

Agricultural Land Usufruct Contracts in Islamic Jurisprudence and Contemporary Legal Frameworks: A Bibliometric and Doctrinal Analysis with Implications for Omani Law

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Abstract

Agricultural land usufruct arrangements play an important role in expanding access to land, supporting agricultural production, and regulating the relationship between landowners, cultivators, and public authorities. However, the related literature remains fragmented across land tenure, property rights, agricultural leasing, rural development, environmental governance, and Islamic jurisprudence. This study examines the development and conceptual structure of research on agricultural land usufruct and related legal frameworks while analysing the principal agricultural land-use models recognized in Islamic jurisprudence and their implications for Oman. An integrated bibliometric and doctrinal research design was adopted. The bibliometric analysis was based on 456 English-language Scopus-indexed publications published between 2016 and 2025, refined from an initial set of 869 records. Performance analysis, citation analysis, collaboration analysis, keyword co-occurrence, and thematic mapping were used to examine publication growth, scholarly influence, and the intellectual structure of the field. The results show that annual publication output increased from 26 documents in 2016 to 71 in 2025, representing an approximate compound annual growth rate of 11.81%. The corpus received 9,546 citations and achieved an h-index of 53, while internationally co-authored publications represented 33.11% of the dataset. *Land Use Policy* emerged as the most productive and influential source, while China, the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Ethiopia were among the leading contributing countries. The conceptual analysis identified seven major research clusters centred on land tenure and leasing, tenure security and property rights, land grabbing and sustainability, land reform and policy, political economy, land consolidation and markets, and urbanization and remote sensing. The doctrinal analysis further distinguished *ijārah*, *muzāra'ah*, *musāqāh*,

mughārasah, and *ihyā' al-mawāt* as functionally different models for structuring agricultural land use, benefit sharing, labour, investment, and risk. The study concludes that agricultural usufruct regulation in Oman would benefit from clearer contractual provisions concerning duration, cultivation obligations, production inputs, water use, improvements, crop failure, environmental responsibility, termination, and dispute resolution.

Keywords: Agricultural Land, Usufruct, Land Tenure, Agricultural Leasing, Islamic Jurisprudence, *Ijārah*, *Muzāra'ah*, Oman, Bibliometric Analysis

Introduction

Agricultural land is simultaneously an economic asset, a source of livelihood, a productive resource, and an object of legal and social regulation. The rights governing its possession, use, cultivation, transfer, and enjoyment directly influence agricultural investment, tenure security, rural welfare, food production, and environmental sustainability. However, access to agricultural land does not always depend on full ownership. In many jurisdictions, land is cultivated through leases, tenancies, concessions, usufruct rights, crop-sharing agreements, customary arrangements, or other contractual mechanisms that separate ownership from the right to use and benefit from the land. Consequently, agricultural productivity and land sustainability depend not only on who formally owns the land but also on how cultivation rights are created, allocated, documented, protected, and terminated.

The literature on agricultural land rights has consistently emphasized the importance of tenure security, although its effects are neither uniform nor automatic. Secure land rights may strengthen farmers' willingness to invest in irrigation, soil conservation, tree planting, land improvement, and other activities whose returns are realized over an extended period. Nevertheless, the relationship between formal tenure security and agricultural outcomes is shaped by local institutions, enforcement capacity, access to finance, market conditions, customary norms, and farmers' perceptions of whether their rights will be respected. Place (2009), for example, found considerable variation in the relationship between tenure arrangements and agricultural productivity, indicating that legal reform must respond to institutional and socioeconomic contexts rather than assume that formalization produces identical outcomes everywhere. Similarly, Higgins et al. (2018) identified relatively strong evidence linking tenure security to productive and environmentally beneficial investment, but less consistent evidence regarding productivity, credit access, and income. More recent research has likewise challenged the assumption that formal tenure security necessarily produces higher agricultural output in every setting (Singirankabo et al., 2022).

These findings demonstrate that agricultural land-use arrangements are not merely technical instruments for granting temporary access to land. They distribute authority, economic benefit, production risk, environmental responsibility, and bargaining power between landowners, cultivators, investors, and public institutions. Contractual uncertainty regarding duration, rent, crop ownership, agricultural inputs, water access, land improvements, renewal, termination, or crops remaining at the end of the agreed period can discourage investment and generate disputes. A legally effective agricultural usufruct framework must therefore provide sufficient certainty to protect the landowner's proprietary interests while enabling the cultivator to obtain the anticipated benefit of productive use.

The subject has particular significance within Islamic jurisprudence because Islamic law developed several contractual models governing the use and cultivation of land. These models do not treat all agricultural arrangements as a single undifferentiated category. *Ijārah* generally concerns the transfer of a defined usufruct in exchange for an agreed consideration, whereas *muzāraʿah* is structured around cultivation and the proportional distribution of agricultural output. *Musāqāh* principally concerns the care, irrigation, and maintenance of existing trees or orchards in return for a share of the produce, while *mughārasah* is associated with planting and the longer-term development of land. The doctrine of *iḥyāʾ al-mawāt* addresses the revival and productive use of previously undeveloped or uncultivated land. Each model reflects a particular combination of land, labour, agricultural inputs, expected returns, duration, and risk.

The jurisprudential classification of an agreement has important practical consequences. A fixed-rent lease and an output-sharing cultivation partnership may produce substantially different allocations of crop-failure risk, input responsibility, and entitlement to returns. Historical Islamic legal scholarship also demonstrates that rules relating to land, tenancy, rent, taxation, cultivation, and property rights evolved within wider institutional and political contexts rather than operating in isolation from prevailing land systems (Johansen, 1988). Contemporary scholarship has consequently examined whether Islamic agricultural contracts can provide viable structures for financing land development, allocating production responsibilities, and protecting parties from unfair or uncertain arrangements (Shafiai & Moi, 2015).

Despite the importance of these issues, the relevant scholarship is highly fragmented. Research is distributed across land-use policy, agricultural economics, rural sociology, environmental governance, development studies, property law, Islamic jurisprudence, and Islamic finance. Studies may employ related terms such as land tenure, land-use rights, agricultural lease, tenancy, usufruct, concession, sharecropping, property rights, or cultivation agreements without necessarily situating them within a unified conceptual field. As a result, it remains difficult to determine how this body of knowledge has developed, which countries and institutions have shaped it, which publications have been most influential, and which themes constitute its principal intellectual structure.

Conventional narrative reviews are valuable for interpreting legal principles and substantive arguments, but they are less suitable for systematically mapping a large and multidisciplinary publication corpus. Bibliometric analysis offers a complementary method by quantitatively examining publication output, citations, sources, contributors, collaboration relationships, keywords, and thematic structures. It combines performance analysis, which evaluates the contributions and influence of research constituents, with science mapping, which reveals relationships among authors, countries, institutions, publications, and concepts (Donthu et al., 2021). Bibliometric tools such as Bibliometrix and VOSviewer facilitate the transparent construction, clustering, and visualization of bibliographic and conceptual networks (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; van Eck & Waltman, 2010).

The relevance of this inquiry is especially clear in the Sultanate of Oman, where usufruct is used as a mechanism for allocating and registering rights over government and privately held land. Royal Decree 42/2021 expressly provides that the allocation of agricultural government

land is to occur through usufruct under the applicable legal procedures. Official administrative services also provide for the registration of usufruct contracts and the issuance of title documentation establishing the usufructuary right. Current registration requirements recognize contracts lasting between one and 99 years, illustrating the potentially long-term character of usufruct arrangements and the resulting need for clear rules governing productive use, improvements, environmental duties, transfer, and termination (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, 2026; Sultanate of Oman, 2021).

Agricultural usufruct is not merely a theoretical legal mechanism in Oman. Government initiatives continue to use usufruct contracts for agricultural, food-production, and investment projects, reinforcing the practical importance of aligning legal certainty with productive and sustainable land use. The Omani context therefore provides a relevant setting in which the international literature on agricultural land rights can be examined alongside Islamic jurisprudential models. Nevertheless, the present study does not assume that foreign land-tenure findings or classical contractual rules can be transferred mechanically into Omani law. Instead, it identifies the patterns, concepts, and legal considerations that may inform context-sensitive legal and policy development.

Against this background, the study examines agricultural land usufruct contracts through an integrated bibliometric and doctrinal approach. The bibliometric component analyses 456 English-language Scopus-indexed documents published between 2016 and 2025. The dataset covers agricultural land, usufruct and land-use rights, agricultural leasing, tenancy, tenure, concessions, contracts, law, regulation, governance, and related policy frameworks. The doctrinal component examines the principal Islamic jurisprudential models governing agricultural land use, particularly *ijārah*, *muzāraʿah*, *musāqāh*, *mughārasah*, and *ihyāʾ al-mawāt*. The two components are subsequently synthesized to identify implications relevant to the design and regulation of agricultural usufruct arrangements in Oman.

The study makes three contributions. First, it provides a systematic mapping of the contemporary knowledge structure surrounding agricultural land-use rights and contractual frameworks. Second, it connects the dominant themes of the international literature with the more functionally differentiated contractual models developed in Islamic jurisprudence. Third, it translates this combined evidence into legally relevant considerations for Oman without presenting bibliometric prominence as legal authority or treating Islamic jurisprudential concepts as automatically equivalent to contemporary statutory categories.

Accordingly, the study addresses the following research questions:

- **RQ1:** What are the annual publication and citation trends in research on agricultural land usufruct, land-use rights, leasing, tenancy, tenure, and related legal frameworks between 2016 and 2025?
- **RQ2:** Which authors, institutions, countries, sources, and publications are the most productive and influential in this field, and what patterns of scholarly collaboration characterize the literature?
- **RQ3:** What conceptual clusters, dominant themes, emerging topics, and temporal shifts characterize research on agricultural land usufruct and related land-use frameworks?

