritance provisions. Studies on scholars such as Husein Muhammad and Muhammad Shahrur demonstrate how feminist, historical, and maqasid al-shariah-oriented hermeneutical approaches have been employed to reinterpret inheritance verses, emphasizing justice and human welfare as the overarching objectives of Islamic inheritance law rather than strict adherence to fixed numerical allocations. [1][2][3]. Proposals include viewing the 2:1 rule as a maximum–minimum range open to adjustment, or recalibrating shares based on actual socio-economic roles, while still claiming fidelity to Islamic legal logic [4]. At a broader level, scholarship on gender equity in Muslim family law situates inheritance alongside divorce, testimony, and polygamy debates, arguing that many modern and contemporary scholars defend differentiated rights as an expression of equity (proportional fairness) rather than absolute sameness [3][5].

Beyond textual and doctrinal debates, contemporary scholarship increasingly examines how Islamic inheritance law operates within plural legal and social contexts. Comparative studies reveal that customary practices continue to influence estate distribution across many Muslim societies, sometimes constraining daughters' inheritance rights and reinforcing informal arrangements that depart from Qur'anic inheritance provisions [6][7]. Research on specific communities, such as the Pakpak Muslims in Dairi, documents a gradual, community-driven transition from male-favoring customary systems to Islamic faraid, motivated by rising legal consciousness, religious education, and gender equality discourse [7][8]. Similarly, analyses of Muslim countries reveal that some communities allow tradition to overshadow Sharia-based distribution, largely due to weak awareness of faraid and limited access to expert guidance [6][9]. These studies highlight the importance of musyawarah (family deliberation), legal literacy, and the role of institutions such as religious courts, councils, and educational bodies in promoting fair implementation [7][10][11]. Comparative scholarship on Islamic and civil inheritance regimes in Indonesia demonstrates the complexities arising from the coexistence of fixed-share inheritance principles and testamentary discretion, pointing to legal harmonization and sharia-based mediation as potential mechanisms for strengthening distributive justice and dispute resolution [11].

Recent scholarship has increasingly explored reformist trajectories and innovative approaches that seek to preserve the normative foundations of Islamic inheritance law while adapting its application to contemporary social and legal contexts. The maqasid al-shariah approach is frequently invoked to justify reinterpretation or reconstruction of inheritance rules in line with objectives such as protection of wealth, lineage, and overall welfare, especially for women [2][10][12].

Studies examining bilateral inheritance systems, particularly those informed by Hazairin’s approach, suggest that interpreting Qur’anic inheritance provisions through the principles of mutuality and bilateral lineage may accommodate more balanced inheritance rights for men and women without contravening explicit textual prescriptions [1][4]. Historical and comparative analyses show that divergent inheritance models based on alternative readings of Qur’anic and legal materials have existed since early Islamic centuries, suggesting that inequality has often persisted for political or institutional rather than purely textual reasons [4] [13]. At the same time, contemporary scholarship highlights the distinction between the fixed components of Islamic inheritance law and the more flexible dimensions of estate planning. Accordingly, instruments such as hibah, wasiyyah, and negotiated settlements are increasingly viewed as mechanisms for accommodating contemporary needs while remaining consistent with established inheritance principles[10][12][14]. Technological advancements, particularly AI-enabled applications that automate faraid calculations, highlight contemporary efforts to facilitate the practical application of Islamic inheritance law by improving transparency, accessibility, and user engagement. [15].