- **RQ4:** What contractual models and governing principles concerning agricultural land use are established in Islamic jurisprudence, particularly in relation to *ijārah*, *muzāra'ah*, *musāqāh*, *mughārasah*, and *iḥyā' al-mawāt*?

Literature Review

Agricultural land rights, tenure security, and productive use

Land tenure refers broadly to the formal or informal institutional arrangements that determine how land is accessed, used, controlled, transferred, and inherited. These arrangements may derive from legislation, registered ownership, leases, customary institutions, community rules, concessions, or administrative allocation. The concept is therefore wider than ownership and may include different combinations of rights to occupy, cultivate, exclude others, receive income, transfer an interest, or benefit from land for a specified period (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO], 2002).

Tenure security has become one of the dominant concepts in agricultural land research because farmers' expectations regarding the continuity and enforceability of their rights affect long-term decision-making. Where cultivators fear eviction, non-renewal, arbitrary reallocation, or the loss of improvements, they may avoid investments that cannot be recovered within a short production cycle. Secure rights may therefore support irrigation, soil improvement, permanent crops, conservation measures, and other productive investments. Higgins et al. (2018) found strong evidence that greater tenure security can encourage productive and environmentally beneficial agricultural investment. However, the review also demonstrated that the expected effects on credit access, income, and productivity were less consistent and were influenced by discrimination, institutional enforcement, historical experience, and the characteristics of local financial systems.

This qualification is significant for agricultural usufruct regulation. Legal certainty is important, but registration or contractual formalization alone may not produce efficient or equitable agricultural use. Place (2009) argued that the diversity of tenure systems and the heterogeneity of empirical results require locally grounded policy responses. The effects of land rights depend on the breadth, duration, clarity, and enforceability of the rights granted, as well as the functioning of agricultural input, credit, labour, and land markets. Singirankabo et al. (2022) similarly found that the assumed positive relationship between tenure security and farm-level harvests was not evident in the studied Rwandan communities, demonstrating that production outcomes may be shaped by agricultural policy and intensification programmes alongside tenure arrangements.

Accordingly, agricultural usufruct should be evaluated as a bundle of legally structured rights and obligations rather than simply as permission to occupy land. Its effectiveness depends on whether the parties understand the permitted agricultural purpose, the duration of the agreement, payment or benefit-sharing terms, access to water, responsibility for inputs, maintenance requirements, ownership of crops and improvements, transferability, renewal conditions, and the consequences of non-use or breach.

Contractual governance, agricultural risk, and sustainability

Agricultural contracts operate under conditions that differ from many ordinary commercial exchanges. Production is seasonal, biological, and vulnerable to weather, pests, disease,

water scarcity, market fluctuation, and other events that may be difficult for either party to control. The conclusion of a fixed contractual period does not necessarily coincide with the completion of a crop cycle. Similarly, improvements such as wells, irrigation systems, soil rehabilitation, greenhouses, planted trees, or permanent structures may retain value after the contract ends.

These characteristics make risk allocation central to the legal design of agricultural usufruct. An agreement must determine whether the cultivator pays a fixed amount regardless of production, shares the actual output with the landowner, or receives compensation for labour and investment under another arrangement. It must also clarify what occurs when harvesting is delayed beyond the agreed period, when a crop is destroyed, or when long-term improvements remain on the land following termination. Rosyadi et al. (2022) demonstrated the practical importance of aligning lease duration with agricultural reality in their analysis of disputes arising where crops had not reached harvest at the end of an annual land lease. The study illustrates how rigid time provisions may generate conflict when contracts do not adequately address standing crops, unavoidable delay, customary practice, or equitable adjustment.

Environmental obligations constitute a further dimension of contractual governance. The holder of a land-use right may receive economic benefit while simultaneously affecting soil fertility, groundwater, biodiversity, and the future productive capacity of the land. A sustainable agricultural usufruct framework therefore requires more than the prevention of physical waste. It may need positive duties relating to cultivation, water efficiency, soil protection, permissible crops, maintenance, restoration, and compliance with agricultural and environmental regulation. The bibliometric prominence of themes involving sustainability, governance, land consolidation, policy, and tenure security confirms that contemporary research increasingly treats agricultural land rights as components of wider social–ecological systems rather than isolated private agreements.

Islamic Jurisprudential Models of Agricultural Land Use

Islamic jurisprudence offers a differentiated framework for matching the legal form of an agreement to its underlying economic function. Under *ijārah*, a defined usufruct is transferred for an agreed consideration. Applied to agricultural land, this generally resembles a lease in which the cultivator receives the right to use the land for a specified purpose and period while the owner receives rent. The clarity of the usufruct, duration, consideration, and permitted use is particularly important because uncertainty in these elements can lead to dispute or unfair advantage.

Muzāraʿah differs from a fixed-rent lease because the landowner and cultivator share agricultural output in agreed proportions. The arrangement can distribute production risk more directly between the parties, although its validity and detailed conditions have been debated among juristic schools. Issues include the provision of seed and other inputs, the specification of the cultivable land, the agreed share of production, and the avoidance of terms that guarantee one party the produce of a particular area or a fixed quantity regardless of the actual harvest. Modern scholarship has suggested that output-sharing models may be relevant to agricultural development where cultivators possess labour and expertise but lack land or financing (Shafiai & Moi, 2015).

Musāqāh primarily concerns the maintenance, irrigation, and care of existing trees or orchards in exchange for a specified share of their produce. Its economic function therefore differs from an agreement concerning the initial cultivation of vacant land. *Mughārasah*, by contrast, is associated with planting trees and the longer-term development of land, raising questions concerning ownership of the planted trees, the land, and the resulting improvements. *Iḥyā' al-mawāt* extends the analysis beyond bilateral contract by addressing the legal significance of reviving and productively developing previously uncultivated land.

The distinctions among these models demonstrate that Islamic jurisprudence does not reduce agricultural land use to the transfer of possession for rent. It recognizes functional differences among leasing, cultivation partnerships, orchard maintenance, planting arrangements, and land revival. This differentiation offers an analytical basis for evaluating whether the risks, inputs, duration, and expected benefits of an agricultural project are properly aligned with its contractual form. At the same time, historical analysis cautions against presenting Islamic land law as a static or entirely uniform body of rules. Johansen (1988) showed that Hanafi doctrines concerning tenancy, agricultural rent, taxation, and property rights developed through interaction with changing economic and governmental institutions.

Omani Context and the Research Gap

Oman provides a particularly relevant context because usufruct forms part of the contemporary legal and administrative framework for allocating land. Royal Decree 42/2021 established usufruct as the mechanism for granting agricultural government land under the applicable conditions and procedures. In addition, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning operates formal processes for recording usufruct contracts and issuing title deeds that establish the right. These mechanisms demonstrate that usufruct is not merely a private doctrinal concept but an active instrument of land administration, agricultural investment, and public policy in Oman (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, 2026; Sultanate of Oman, 2021).

Nevertheless, the existence of a statutory and administrative usufruct framework does not by itself resolve the distinctive problems associated with agricultural activity. Agricultural land contracts require detailed treatment of cultivation obligations, water use, production inputs, crop failure, land improvements, environmental protection, monitoring, assignment, non-use, expiry, and standing crops. The Islamic jurisprudential distinction among fixed-rent, output-sharing, orchard-management, planting, and land-revival arrangements may therefore provide a useful comparative lens for assessing the functional adequacy of contemporary contractual provisions.

The existing literature reveals three principal gaps. First, agricultural land research remains conceptually dispersed across several fields and terminologies, limiting understanding of its overall knowledge structure. Second, Islamic agricultural contracts are commonly discussed within jurisprudence or Islamic finance without being systematically connected to the broader international literature on tenure security, land governance, sustainability, and contractual regulation. Third, limited research integrates these two bodies of knowledge to identify implications for the design of agricultural usufruct arrangements in Oman.

The present study responds to these gaps by combining bibliometric mapping with doctrinal analysis. The bibliometric component identifies the growth, influential contributors, collaboration structures, conceptual clusters, and thematic development of the international literature. The doctrinal component examines the legal functions and governing principles of the principal Islamic agricultural contract models. Their integration provides a more comprehensive foundation for evaluating agricultural usufruct as a legal institution that must balance ownership, productive use, contractual fairness, risk allocation, sustainability, and public regulation.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts an integrated bibliometric and doctrinal legal design. The bibliometric component maps the development, influence, collaboration structure, and conceptual organization of scholarship concerning agricultural land usufruct and adjacent land-use arrangements. The doctrinal component examines Islamic jurisprudential models in Section 5, while the subsequent comparative and national-law sections assess their relationship to contemporary frameworks and Omani law. Separating these components is methodologically necessary because the Scopus corpus represents the broader international literature on agricultural land tenure, leasing, use rights, and legal governance, whereas Islamic jurisprudential rules and Omani statutory provisions require targeted analysis of authoritative legal sources.

The bibliometric component combines performance analysis and science mapping. Performance analysis was used to quantify annual production, citation impact, source productivity, author productivity, institutional participation, national contributions, and collaboration patterns. Science mapping was used to examine the conceptual structure of the field through author-keyword co-occurrence, network clustering, cluster centrality and density, and temporal keyword distribution. This combination follows established guidance that bibliometric studies should distinguish descriptive performance indicators from relational techniques that reveal the social and conceptual structure of a research field (Donthu et al., 2021). The analytical workflow was also informed by the data-preparation and science-mapping principles articulated by Aria and Cuccurullo (2017), van Eck and Waltman (2010), and Cobo et al. (2011).

Data Source and Search Strategy

Scopus was selected as the bibliographic database because the study required structured records containing titles, abstracts, author keywords, affiliations, citation counts, document types, and persistent identifiers. The search was conducted on 12 July 2026 using the TITLE-ABS-KEY field. The search strategy combined three concept groups: agricultural land, agricultural usufruct or related tenure arrangements, and legal or policy frameworks. The broad terminology was intentional. Restricting the query to the word “usufruct” or to Islamic legal terminology would have produced a dataset too small for meaningful science mapping and would have excluded adjacent legal forms, including agricultural leases, tenancy, land-use rights, land concessions, and land-tenure systems.

Table 1

Scopus Search Parameters and Database Filters

Parameter	Specification
Database	Scopus
Search field	TITLE-ABS-KEY
Search date	12 July 2026
Initial retrieval	869 records
Publication years	2016–2025
Subject areas	Social Sciences; Environmental Science; Agricultural and Biological Sciences; Economics, Econometrics and Finance; Earth and Planetary Sciences; Arts and Humanities; Business, Management and Accounting
Language	English
Document types	Articles, reviews, book chapters, and conference papers
Final bibliometric corpus	456 records

The complete search expression was:

TITLE-ABS-KEY (("agricultural land" OR farmland OR "farm land" OR "arable land" OR "cultivated land" OR "rural land" OR "agricultural property") AND (usufruct* OR "land use right*" OR "land-use right*" OR "right to use land" OR "agricultural lease*" OR "land lease*" OR "farm lease*" OR "agricultural tenancy" OR "land tenancy" OR "land tenure" OR "agricultural contract*" OR "land concession*") AND (contract* OR law OR legal OR legislation OR regulation* OR framework* OR governance OR polic*)).

Scopus Dataset Identification and Filtering

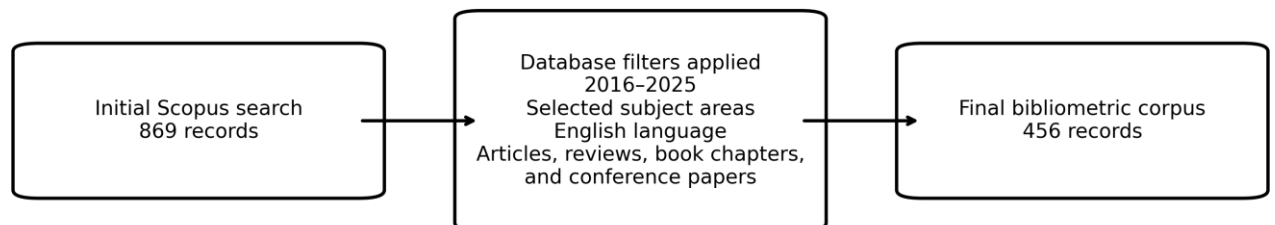


Figure 1. Scopus dataset identification and database-level filtering.

The initial query returned 869 records. Database-level filters were then applied for publication year, selected subject areas, English language, and eligible document types, resulting in 456 records. This process is reported as database filtering rather than a PRISMA study-selection process because the reduction was achieved through Scopus filters rather than title, abstract, and full-text eligibility screening. The 456 records constitute the bibliometric corpus for RQ1–RQ3. The separate corpus used for the Islamic jurisprudential analysis will be screened and documented independently.

Data Preparation and Quality Control

The Scopus CSV export contained 34 bibliographic fields. All 456 records contained a title, publication year, source title, abstract, document type, citation count, and Scopus EID. Author keywords were available for 416 records (91.23%), affiliations for 452 records (99.12%), and DOIs for 439 records (96.27%). Exact-duplicate checks using Scopus EIDs, DOIs, and titles identified no duplicated records. Because the cited-reference field was not included in the export, reference co-citation analysis, publication-level bibliographic coupling, and historiographic citation mapping were not performed.

Author identities were disambiguated using Scopus author identifiers rather than initials alone. Countries were extracted from the affiliation strings and standardized to a consistent naming scheme. Institutional names were normalized by removing department-level detail, resolving common naming variants, separating identifiable campuses, and removing duplicate institutional affiliations within the same document. Full counting was used: each author, institution, country, or source represented in a document received one publication credit. This approach was retained because the study is designed to identify participation and visibility across the field rather than to allocate fractional authorship credit.

Author keywords were converted to lowercase and cleaned for spacing, punctuation, hyphenation, and obvious singular–plural variants. Equivalent forms were merged through a controlled thesaurus. Examples included “land-use rights,” “land use right,” and “land-use right,” which were standardized as “land use rights”; “farmland” was merged with “farmland”; and “land reforms” was merged with “land reform.” Conceptually different expressions, such as “land tenure security” and “tenure security,” were retained separately because they may signal different levels of analytical specificity.

Performance Indicators

The performance analysis included annual scientific production, compound annual growth rate, document-type distribution, total citations, mean and median citations per document, the corpus h-index, source productivity, source-level citation impact, author productivity, institution and country productivity, and international collaboration. The compound annual growth rate was calculated from the 2016 and 2025 publication totals across nine annual intervals. Citation counts were interpreted as a snapshot of the Scopus export date. Accordingly, citation comparisons by publication year were treated cautiously because older documents had longer exposure periods.

Authorship indicators included the mean number of authors per document, the number of single-authored and multi-authored records, and the collaboration index calculated for multi-authored documents. International collaboration was defined as the presence of affiliations from more than one country in a single publication. Country collaboration links were counted by the number of records jointly authored by each country pair.

Keyword Co-Occurrence, Clustering, and Temporal Analysis

The conceptual structure was examined using author keywords because these terms reflect the authors’ own characterization of their studies. Keywords occurring at least four times were retained, and network links were retained when two keywords co-occurred in at

least two documents. These thresholds balanced interpretability with retention of substantively relevant terms. The resulting network contained 41 keywords and 55 links.

Co-occurrence links were normalized using association strength, calculated as $c_{ij}/(w_i \times w_j)$, where c_{ij} is the number of documents in which keywords i and j co-occur and w_i and w_j are their total occurrence counts. Association-strength normalization is widely used in bibliometric mapping to reduce the dominance of highly frequent items and emphasize comparatively strong relationships (van Eck & Waltman, 2010; Waltman et al., 2010). Community detection was performed using the Louvain modularity-optimization algorithm with a fixed random seed to support reproducibility (Blondel et al., 2008). Network construction and analysis were implemented in Python 3.13.5 using NetworkX 3.6.1, which provides tools for constructing and analysing complex networks (Hagberg et al., 2008).

For each keyword cluster, Callon-style centrality and density indicators were calculated. Centrality represents the strength of a cluster's connections with other clusters, whereas density reflects its internal cohesion. These indicators were used as interpretive aids rather than as standalone evidence of substantive importance. Temporal patterns were assessed across three periods with broadly comparable numbers of publications: 2016–2019 (141 documents), 2020–2022 (149 documents), and 2023–2025 (166 documents). The analysis compared the number and proportion of keyword occurrences across these periods, following the longitudinal science-mapping logic described by Cobo et al. (2011).

Methodological Boundaries

Four boundaries are important when interpreting the results. First, the dataset is intentionally broader than the doctrinal concept of usufruct; it maps the adjacent international research domain within which agricultural usufruct contracts are situated. Second, the English-language restriction may underrepresent Arabic and other non-English legal scholarship. Third, Scopus coverage and indexing decisions influence the countries, journals, and disciplines visible in the corpus. Fourth, the absence of cited-reference data prevents analysis of the intellectual base through co-citation or bibliographic coupling. These boundaries are addressed in the overall study design by keeping the bibliometric findings separate from the targeted Islamic jurisprudential and Omani legal analyses.

Bibliometric Results

General Profile of the Corpus

The final corpus contained 456 publications issued between 2016 and 2025. Journal articles constituted the clear majority, with 393 records (86.18%), followed by 35 book chapters (7.68%), 20 reviews (4.39%), and 8 conference papers (1.75%). The records were distributed across 237 sources and involved 1,351 distinct Scopus author identifiers, 597 normalized institutions, and 88 countries. These figures indicate a broad and multidisciplinary research domain rather than a small, specialized legal literature.

The corpus had accumulated 9,546 citations by the export date, with a mean of 20.93 and a median of 9 citations per document. The corpus h-index was 53, while 45 documents (9.87%) had not yet received a citation. Authorship was predominantly collaborative: 355 documents (77.85%) were multi-authored and 101 (22.15%) were single-authored. The mean number of authors per document was 3.22, and the collaboration index among multi-

authored publications was 3.85. International co-authorship was identified in 151 documents (33.11%).

Table 2

General characteristics of the bibliometric corpus

Indicator	Result
Documents	456
Period	2016–2025
Sources	237
Distinct authors	1,351
Normalized institutions	597
Countries	88
Total citations	9,546
Mean citations per document	20.93
Median citations per document	9
Corpus h-index	53
Single-authored documents	101 (22.15%)
Multi-authored documents	355 (77.85%)
Internationally collaborative documents	151 (33.11%)
Records with author keywords	416 (91.23%)
Records with affiliations	452 (99.12%)
Records with DOI	439 (96.27%)

Publication and Citation Trends (RQ1)

Annual publication output increased from 26 records in 2016 to 71 in 2025, equivalent to a compound annual growth rate of approximately 11.81%. The pattern was not linear. Output remained low in 2016 and 2017, with 26 and 25 publications, respectively, before increasing to 45 in both 2018 and 2019. A modest decline occurred in 2020, when 42 records were published, followed by a rise to 55 in 2021. Production remained relatively high between 2022 and 2024, with annual totals ranging from 46 to 52, before reaching the decade's maximum of 71 publications in 2025. The 2025 output alone represented 15.57% of the entire corpus.