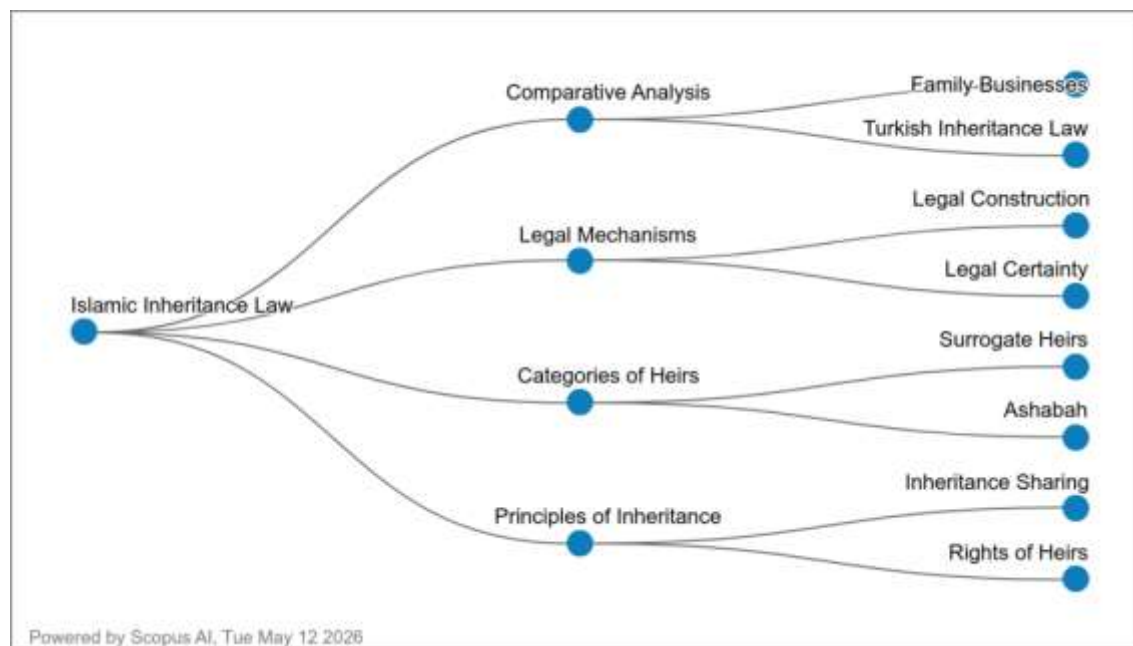


FIGURE 1. Concept of Islamic Inheritance Law

The contemporary literature portrays Islamic inheritance law as a field characterized by the interaction between established textual principles and evolving social realities. While many scholars continue to emphasize the divine authority and normative foundations of faraid, increasing attention has been given to its application within changing legal, social, and economic contexts [6][9][12]. At the same time, the literature identifies persistent challenges, including limited public understanding and implementation of inheritance rules, continuing debates on gender justice, and a range of reform-oriented initiatives encompassing contextual hermeneutics, maqasid al-shariah-based reasoning, bilateral inheritance models, legal harmonization, and technological innovations. [5][11][13][16]. Together, these studies indicate that Islamic inheritance law remains a living, contested, and adaptable tradition: its foundational texts are stable, but their application is negotiated through changing social roles, legal pluralism, and evolving notions of justice and equality. Any extended treatment of “Islamic Inheritance Law” must therefore address not only its classical rules and sources, but also how contemporary Muslim societies are reinterpreting, implementing, and sometimes reforming those rules to align religious fidelity with modern demands for fairness, especially regarding women’s rights and social welfare.

Figure 1 illustrates the concept map of the literature review on the Concept of Islamic Inheritance Law, highlighting four main thematic areas discussed in previous studies, namely comparative analysis, legal mechanisms, categories of heirs, and principles of inheritance. Under comparative analysis, the literature emphasizes the relationship between Islamic inheritance law and family businesses, as well as comparative discussions with Turkish inheritance law. The theme of legal mechanisms focuses on aspects such as legal

construction and legal certainty in the implementation of inheritance distribution. Meanwhile, the category of heirs discusses the roles of surrogate heirs and asabah as important components in determining inheritance entitlement. The principles of inheritance theme highlights inheritance sharing and the protection of heirs' rights as fundamental principles in Islamic inheritance law. Overall, the concept map demonstrates that Islamic inheritance law is a comprehensive system that not only regulates the distribution of estates but also ensures justice, legal clarity, and the protection of heirs' rights within various legal and social contexts.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Identification

According to the PRISMA framework, the identification stage constitutes the initial phase of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) process, which aims to systematically collect and organize relevant scholarly publications related to the research topic. In this study, the literature search was conducted using two prominent academic databases, namely Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). The search strategy was developed based on several core keywords, including "inheritance," "succession," "faraid," and "Islam," together with their related terms and conceptual variations to ensure broad coverage of the relevant literature. The initial search identified 659 records from Scopus and 467 records from Web of Science (WoS), resulting in a total of 1,126 publications. The large number of retrieved records demonstrates the extensive scholarly discourse surrounding Islamic inheritance and succession studies across multidisciplinary academic fields.

The selection of Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) was based on their extensive coverage of peer-reviewed scholarly publications and their widespread use in systematic literature reviews across diverse academic disciplines. The initial search retrieved a total of 1,126 records, with 58.5% identified from Scopus and 41.5% from Web of Science. The inclusion of keywords such as "faraid" and "Islam" ensured that the search remained contextually grounded within the Islamic legal tradition while capturing broader discussions related to succession, inheritance, wealth distribution, and estate administration. The identification stage therefore generated a comprehensive pool of literature for the subsequent screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages.