The citation distribution by publication-year cohort reflected both intellectual influence and citation exposure. Publications from 2018 had accumulated the largest total number of citations (1,834), followed by those from 2021 (1,515), 2019 (1,316), and 2017 (1,218). The 2017 cohort recorded the highest mean citation count at 48.72 citations per document, while the 2018 cohort averaged 40.76. More recent cohorts had lower means, particularly 2025, with 2.92 citations per document, because they had considerably less time to accrue citations. Therefore, the citation figures should not be interpreted as evidence of declining research quality in recent years.

Table 3

Annual Publication and Citation Indicators

Year	Documents	Share (%)	Total citations	Mean citations	Median citations	Uncited
2016	26	5.70	882	33.92	27.0	1
2017	25	5.48	1,218	48.72	27.0	0
2018	45	9.87	1,834	40.76	30.0	1
2019	45	9.87	1,316	29.24	17.0	2
2020	42	9.21	946	22.52	14.0	4
2021	55	12.06	1,515	27.55	16.0	3
2022	52	11.40	717	13.79	10.0	3
2023	49	10.75	547	11.16	7.0	1
2024	46	10.09	364	7.91	5.0	5
2025	71	15.57	207	2.92	1.0	25

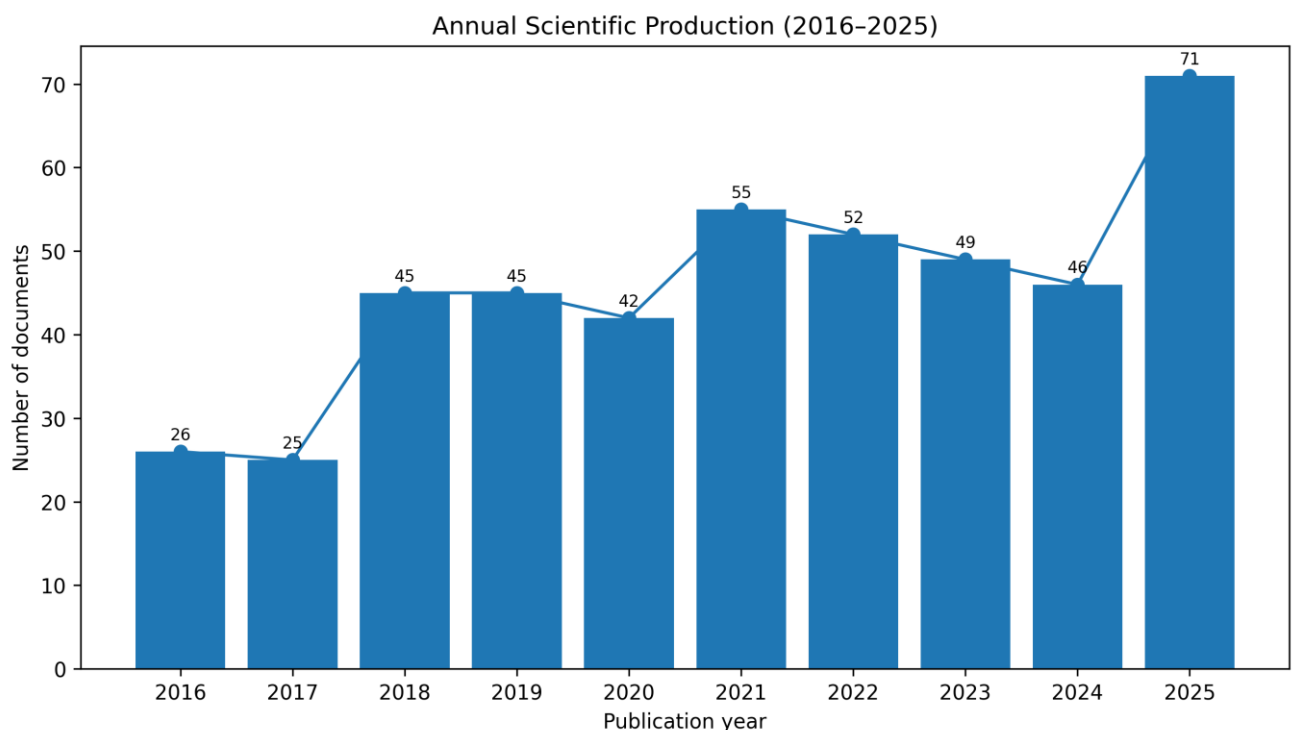


Figure 2. Annual scientific production in the Scopus corpus, 2016–2025.

Answer to RQ1: The field expanded substantially over the study period, with output in 2025 almost three times the 2016 level. Growth was characterized by an early expansion in 2018–2019, a short interruption in 2020, renewed growth in 2021, and a pronounced peak in 2025. Citation influence was concentrated in older and middle-period cohorts, particularly 2017, 2018, and 2021, although citation-age effects limit direct comparison with the most recent publications.

Influential Contributors and Collaboration Patterns (RQ2)

The source distribution was strongly concentrated. Land Use Policy published 75 documents, representing 16.45% of the corpus, and these records accumulated 3,011 citations with a corpus h-index of 33. Land ranked second with 40 publications and 464 citations, followed by Sustainability (Switzerland) with 19 publications and 291 citations. The

Journal of Rural Studies published nine records that received 282 citations, while Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems contributed eight publications and 109 citations. The dominance of Land Use Policy indicates that the field is anchored primarily in land governance, rural development, and land-use regulation rather than in doctrinal property law alone.

Table 4

Ten most productive sources

Source	Documents	Total citations	Mean citations	Corpus h-index
Land Use Policy	75	3,011	40.15	33
Land	40	464	11.60	11
Sustainability (Switzerland)	19	291	15.32	11
Journal of Rural Studies	9	282	31.33	8
Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems	8	109	13.62	5
Journal of Environmental Management	5	278	55.60	4
World Development	5	143	28.60	4
Land Degradation and Development	5	87	17.40	4
Agricultural Systems	4	275	68.75	4
Journal of Peasant Studies	4	192	48.00	4

Author productivity was comparatively dispersed. Hossein Azadi and Petr Sklenička were the most productive authors, with six documents each. Azadi's publications received 106 citations and produced a corpus h-index of 5, while Sklenička's received 92 citations with the same h-index. Jaap Zevenbergen contributed four documents that accumulated 188 citations, and R. M. Bennett contributed four documents with 146 citations. Kristina Janečková and Meseret C. Abate also published four documents each. The difference between productivity and citation impact was visible among authors with only two publications: Jampel Dell'Angelo, Maria Cristina Rulli, and Paolo D'Odorico each accumulated 212 citations, largely because their jointly authored publications were highly cited. Consequently, productivity and influence were treated as related but distinct dimensions.

Table 5

Ten most productive authors

Author	Documents	Total citations	Mean citations	Corpus h-index
Azadi, Hossein	6	106	17.67	5
Sklenička, Petr	6	92	15.33	5
Zevenbergen, Jaap	4	188	47.00	4
Bennett, R.M.	4	146	36.50	4
Janečková, Kristina	4	45	11.25	3
Abate, Meseret C.	4	29	7.25	3
Amponsah, Owusu	3	153	51.00	2
Takyi, Stephen Appiah	3	153	51.00	2
Calo, Adam	3	134	44.67	3
Wästfelt, Anders	3	126	42.00	2

At the institutional level, Nanjing Agricultural University was the most productive organization, with 13 documents and 524 citations. Addis Ababa University followed with

nine documents, while the University of Twente and China Agricultural University each contributed eight. Renmin University of China contributed seven publications. The institutional profile confirms substantial participation from universities specializing in agricultural economics, land administration, spatial planning, and rural development.

Table 6

Ten most productive institutions

Institution	Documents	Total citations	Mean citations
Nanjing Agricultural University	13	524	40.31
Addis Ababa University	9	176	19.56
University of Twente	8	348	43.50
China Agricultural University	8	119	14.88
Renmin University of China	7	28	4.00
Chinese Academy of Sciences	6	238	39.67
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology	6	168	28.00
Ghent University	6	147	24.50
Czech University of Life Sciences Prague	6	119	19.83
University of California, Berkeley	5	278	55.60

China was the leading country, contributing 102 documents (22.37%) and 2,672 citations. The United States ranked second with 77 documents and 2,081 citations, followed by Germany with 39 publications. The United Kingdom and Ethiopia each contributed 33 documents, while the Netherlands contributed 28. The Netherlands recorded a relatively high mean citation count of 38.00 citations per document. The prominence of China was also visible in the collaboration network: China and the United States co-authored 15 documents, Australia and China co-authored seven, and China and the Netherlands co-authored five. Other recurrent partnerships included Germany–Kenya, Germany–United Kingdom, Belgium–China, Ethiopia–Netherlands, Germany–Ghana, Canada–China, and China–United Kingdom, each with four joint publications.