TABLE 1: The search strings.

Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("inheritance" OR "succession" OR "estate distribution" OR "faraid") AND ("muslim" OR "Islamic")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2023") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2024") OR LIMIT-TO (PUBYEAR , "2025")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ARTS")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Inheritance") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Islamic Law") OR LIMIT-TO (EXACTKEYWORD , "Islamic Inheritance Law")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE , "final")) Date of Access: 12 May 2026
Web of Science (WoS)	TS=(("inheritance" OR "succession" OR "estate distribution" OR "faraid") AND ("muslim" OR "Islamic")); Publication Years: 2023–2025; Document Type: Article; Language: English; WoS Categories: Social Sciences Interdisciplinary, Humanities Multidisciplinary, Philosophy, Area Studies, Sociology. Date of Access: 12 May 2026

Screening

The screening process was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA framework to refine the retrieved publications based on the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. These criteria included publication language, publication year, literature type, publication stage, and subject area, as presented in Table 2. From the 1,126 records initially identified through Scopus and Web of Science, 589 records were excluded for not meeting the predefined criteria. The excluded records comprised non-English publications, studies published before 2023, conference papers, books and review articles, in-press publications, and studies outside the Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities subject areas. The application of these criteria was intended to maintain consistency in the selection of recent, relevant, and peer-reviewed journal articles that corresponded with the scope of the review.

After applying these criteria, 107 records from Scopus and 430 records from Web of Science were retained, resulting in a total of 537 records. The remaining records were subsequently checked for duplication to avoid multiple entries of the same publication across the two databases. This procedure identified one duplicate record, which was removed from the dataset, leaving 536 articles for further eligibility assessment. The systematic application of the selection criteria and duplicate removal provided a more focused pool of publications for subsequent evaluation and ensured that the articles carried forward were aligned with the scope and objectives of the review.

TABLE 2 :The selection criterion is searching

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Publication Year	2023 – 2025	< 2023
Document Type	Journal Article	Conference Paper, Book, Review Article
Publication Stage	Final	In Press
Subject Area	Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities	Subject areas outside Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

Eligibility

In the third stage, known as the eligibility phase, a total of 536 articles were assessed to determine their suitability for inclusion in the final qualitative synthesis. During this stage, the articles were carefully examined based on their research scope, relevance of the title and abstract to the research objectives, and availability of the full text. Following this assessment, 502 articles were excluded because they were outside the scope of the study, their titles or abstracts were not sufficiently relevant to the research objectives, or the full texts were unavailable. These exclusion criteria were applied to ensure that only studies directly related to Islamic inheritance and succession were retained for further analysis.

The eligibility assessment was undertaken to maintain the relevance and thematic consistency of the review. Studies outside the field of Islamic inheritance and succession were excluded to avoid conceptual deviation, while articles with irrelevant titles or abstracts were removed to ensure alignment with the research objectives. Full-text availability was also required to enable comprehensive assessment and accurate data extraction. At the end of the eligibility assessment, 34 articles that fulfilled all inclusion criteria were retained for the final qualitative synthesis.

Data Abstraction and Analysis

An integrative analysis approach was employed to systematically analyse and synthesise the 34 articles included in the review. A structured data extraction process was conducted to identify relevant information from each article, including the authors, year of publication, study context, research objectives, methodological approach, key findings, and issues related to Islamic inheritance law. The extracted information was organised according to the research questions to facilitate comparison across the selected studies and support the subsequent thematic analysis.

The thematic analysis involved systematically examining the extracted data to identify recurring concepts, patterns, and issues relevant to the objectives of the review. Initial codes were developed from the findings and discussions reported in the selected articles and subsequently compared and grouped into broader categories. Related categories were then organised into themes and subthemes representing the major areas of contemporary scholarship on Islamic inheritance law. This analytical process resulted in three major themes corresponding to the research questions of the study.

Consistency throughout the analysis was strengthened through collaborative review of the extracted data, coding decisions, and emerging themes by the authors. A reflective log was maintained throughout the analytical process to document interpretations, emerging ideas, and issues encountered during theme development. Any differences in interpretation or coding were discussed among the authors until consensus was reached. The themes were subsequently refined to ensure coherence, clear distinction, and adequate support from the evidence presented in the included studies.