Table 7

Ten most productive countries

Country	Documents	Total citations	Mean citations	International collaboration (%)
China	102	2,672	26.20	44.12
United States	77	2,081	27.03	50.65
Germany	39	1,084	27.79	56.41
United Kingdom	33	746	22.61	54.55
Ethiopia	33	706	21.39	60.61
Netherlands	28	1,064	38.00	67.86
Canada	22	728	33.09	59.09
Ghana	20	447	22.35	65.00
Australia	19	606	31.89	84.21
South Africa	18	262	14.56	44.44

International Collaboration Network among the 20 Most Productive Countries

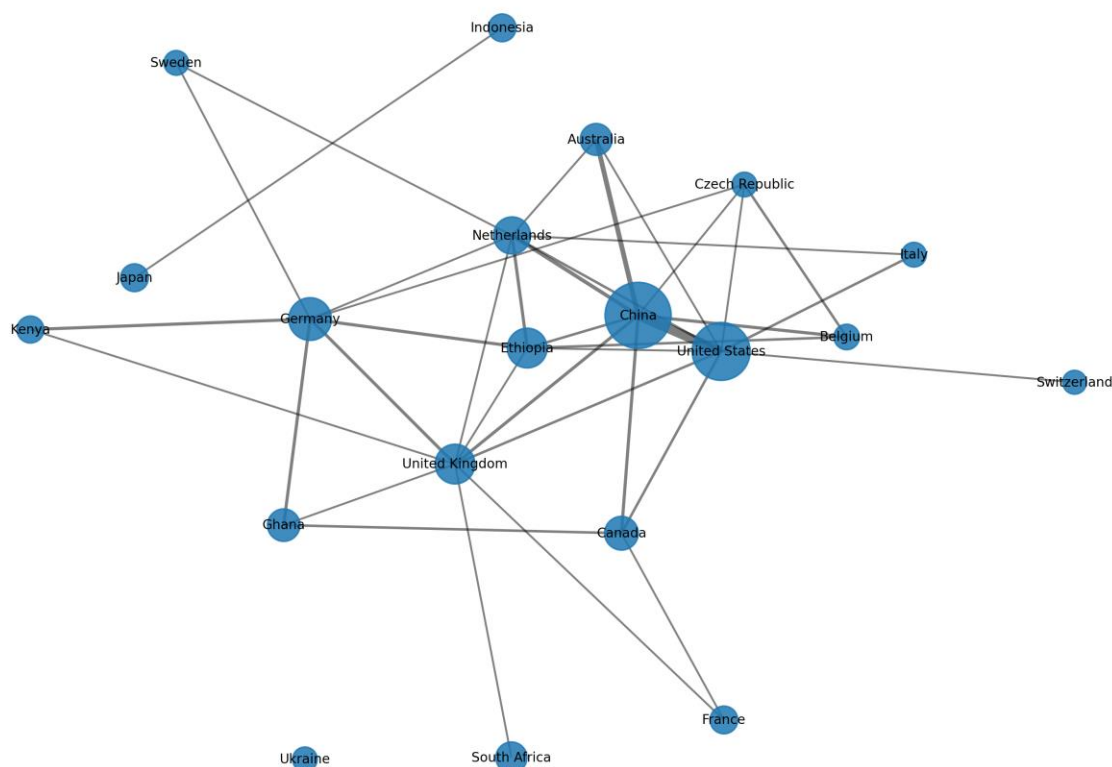


Figure 3. International collaboration network among the 20 most productive countries. Node size represents publication output; edge width represents joint publications.

The five most-cited documents further demonstrate the breadth of the corpus. Paustian and Theuvsen's 2017 study of precision-agriculture adoption received 311 citations. Lu and Xie's 2018 analysis of labour-resource changes, land-use-right transfers, and agricultural non-point-source pollution received 159 citations. Autio et al.'s 2021 study of constraints on climate-smart agriculture received 158 citations, while Guo and Liu's work on land assetization and rural revitalization received 151. Li and Shen's study of land-transfer quality and organic-fertilizer application received 148 citations. These influential documents link land arrangements to technology adoption, environmental externalities, rural development, and sustainable agricultural practice. Their prominence confirms that contemporary agricultural land-rights research is interdisciplinary and extends beyond formal contract doctrine.

Answer to RQ2: The field is led by Land Use Policy and by institutions and countries with strong agricultural-economics, land-administration, and rural-development research capacity. China and the United States are the principal national contributors and form the strongest bilateral collaboration link. Author productivity is diffuse, with few scholars contributing more than four publications, while citation influence is often concentrated in individual highly cited studies. Approximately one third of the corpus involved international collaboration, indicating meaningful but not dominant cross-border research integration.

Conceptual Clusters and Temporal Shifts (RQ3)

After keyword normalization, “land tenure” was the most frequent author keyword, with 71 occurrences. It was followed by “China” (32), “land tenure security” (16), “land use” (16), “land reform” (16), “agricultural land” (15), “property rights” (15), “land grabbing” (15), “tenure security” (14), “land” (14), and “agriculture” (14). The frequency profile demonstrates that the field is organized primarily around tenure systems, rights security, land reform, and governance. Contract-specific terms were present but less dominant; “land lease” occurred nine times, while broader tenure and rights terminology occurred much more frequently.

The co-occurrence network contained 41 keywords connected by 55 links and was partitioned into seven clusters. Cluster 1 centered on land tenure, agricultural land, land lease, Africa, Ghana, property, institutions, land access, and agroecology. This cluster represents access to agricultural land and the institutional conditions governing tenure and leasing. Cluster 2 combined China, land tenure security, property rights, tenure security, farmland, agricultural investment, land registration, land titling, and migration. It reflects the relationship between formalized rights, investment incentives, and agrarian transformation, with a strong Chinese empirical orientation.

Cluster 3 linked land grabbing, food security, land rights, deforestation, sustainable agriculture, land governance, sustainable development, and land acquisition. This cluster captures the distributive and environmental consequences of large-scale land control. Cluster 4 consisted of land reform, land policy, land-use rights, and Vietnam, indicating a policy-reform stream concerned with the restructuring and legal allocation of land-use entitlements. Cluster 5 brought together agriculture, land, policy, and political economy, representing macro-level analysis of agrarian institutions and power. Cluster 6 connected land use, land consolidation, land markets, and land fragmentation, highlighting structural reorganization of agricultural holdings. Cluster 7 linked urbanization, drivers, and remote sensing, representing a more specialized spatial-change stream.

Table 8

Author-keyword co-occurrence clusters

Cluster	Interpretive label	Terms	Total occurrences	Leading keywords
1	Tenure, agricultural land, and leasing	9	125	land tenure (71); agricultural land (15); land lease (9); africa (7); ghana (6); property (5); institutions (4); land access (4); agroecology (4)
2	Tenure security, property rights, and investment	9	111	china (32); land tenure security (16); property rights (15); tenure security (14); farmland (10); agricultural investment (8); land registration (7); land titling (5); migration (4)
3	Land grabbing, food security, and sustainability	8	78	land grabbing (15); food security (13); land rights (10); deforestation (10); sustainable agriculture (9); land governance (9); sustainable development (8); land acquisition (4)

Cluster	Interpretive label	Terms	Total occurrences	Leading keywords
4	Land reform, policy, and use rights	4	42	land reform (16); land policy (12); land use rights (7); vietnam (7)
5	Agriculture and political economy	4	40	agriculture (14); land (14); policy (7); political economy (5)
6	Land use, consolidation, and markets	4	33	land use (16); land consolidation (7); land market (5); land fragmentation (5)
7	Urbanization and spatial change	3	21	urbanization (8); drivers (7); remote sensing (6)

Author-Keyword Co-occurrence Network (Minimum Four Occurrences)

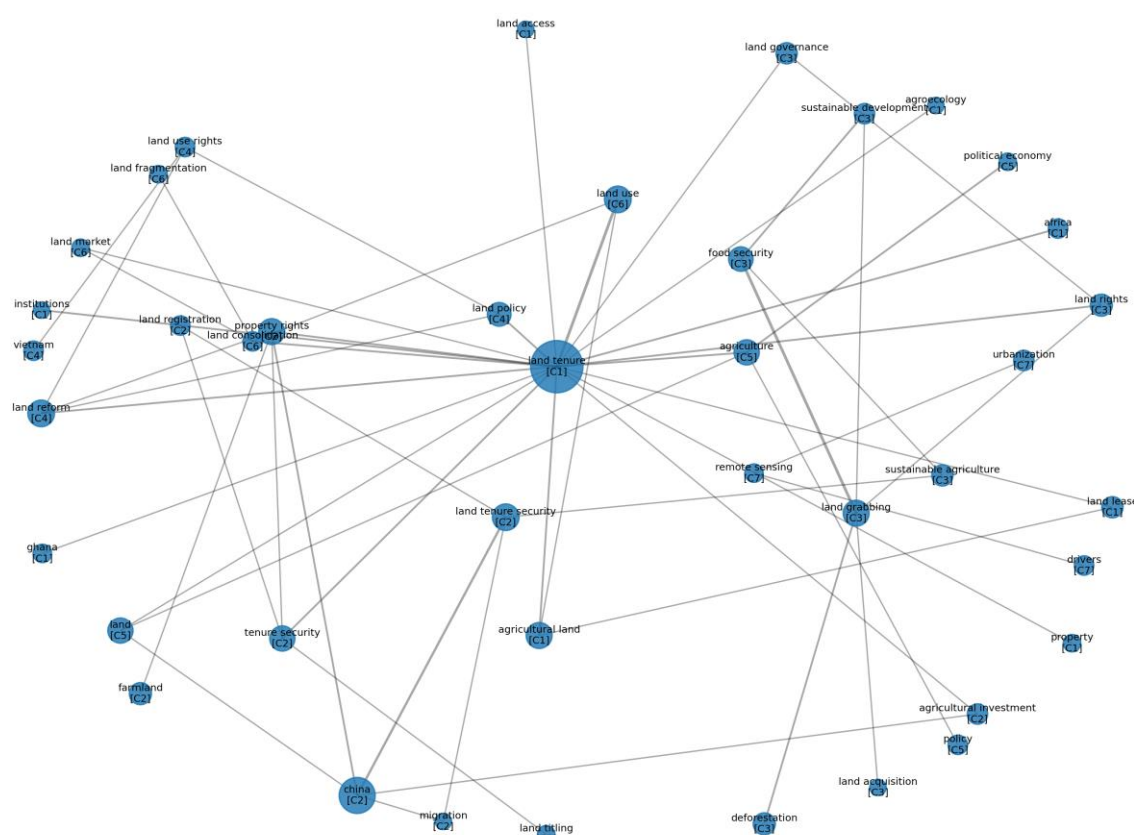


Figure 4. Author-keyword co-occurrence network. Labels C1–C7 indicate the seven Louvain clusters.