The analysis was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do contemporary socio-legal reforms and judicial reinterpretations influence the development and application of Islamic inheritance law within modern Muslim societies?
2. How does legal pluralism shape the interaction between Islamic inheritance law, customary inheritance practices, and state legal systems within Muslim communities?
3. How do gender roles and socioeconomic conditions influence perceptions of justice and rights in the implementation of Islamic inheritance law among contemporary Muslim societies?

Quality Appraisal

The quality appraisal was conducted to assess the methodological adequacy and relevance of the 34 studies included in the qualitative synthesis. Each study was evaluated based on five criteria: clarity of the research objectives, appropriateness of the methodology, adequacy of data analysis and interpretation, relevance of the findings to the research questions, and sufficient evidence to support the conclusions.

The appraisal was conducted alongside the data extraction process. The authors collaboratively reviewed the methodological characteristics and relevance of the included studies, and any differences in assessment were discussed until consensus was reached. Studies were considered adequate when they provided clear information on their objectives, methodology, analysis, and findings and demonstrated relevance to at least one of the research questions.

The appraisal also informed the thematic synthesis by ensuring that the identified themes were supported by relevant and methodologically adequate evidence. Broader interpretations were treated cautiously when the available evidence was limited or context-specific, thereby strengthening the reliability and consistency of the review findings.

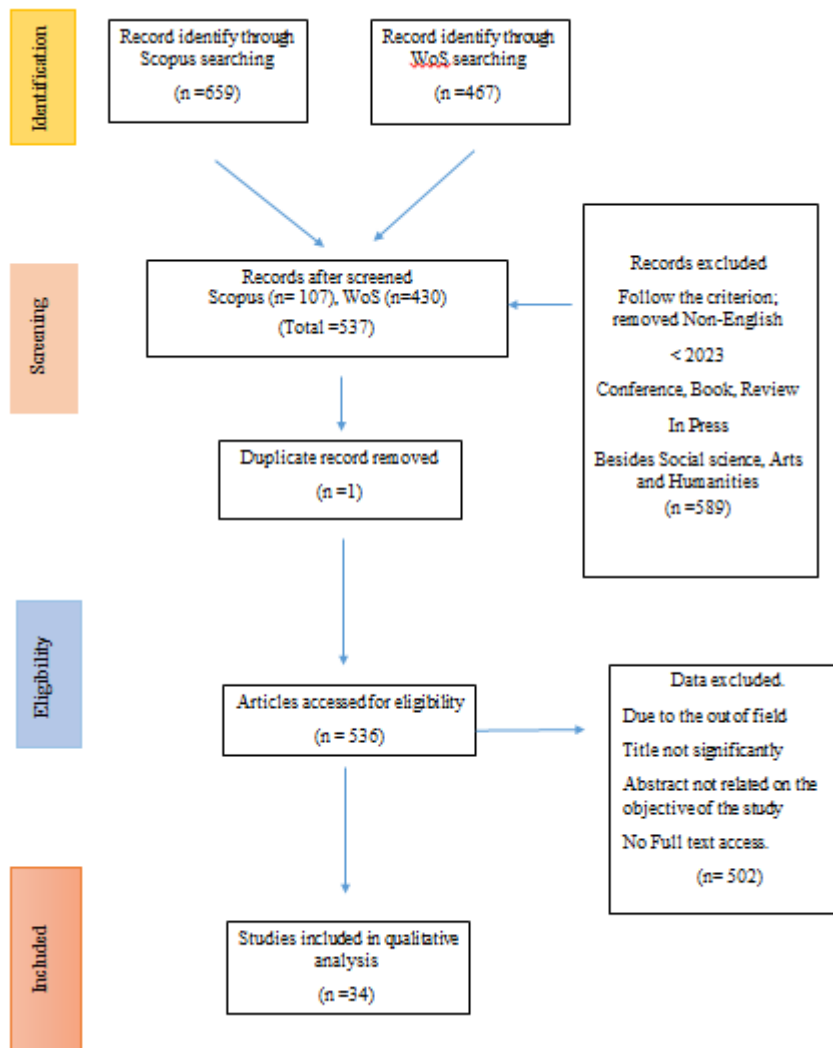


FIGURE 2. Flow diagram of the proposed searching study

RESULT AND FINDING

The findings of this Systematic Literature Review (SLR) reveal that contemporary studies on Islamic inheritance law can be broadly categorized into three major themes. The first theme, Contemporary Reform and Legal Development in Islamic Inheritance Law, discusses the evolution of legal interpretation, judicial reform, and contemporary approaches adopted to address emerging inheritance issues within Muslim societies. The second theme, Legal Pluralism, Customary Practices, and Sociological Dimensions of Inheritance, highlights the interaction between Islamic inheritance law, customary law, state law, and sociocultural practices in plural legal systems. Meanwhile, the third theme, Gender, Rights, and Socioeconomic Perspectives in Islamic Inheritance, focuses on issues related to women's inheritance rights, social justice, economic considerations, and the influence of gender perspectives in inheritance distribution. These themes demonstrate that Islamic inheritance law is continuously developing in response to social transformation, legal challenges, cultural diversity, and contemporary societal needs. The thematic analysis further suggests that contemporary scholarship extends beyond doctrinal discussions to engage with broader concerns relating to contextual adaptation, legal harmonization, and the promotion of justice and social welfare within modern inheritance practices.

Theme 1: Contemporary Reform and Legal Development in Islamic Inheritance Law

Contemporary discussions on Islamic inheritance law increasingly emphasize the need for reinterpretation and legal reform in response to evolving social realities and modern legal challenges. Several studies highlighted the role of judicial institutions and Islamic legal reasoning in accommodating social diversity

within Muslim societies. Najib, Bahiej, and Falah (2025) [17] demonstrated that Indonesian courts have expanded the application of wasiat wajibah to non-Muslim relatives as a mechanism to achieve maslahah and social justice in pluralistic communities. Similarly, Kutaraya, Hamidah, and Chanifah (2024) [18] observed that judicial interpretation in inheritance disputes involving non-Muslim family members often creates tensions between statutory law and judicial discretion, particularly when courts prioritize contextual interpretations over codified regulations. Fatima (2024) [19] further explained that obligatory bequest mechanisms in several Muslim countries emerged as reform instruments to address economic deprivation among orphaned grandchildren, although implementation remains limited and inconsistent. These findings collectively indicate that contemporary reform efforts within Islamic inheritance law are strongly influenced by attempts to balance classical jurisprudence with modern social realities. Another dominant issue concerns reinterpretation of Islamic legal texts and the methodological challenges associated with deriving inheritance rulings. Maizuddin, Chalida, Hanum, and Nur (2023) [20] identified several typologies of hadith used as bayan of Qur'anic verses in inheritance law and argued that methodological weaknesses within certain hadith interpretations provide opportunities for legal renewal. Jalaludin and Ahmad (2024) [21] also revealed that the concept of 'asabah in Sunni jurisprudence was heavily influenced by Arab patrilineal traditions, resulting in inheritance structures that may conflict with broader Qur'anic principles of fairness and bilateral inheritance. These studies collectively suggest that contemporary scholars increasingly advocate contextual and sociohistorical reinterpretations of Islamic inheritance principles to ensure greater legal equity and relevance.

The issue of inheritance rights for marginalized or legally vulnerable groups also emerged as a significant focus within contemporary Islamic inheritance discourse. Maulana, Akbar, Habibie, Norhadi, and Hasuna (2024) [22] discussed the inheritance rights of children born out of wedlock and highlighted the growing relevance of scientific approaches such as DNA testing in determining nasab within Islamic legal frameworks. Khoyum, Amilia, and Ardana (2023) [23] similarly examined inheritance claims involving extramarital children and emphasized the importance of reconciling Islamic legal principles with contemporary understandings of justice, equality, and parental responsibility. The reviewed studies reveal a growing scholarly engagement with the reinterpretation of traditional inheritance doctrines, particularly in relation to enhancing the protection of vulnerable groups and addressing exclusions from inheritance entitlements.

Legal pluralism and institutional governance also constitute an important aspect of inheritance reform in Muslim-majority countries. Handayani and Harahap (2024) [24] demonstrated that inheritance disputes in Indonesia are often shaped by the coexistence of Islamic, customary, and civil legal frameworks, where overlapping jurisdictions and legislative inconsistencies create challenges in the administration and distribution of estates. Mu'in, Fikri, Asnawi, and Nawawi (2023) [25] further observed that the implementation of substitute heir provisions within Indonesian Religious Courts remains restrictive despite formal legal reforms introduced through the Compilation of Islamic Law. Nasrul, Alihan, Hamid, and Sultan (2024) [26] additionally highlighted administrative complexities in estate management practices within Malaysia and Brunei, particularly concerning interactions between civil courts, Syariah institutions, and customary systems. These findings indicate that inheritance reform is not limited to jurisprudential reinterpretation but also involves broader institutional coordination, legislative harmonization, and procedural standardization.