The centrality–density analysis showed that Cluster 1 had the strongest external connectivity, confirming that land tenure, agricultural land, and leasing operate as the principal bridge across the field. Cluster 6 had the highest internal density, indicating a cohesive specialist literature on land use, consolidation, markets, and fragmentation. Cluster 7 had no retained external link under the selected threshold, suggesting that the urbanization–remote-sensing stream was comparatively peripheral to the main tenure and

rights discourse. These network positions should be interpreted in conjunction with term frequency and substantive content, rather than as independent measures of research quality.

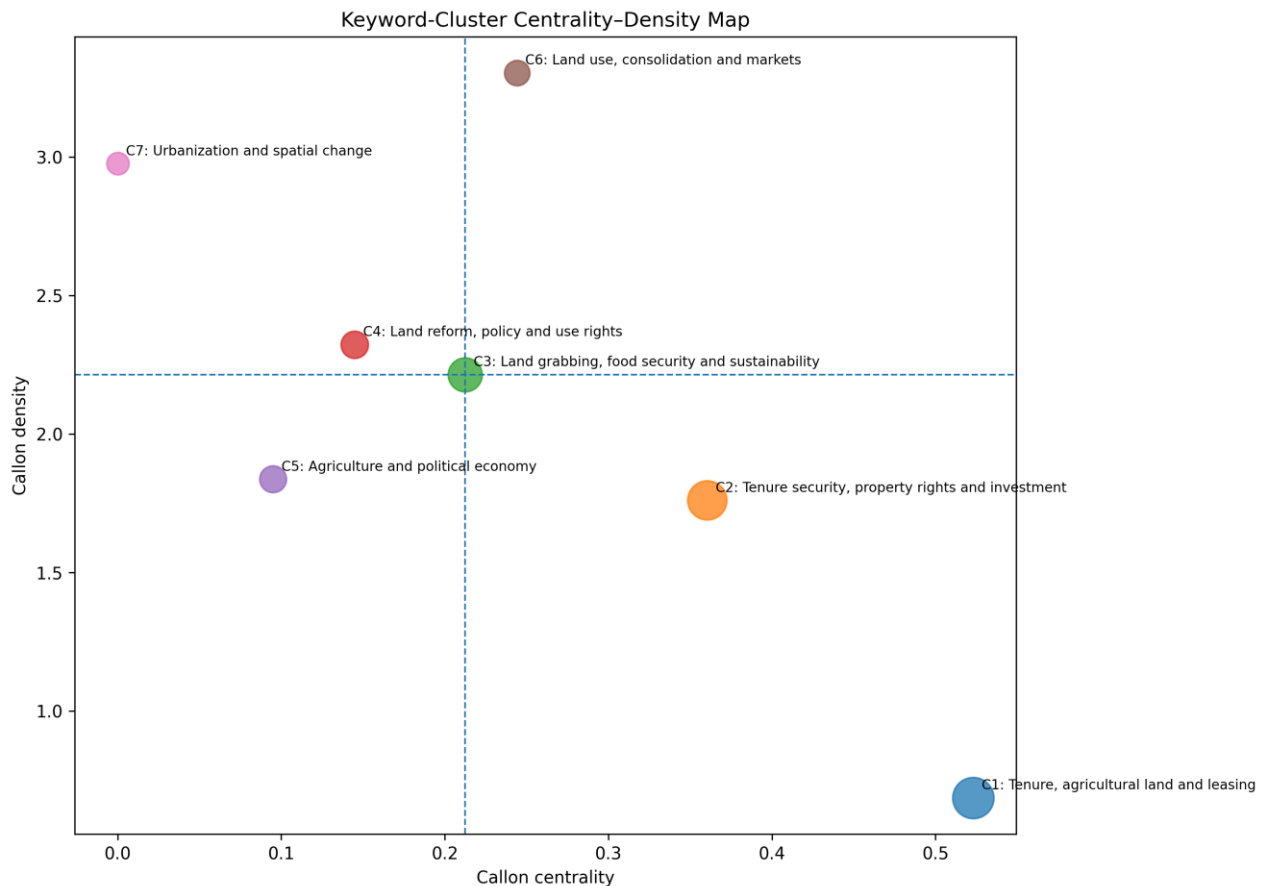


Figure 5. Keyword-cluster centrality–density map. Bubble size represents total keyword occurrences within each cluster.

Temporal analysis showed both continuity and change. Land tenure remained the dominant term throughout the period, with 30 occurrences in 2016–2019, 18 in 2020–2022, and 23 in 2023–2025. China was similarly stable across the three periods, with 11, 11, and 10 occurrences. Agricultural land was absent from the first period as an author keyword but appeared nine times in 2020–2022 and six times in 2023–2025. Tenure security increased from two occurrences in the first period to five in the second and seven in the third. Land use increased to eight occurrences in 2023–2025, compared with six in 2016–2019 and two in 2020–2022.

Several terms showed recent concentration. Ethiopia recorded eight of its 12 occurrences in 2023–2025; land registration recorded four of seven; agroforestry recorded four of seven; urbanization recorded four of eight; and agricultural investment recorded four of eight. These patterns suggest increasing attention to formalization, investment, spatial pressures, and African land systems. In contrast, land consolidation was concentrated in 2016–2019, with five of seven occurrences, while the generic term policy did not appear in 2023–2025 under the selected keyword form. Land-tenure reform and migration also had no occurrences in the most recent period. Because some counts are small, these movements indicate shifts in emphasis rather than definitive emergence or decline.

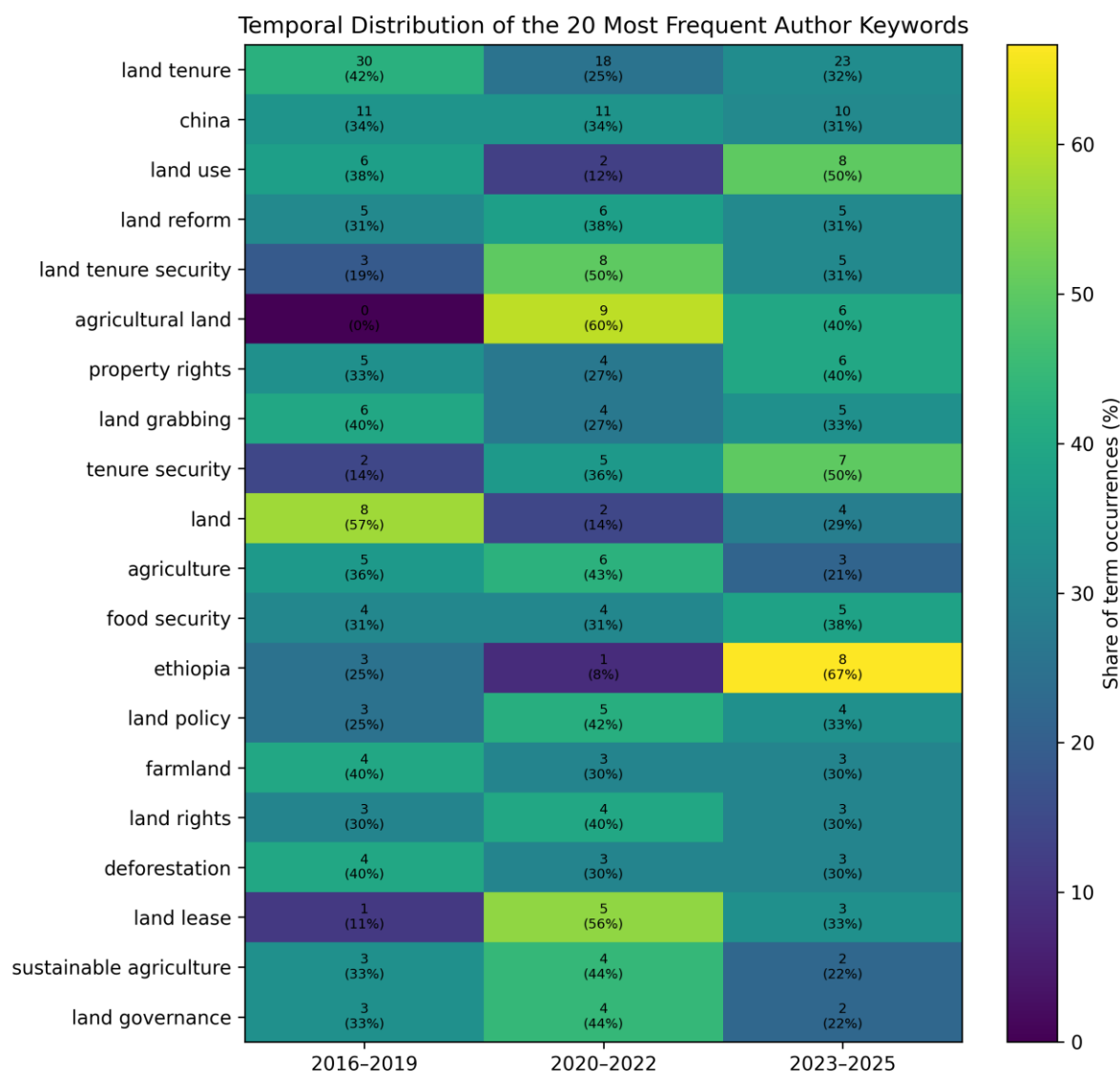


Figure 6. Temporal distribution of the 20 most frequent author keywords across three publication periods.