Several contemporary studies also examined the relationship between Islamic inheritance principles and economic sustainability in modern societies. Alketbi and AlQahtani (2025) [27] argued that the traditional mechanism of al-takharuj could function as an effective instrument for preserving corporate continuity and minimizing disputes within family-owned businesses in the Gulf region. The study demonstrated that modern legislation in the United Arab Emirates has adapted classical Islamic inheritance concepts to contemporary corporate governance systems. These findings illustrate that contemporary inheritance reforms increasingly attempt to integrate classical Islamic principles with economic realities, corporate governance needs, and modern legislative structures.

Overall, the reviewed studies indicate that contemporary reform and legal development in Islamic inheritance law are characterized by efforts to reinterpret classical legal doctrines, accommodate social pluralism, protect vulnerable groups, and strengthen institutional governance. The findings also reveal an emerging trend toward contextual jurisprudence that emphasizes *maslahah*, gender justice, legal certainty, and social welfare without abandoning the foundational principles of Islamic law. Despite these developments, many studies identified continuing challenges related to legal inconsistency, judicial discretion, patriarchal interpretation, and conflicts between religious and civil legal systems. Therefore, contemporary Islamic inheritance discourse continues to evolve as scholars and legal institutions seek to reconcile traditional jurisprudence with contemporary societal demands.

Theme 2: Legal Pluralism, Customary Practices, and Sociological Dimensions of Inheritance

The reviewed studies show that legal pluralism remains a central issue in the application of Islamic inheritance law, especially in societies where Islamic law, state law, and customary law operate together. Bachri (2024) [28] found that Islamic inheritance law in Indonesia cannot be separated from sociological changes, because justice and public benefit become important considerations in its application. This position is closely related to the findings of Anggraeni (2023) [29], who highlighted conflicts between Islamic law, state law, and customary law within matrilineal, patrilineal, and parental kinship systems. Similarly, Kusmayanti and Suwandono (2024) [30] showed that the Banceuy customary community applies inheritance practices based on family agreement and bilateral kinship, although the community is Muslim. These studies suggest that Islamic inheritance law is often negotiated within local realities rather than applied in a purely textual manner.

Customary practices also function as a mechanism for maintaining family harmony and social order. Zuhdi, Dimiyati, Wardiono, and Apreliyanti (2025) [31] found that the Surakarta Sunanate royal family applies inheritance through *Paugeran* and family agreement, creating both harmony and tension with Islamic inheritance principles. Fithri, Wira, and Hadi (2025) [32] explained that *Minangkabau pusako tinggi* represents dignity, identity, and collective ownership, and its transfer is accepted when supported by customary and religious consensus. Abubakar, Achyar, Khatimah, and Samad (2023) [33] further showed that inheritance postponement in *Seunuddon* may be valid under *'urf* when it preserves family welfare, but may become problematic when it causes injustice. These findings indicate that custom is not always opposed to Islamic law; instead, it can become a social instrument for adaptation.

Several studies further show that dispute resolution in inheritance matters depend heavily on mediation, consensus, and local authority. Ramli, Rijal, Surya, and Malika (2024) [34] demonstrated that Acehese customary courts resolve inheritance and other minor disputes through mechanisms that harmonize state law, customary law, and Islamic values, especially the principle of *al-sulh*. Rasyid, Lubis, and Saleh (2024) [35] found that Mandailing inheritance practices are strongly influenced by *Dalihan Na Tolu*, where traditional leaders and religious scholars mediate between customary expectations and Islamic legal norms. Mutiara et al. [10] and Munir (2025) [36] also highlighted negotiated approaches in inheritance distribution, including the use of *takharruj* and family-based arrangements to accommodate specific circumstances and reduce potential conflicts.

The studies also reveal critical debates on justice, gender, kinship, and legal reform. Zaman, Sholeh, Fadil, Salam, and Binti Ros Azman (2024) [37] argued that excessive legal positivism may limit judicial capacity to achieve moral justice in inheritance cases, especially when rigid application of the 2:1 rule is viewed as socially unsuitable. Ma'mun (2023) [38] similarly found that inheritance distribution must be examined through juridical, psychological, sociological, and economic perspectives because family conflict may occur when justice is perceived narrowly. Kooria's study on matrilineal Muslims further challenges assumptions that Islamic inheritance must always operate within patrilineal structures [39]. Overall, the theme demonstrates that Islamic inheritance law is continuously shaped by plural legal orders, local customs, social justice, and institutional negotiation.