Answer to RQ3: The conceptual structure is organized around seven interrelated themes. Land tenure is the field's central and most persistent concept, connecting work on agricultural access and leasing, rights security and investment, land grabbing and sustainability, land reform and policy, political economy, land consolidation and markets, and spatial change. Recent scholarship shows greater emphasis on tenure security, land registration, agricultural investment, urbanization, agroforestry, and African cases, while the foundational concerns of land tenure, property rights, food security, and reform remain visible across the decade.

Transition to the Doctrinal and Omani Legal Analysis

The bibliometric findings answer RQ1–RQ3 and establish the contemporary international research landscape. They do not, by themselves, answer the jurisprudential and national-law questions. The keyword and source profiles confirm that explicit Islamic-law and Omani-law coverage is limited in the 456-record corpus. RQ4 is addressed in Section 5 through a separately screened corpus of Islamic jurisprudential scholarship. RQ5–RQ6 will be developed through comparative analysis and verified Omani primary legal materials. The comparative

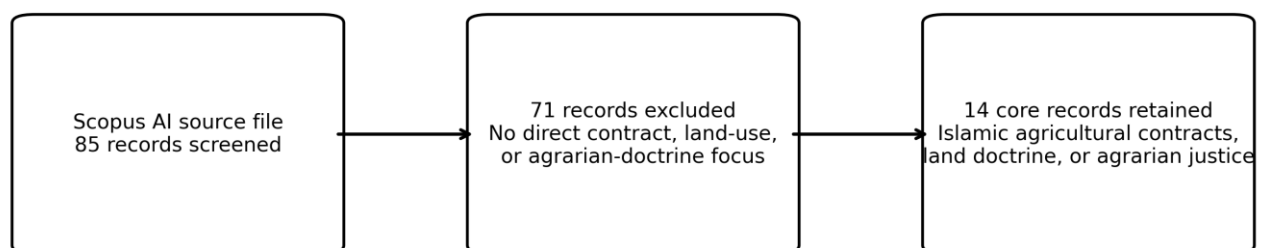
analysis will use the bibliometric themes—tenure security, lease and land-use rights, risk and investment, registration, environmental obligations, and dispute governance—as analytical dimensions rather than treating keyword frequency as legal authority.

Islamic Jurisprudential Models of Agricultural Land Use

Scope and Evidentiary Basis

The doctrinal analysis addresses RQ4 by examining the legal structures through which Islamic jurisprudence regulates access to agricultural land, cultivation, orchard care, long-term planting, and the revival of uncultivated land. It does not treat the 456-document bibliometric corpus as a source of Islamic legal doctrine. As established in Section 4.5, that corpus maps the broader international literature on tenure, leasing, land-use rights, and governance, but contains only a small number of records explicitly concerned with Islamic law. The doctrinal evidence was therefore developed from the separate 85-record Scopus AI source file supplied for this study and from authoritative classical and comparative legal works.

All 85 records in the supplementary file were screened by title and abstract. A record was retained when its principal focus concerned an Islamic agricultural contract, Islamic rules governing agricultural land use, the legal treatment of uncultivated land, or agrarian justice directly connected to cultivation arrangements. Records dealing only with inheritance, general Islamic finance, agricultural technology, environmental management, non-Islamic land administration, or Omani agriculture without a contractual or jurisprudential focus were excluded. Fourteen records met the direct-relevance criteria. These records were not merged into the bibliometric dataset, because they were generated through a different search process and included publications outside the 2016–2025 bibliometric period. They were used as a targeted doctrinal corpus and triangulated with Ibn Rushd’s comparative juristic account, Johansen’s study of Hanafi land-tax and rent doctrine, and Sait and Lim’s analysis of Islamic property and land-tenure systems (Ibn Rushd, 2000; Johansen, 1988; Sait & Lim, 2006).



The retained corpus was supplemented with authoritative classical and comparative legal sources.

Figure 7. Screening of the supplementary Islamic jurisprudence source file.

The retained literature reveals a crucial analytical distinction. Islamic jurisprudence does not regulate agricultural land use through a single generic ‘usufruct contract.’ Instead, it differentiates among a fixed-return lease of land usufruct, output-sharing cultivation

partnerships, orchard-care partnerships, long-term planting arrangements, and the public-law consequences of reviving previously uncultivated land. These models may pursue similar productive purposes, but they differ in their legal object, consideration, contribution of labour and inputs, allocation of production risk, and relationship to ownership.

Ijārah: Exchange of a Defined Agricultural Usufruct

In an agricultural *ijārah*, the landowner transfers a defined right to use and benefit from land for a specified period in return for an agreed rent; ownership of the land itself remains with the lessor. The legal object is therefore the usufruct (*manfaʿah*), not the corpus of the land. For the arrangement to be operationally certain, the land and permitted agricultural use must be identifiable, the duration must be known, and the rent must be determined or objectively determinable. These requirements distinguish *ijārah* from *muzāraʿah*: the former ordinarily gives the owner a fixed return that is not calculated as an undivided share of the actual crop, whereas the latter links the parties' returns directly to agricultural output.

Classical jurists disagreed over the permissible forms of agricultural land rent. Ibn Rushd (2000) records positions ranging from broad prohibition of land rental to permission when rent was paid in gold, silver, or other known property, as well as broader views permitting rent connected to agricultural produce. A recurring concern was *gharar* created when rent was tied to the yield of a designated section of the field: one section might produce while another failed, producing an unequal and indeterminate exchange. The doctrinal controversy is therefore not reducible to a simple binary of 'lease permitted' or 'lease prohibited.' It concerns the structure of the countervalue, the degree of production uncertainty, and whether one party receives a guaranteed claim while the other bears the entire agricultural risk (Ibn Rushd, 2000; Johansen, 1988).

Contemporary agricultural leasing illustrates why duration and harvest clauses require special treatment. Rosyadi et al. (2022) examined disputes arising when a fixed lease period expired before standing crops could be harvested. A formal expiry rule that ignores the biological production cycle can deprive the cultivator of the expected benefit after labour and inputs have already been committed. The doctrinally safer drafting response is not to leave the term indefinite, but to define the contractual period while expressly regulating delayed maturation, access for harvesting, additional compensation where justified, and the consequences of delay attributable to either party. The agricultural product guide issued by Da Afghanistan Bank similarly provides, in the context of *musāqāh*, that when the stated period ends before fruit is produced, the arrangement continues through production and harvest (Da Afghanistan Bank, n.d.). This confirms the wider need to coordinate calendar duration with the productive cycle of the asset.

Muzāraʿah: Cultivation Partnership and Proportional Crop Sharing

Muzāraʿah is a cultivation partnership in which one party makes agricultural land available, and another undertakes cultivation, while the resulting crop is divided according to an agreed proportional share. Depending on the juristic formulation and local practice, seeds, equipment, irrigation costs, and other inputs may be supplied by either party or shared between them. The defining consideration is not a predetermined quantity of produce or a fixed return from a particular portion of the land; it is an undivided ratio of the crop produced. Da Afghanistan Bank's product guide accordingly requires identification of the land, suitability

for farming, determination or authorized selection of the crop, specification of the party providing seeds and equipment, a lawful crop, a percentage-based share, and a period sufficient for production and harvest (Da Afghanistan Bank, n.d.).

The classical controversy surrounding sharecropping was shaped by different readings of reports concerning the cultivation of Khaybar and by concern about uncertainty and unequal appropriation. Ibn Rushd (2000) explains that jurists who permitted crop-sharing rejected arrangements allocating the output of a particular strip, watercourse, or fixed quantity to one party, because the specified portion might succeed while the remainder failed. A proportional share—one half, one third, or another agreed fraction—keeps both parties' returns linked to the same productive outcome. This feature makes muzāra'ah a risk-sharing contract rather than a disguised fixed-rent arrangement.

The supplementary studies show that validity in doctrine does not automatically ensure fairness in practice. Bakung et al. (2022) found that formal freedom of contract can coexist with unequal bargaining power where cultivators enter product-sharing arrangements under economic pressure. Ibrahim's (2009) historical analysis likewise demonstrates that juristic revisions of sharecropping and administrative contracts could be used to strengthen peasant interests rather than merely preserve landholder power. Recent socio-legal studies add that customary arrangements often specify multiple combinations of labour, production inputs, risk, and crop division. The nyambut sawah arrangements examined by Jamaluddin et al. (2024), for example, resembled muzāra'ah but operated through locally recognized divisions of tasks and returns. Kusmayanti et al. (2025) similarly document continuing contestation over traditional sharecropping and its relationship to economic inequality, local regulation, and juristic opinion.

These findings establish two drafting implications. First, custom ('urf) may clarify operational matters—such as routine cultivation tasks, local irrigation practices, or responsibility for ordinary tools—when it is known, consistent, and does not contradict an express term or governing legal rule. Second, reliance on custom cannot substitute for clarity on matters that materially determine the parties' entitlement. The contract should expressly state the land, crop or authorized crop-selection process, percentage share, provider of seeds and major inputs, responsibility for irrigation and maintenance, treatment of crop failure, duration, harvesting rights, and grounds for termination. Otherwise, the apparent flexibility of muzāra'ah may conceal uncertainty or allow the stronger party to shift disproportionate risk to the cultivator.