Theme 3: Gender, Rights, and Socioeconomic Perspectives in Islamic Inheritance

Contemporary studies on gender, rights, and socioeconomic perspectives in Islamic inheritance demonstrate that inheritance distribution is no longer discussed solely within doctrinal legal frameworks, but increasingly examined through social justice, gender equality, economic security, and legal accessibility perspectives. Taqiyuddin, Millah, and Luthfi (2023) [40] emphasized that Islamic inheritance law fundamentally functions as a divinely regulated mechanism of property ownership transfer grounded in the principle of *ijbāri*, where inheritance rights emerge automatically upon death and cannot be altered through individual preference. The study further highlighted that Islamic inheritance law incorporates principles of balanced justice and bilateral entitlement that distinguish it from other inheritance systems. Similarly, Altarhouni, Daud, Samah, and Kayadibi (2025) [41] argued that Islamic Shari'ah provides a transparent and equitable structure for inheritance allocation, particularly regarding women's entitlement to property ownership. However, practical implementation remains affected by cultural misunderstanding and weaknesses within national legal systems. Munir (2025) [36] also reinforced that inheritance rights under Islamic law are compulsory and legally protected, particularly for women, despite historical distortions introduced through patriarchal customary structures. Collectively, these studies position Islamic inheritance law as a normative framework intended to preserve distributive justice, legal certainty, and protection of family property rights.

A dominant issue identified across the literature concerns the continued marginalization of women in inheritance practices despite clear Islamic legal provisions guaranteeing inheritance rights. Munir (2025) [36] demonstrated that women in Pakistan continue to face systematic deprivation of inheritance through patriarchal customs historically reinforced during colonial administration. Judicial intervention by the Supreme Court of Pakistan has increasingly recognized such deprivation as unlawful, particularly where male relatives manipulate possession, guardianship claims, or procedural delays to exclude female heirs. Comparable findings were identified by Nisar and Cusairi (2025) [42] who revealed that women encounter multiple structural barriers in claiming inheritance, including lack of legal awareness, social pressure from family members, and deeply embedded cultural expectations discouraging women from asserting property rights. Altarhouni, Daud, Samah, and Kayadibi (2025) [41] similarly observed that women's inheritance rights in Libya remain constrained by gaps between statutory law and Islamic principles, alongside societal misconceptions surrounding women's entitlement to inherited property. These findings collectively suggest that the denial of women's inheritance rights is not primarily caused by deficiencies within Islamic inheritance principles themselves, but rather by patriarchal social practices, legal inefficiencies, and cultural resistance toward women's economic autonomy.

The reviewed studies also indicate that socioeconomic and normative factors significantly influence Muslim attitudes toward inheritance distribution. Aseri and Faid (2024) [43] found that socioeconomic status, educational background, and perceived religious obligation do not necessarily produce stronger intention to implement Islamic inheritance distribution immediately. Instead, normative social structures and perceived behavioural control emerged as stronger determinants influencing inheritance behaviour through attitudinal mediation. The findings suggest that inheritance practices are strongly shaped by surrounding social expectations and the perceived ability to execute inheritance procedures effectively. Similar sociological patterns can be identified in the studies by Nisar and Cusairi (2025) [42], where family pressure and community norms discouraged women from pursuing their legal inheritance claims despite awareness of their entitlement. Munir (2025) [36] also highlighted how prolonged inheritance litigation and institutional delay contribute to women's economic vulnerability and weaken practical enforcement of inheritance rights. These studies collectively demonstrate that implementation of Islamic inheritance law is substantially influenced by social environment, institutional capacity, and cultural perceptions rather than solely by religious understanding.

A prominent theme emerging from literature concerns the relationship between inheritance rights, legal reform, and policy intervention. Munir (2025) [36] proposed that inheritance disputes in Pakistan require institutional reform through the expansion of family court jurisdiction to ensure faster resolution of inheritance cases and more effective protection of women's rights. Altarhouni, Daud, Samah, and Kayadibi

(2025) [41] similarly stressed the urgent need for legislative modernization in Libya to align domestic inheritance regulations more closely with Islamic Shariah principles and strengthen legal safeguards for female heirs. Nisar and Cusairi (2025) [42] further recommended enhanced public awareness campaigns and stronger governmental enforcement mechanisms to improve women's access to inheritance rights. Meanwhile, Taqiyuddin, Millah, and Luthfi (2023) [40] emphasized that the inherent structure of Islamic inheritance law already contains balanced justice principles capable of supporting equitable property distribution when properly implemented. Overall, the findings indicate that contemporary scholarship increasingly views legal reform, judicial intervention, and public legal education as essential instruments for addressing the gap between normative Islamic inheritance principles and actual inheritance practices within Muslim societies.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review aimed to comprehensively examine contemporary scholarship on Islamic inheritance law by synthesizing recent academic discussions published between 2023 and 2025. Guided by the PRISMA framework, the review systematically analyzed journal articles retrieved from the Scopus and Web of Science databases using the keywords “inheritance,” “succession,” “faraid,” and “Islam.” The review specifically focused on identifying dominant themes, emerging debates, methodological approaches, and contemporary developments surrounding Islamic inheritance law within modern Muslim societies. Following rigorous screening and eligibility procedures, 34 articles were selected for qualitative synthesis, allowing a deeper understanding of current scholarly trajectories in the field.

The findings reveal that contemporary studies on Islamic inheritance law are primarily concentrated within three major thematic areas, namely Contemporary Reform and Legal Development in Islamic Inheritance Law, Legal Pluralism, Customary Practices, and Sociological Dimensions of Inheritance, and Gender, Rights, and Socioeconomic Perspectives in Islamic Inheritance. The reviewed studies demonstrate that Islamic inheritance law is increasingly discussed through interdisciplinary perspectives involving legal reform, judicial interpretation, sociology, gender studies, economics, and public policy. The analysis further indicates that contemporary scholarship no longer focuses solely on doctrinal legal interpretation but increasingly emphasizes contextual adaptation, maqasid al-shariah-oriented reasoning, institutional governance, legal harmonization, and social justice considerations. In addition, the findings reveal continuing tensions between Islamic law, customary practices, and civil legal systems, particularly within plural societies where local customs strongly influence inheritance distribution practices. The review also identifies growing scholarly concern regarding women's inheritance rights, vulnerable groups, socioeconomic inequality, and the effectiveness of legal institutions in implementing inheritance regulations fairly and consistently.

This review contributes to the existing body of knowledge by systematically synthesizing fragmented discussions across recent Islamic inheritance scholarship and organizing them into coherent thematic categories. The thematic classification developed in this review provides a clearer conceptual understanding of how contemporary Islamic inheritance law is evolving in response to modern legal, social, and economic realities. Furthermore, the study highlights the increasing importance of contextual and socio-legal approaches in contemporary inheritance discourse, particularly regarding legal pluralism, judicial discretion, gender justice, and institutional reform. The review also demonstrates that contemporary Islamic inheritance studies increasingly adopt qualitative, socio-legal, comparative, and interdisciplinary methodologies to address complex inheritance issues beyond classical doctrinal analysis.

The findings of this review carry several important practical implications. The synthesized evidence suggests that policymakers, judicial authorities, religious institutions, and legal practitioners should strengthen efforts toward legal harmonization, public legal education, and institutional coordination to improve inheritance administration and dispute resolution. Greater attention should also be directed toward enhancing women's legal accessibility, protecting vulnerable heirs, and improving awareness regarding inheritance rights within Muslim communities. In addition, the review highlights the relevance of integrating maqasid al-shariah principles, mediation mechanisms, and contextual legal reasoning into

contemporary inheritance governance in order to balance religious authenticity with social justice and societal welfare. The findings may further assist educators and researchers in developing more comprehensive academic discussions regarding Islamic inheritance law within multidisciplinary educational settings.

Despite its contributions, this review is subject to several limitations. The study focused exclusively on English-language journal articles indexed in Scopus and Web of Science between 2023 and 2025, which may have excluded relevant publications from other databases, languages, and earlier periods. In addition, conference proceedings, books, and review articles were excluded to maintain methodological consistency and academic rigor. Future research may expand the scope of analysis by incorporating broader databases, multilingual publications, longitudinal perspectives, and quantitative bibliometric approaches. Further studies are also recommended to examine comparative inheritance practices across different Muslim jurisdictions, the effectiveness of inheritance institutions, technological innovations in inheritance management, and the long-term socioeconomic impact of inheritance distribution on Muslim families and communities.

Islamic inheritance law continues to attract scholarly attention as researchers engage with questions of legal reform, social change, cultural diversity, and contemporary notions of justice. The findings of this review reveal important thematic developments and emerging research directions that reflect the evolving nature of inheritance scholarship. The study further highlights the value of systematic evidence synthesis in advancing knowledge, identifying gaps in the existing literature, and informing future theoretical, empirical, and policy-oriented inquiries. As such, it provides a comprehensive foundation for further research on the interpretation, implementation, and development of Islamic inheritance law in contemporary Muslim societies.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest to report regarding the present study

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