Musāqāh: Care of Existing Orchards and Productive Trees

Musāqāh concerns existing trees or an orchard that requires watering, maintenance, pollination, pruning, protection, or related care. The owner supplies the productive asset, while the working party performs the agreed horticultural services and receives an undivided share of the fruit or produce. It therefore differs from muzāra'ah, which centers on cultivating land and producing a crop, and from mughārasah, which begins with planting and establishing long-lived trees.

Ibn Rushd (2000) reports majority acceptance of musāqāh among the Mālikī, Shāfi'ī, Hanbalī, and several other juristic positions, with the Khaybar arrangement serving as an

important basis, while Abū Ḥanīfah adopted a restrictive position. Across the permissive approaches, the legally significant elements include the trees or orchard, the work to be performed, the parties' proportional shares, and the period. The worker's return must be connected to an undivided percentage of actual produce rather than a fixed amount added to the share. Da Afghanistan Bank's guide operationalizes these elements by requiring fruit-bearing trees within the contractual period, a percentage-based division of produce, authority for the manager to work on the trees, and a determined term that accommodates production and harvesting (Da Afghanistan Bank, n.d.).

Because musāqāh is tied to a pre-existing productive asset, the contract should distinguish ordinary care from capital improvement. Routine irrigation, pruning, and protection may fall within the cultivator's work, while replacement of irrigation infrastructure, major disease treatment, or replanting after destruction may require separate allocation. This distinction affects both cost and risk. It also determines whether the cultivator is merely performing the agreed care or creating a lasting improvement for the landowner. A contemporary statute or model contract should therefore define the orchard's condition at commencement, the expected work, major expenditures requiring consent, the division of produce, and the consequences of natural loss or owner interference.

Mughārasah: Long-Term Planting and Land Development

Mughārasah addresses the establishment of long-lived trees on another party's land. The landowner supplies the land, and the cultivator plants and maintains specified trees for a period long enough to establish productive value. Modern operational guides commonly express the cultivator's return as an agreed share of produce; some classical and regional formulations may also connect the cultivator's entitlement to the trees or improved plantation. Because the legal consequences are not uniform across juristic schools and historical practices, mughārasah should not be described categorically as transferring a share of the land itself.

Da Afghanistan Bank (n.d.) limits the model to trees of continuing productive life, such as date or olive trees, requires the tree type to be identified, and requires a period sufficient for production and harvest. These conditions reflect the long investment horizon and sunk labour characteristic of the arrangement. They also show why mughārasah demands more detailed rules than a seasonal crop-sharing contract. The parties must address who owns seedlings, trees, and improvements during and after the term; what happens if the relationship ends before the trees mature; how extraordinary water and infrastructure costs are allocated; whether the cultivator may assign the work; and how compensation is calculated if the owner recovers the land after substantial development. Without such provisions, the cultivator may bear the entire establishment risk while the landowner receives the lasting increase in land value.

Iḥyā' Al-Mawāt: Revival of Uncultivated Land

Iḥyā' al-mawāt is analytically different from the four contractual models. It concerns the legal consequences of reviving land classified as uncultivated or 'dead' through productive acts such as cultivation, irrigation, construction, or other recognized development. It is therefore a doctrine of land access and entitlement rather than a bilateral lease or crop-sharing agreement. Its relevance to this study lies in the proposition that productive use may

generate or strengthen a legally recognized interest in land, subject to the land's classification, the rights of others, and the authority of the state.

The legal consequence of revival cannot be assumed to be uniform ownership. Pehlivan's (2023) examination of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ottoman practice challenges the claim that Hanafi doctrine invariably converted revival into full private title. In the relevant fiscal and administrative context, revival could support a right of disposal or use while the underlying land remained subject to state claims and public regulation. Johansen (1988) similarly demonstrates that land tax, rent, cultivation, and property rights were historically interdependent within Hanafi legal literature. For contemporary law, the key implication is that revival must be integrated with registration, public-land classification, environmental controls, water rights, and authorization procedures. It cannot operate as an unrestricted route to private appropriation of any unused parcel.

Comparative Contract Matrix and Cross-Cutting Principles

Table 9 summarizes the five models. The comparison demonstrates that the proper classification of an agricultural arrangement depends on its legal object and economic structure. A fixed payment for temporary use points toward *ijārah*; a proportional share of seasonal crops points toward *muzāra'ah*; care of existing fruit-bearing trees points toward *musāqāh*; establishment of long-lived trees points toward *mughārasah*; and unilateral productive revival of eligible uncultivated land raises *iḥyā' al-mawāt* rather than contract doctrine. Misclassification can obscure the applicable rules on rent, risk, improvements, and termination.

Table 9

Islamic jurisprudential models governing agricultural land use

Model	Legal structure	Principal contributions	Return	Primary risk issue	Critical validity and drafting conditions
Ijārah	Lease of a defined land usufruct; ownership remains with the lessor.	Lessor provides usable land; lessee supplies rent, labour, and normally production inputs.	Known rent or other lawful countervalue, not ordinarily an undivided crop share.	Cultivator may bear production risk while rent remains due; expiry may precede harvest.	Identify land and lawful use; determine rent and term; allocate maintenance, crop-at-expiry, force-majeure, and termination consequences.
Muzāra'ah	Cultivation partnership linked to the output of agricultural land.	Land from one party; labour, seeds, equipment, water, and other inputs allocated by agreement or valid custom.	Undivided percentage or ratio of the crop actually produced.	Uncertain yield and unequal bargaining; invalidity risk if one party receives a fixed quantity or designated plot output.	Specify land, crop or selection authority, input responsibilities, proportional shares, duration, harvesting, loss, and termination.
Musāqāh	Partnership for care of existing trees or an orchard.	Owner provides trees/orchard; worker provides irrigation, cultivation, and agreed care.	Undivided percentage or ratio of fruit or produce.	Boundary between routine care and capital improvement; crop maturity may exceed term.	Identify trees, work, shares, and period; define major expenditure, disease or natural loss, and continuation to harvest.
Mughārasah	Long-term planting and establishment of durable productive trees.	Landowner provides land; cultivator plants and maintains specified long-lived trees.	Agreed produce share and, where legally recognized, other expressly defined interests in trees or improvements.	Long establishment period and uncompensated improvement if early termination occurs.	Specify tree type, term, ownership of seedlings/trees/improvements, infrastructure costs, early termination, and compensation.

Model	Legal structure	Principal contributions	Return	Primary risk issue	Critical validity and drafting conditions
ihyā' al-mawāt	Revival doctrine concerning eligible uncultivated land; not a bilateral usufruct contract.	Reviver undertakes legally sufficient development; public authority determines eligibility and legal effect.	A use, disposal, or ownership interest depending on governing doctrine and positive law.	Conflict with state title, third-party rights, environmental limits, or water allocation.	Define eligible land, authorization, acts constituting revival, registration, time limits, public-interest conditions, and consequences of abandonment.

Across these models, several recurrent principles are evident. First, consent and legal capacity are necessary but insufficient: the land or trees, permitted use, duration, consideration or sharing ratio, and material contributions must be sufficiently clear. Second, a proportional output share must remain genuinely proportional; assigning a fixed quantity or the yield of a favored portion to one party can separate that party's return from the common production risk. Third, the agricultural cycle must be reflected in the term, harvest rights, and treatment of standing crops or fruit. Fourth, inputs and work cannot be left ambiguous where they materially affect the parties' economic burden. Fifth, risk allocation should distinguish ordinary production risk, negligence, natural disaster, owner interference, and extraordinary capital expenditure.

The targeted empirical literature adds a distributive dimension to these formal rules. Agricultural contracts are often made in conditions of unequal land access, limited finance, and farmer dependency. Freedom of contract may therefore require safeguards against coercion, one-sided standard terms, or appropriation of improvements, rather than mere proof of formal consent (Bakung et al., 2022; Ibrahim, 2009; Kusmayanti et al., 2025). At the same time, local custom can support workable contracts by specifying established cultivation practices, provided that it does not legalize an uncertain or exploitative allocation (Jamaluddin et al., 2024; Rusdi et al., 2024). The doctrinal framework consequently joins transactional certainty with proportionality, productive use, and protection against preventable harm.

Islamic jurisprudence regulates agricultural land through differentiated legal models rather than one undivided concept of usufruct. Ijārah exchanges a defined land usufruct for a known return; muzāra'ah shares seasonal crop output between land and cultivation contributors; musāqāh allocates orchard-care work in return for a proportional fruit share; mughārasah governs long-term tree planting and development; and ihyā' al-mawāt addresses the legal effect of reviving eligible uncultivated land. Despite juristic differences over particular forms, the evidence consistently emphasizes identifiable subject matter, lawful and productive use, defined duration, clear allocation of labour and inputs, proportionate sharing where output is the consideration, management of agricultural uncertainty, and explicit rules for harvest, improvements, loss, and termination. These principles provide the doctrinal baseline for the comparative analysis in RQ5 and the assessment of Omani law in RQ6.

Discussion

Growth and Disciplinary Positioning of the Field

The first major finding is that research on agricultural land rights and related contractual arrangements has become a sustained and expanding field. The increase from 26 publications in 2016 to 71 in 2025, together with an estimated compound annual growth rate of 11.81%, indicates more than a temporary rise in interest. It reflects the growing recognition that access to agricultural land is simultaneously a legal, economic, environmental, technological, and distributive question. The dominance of journal articles, the involvement of 237 sources, and the participation of 88 countries further show that the field is not confined to one jurisdiction or disciplinary tradition. At the same time, the uneven annual pattern cautions against describing the development as linear. The decline in 2020, the recovery in 2021, and the strong 2025 peak suggest that research activity responds to changing policy agendas, environmental pressures, food-security concerns, and reforms in rural land administration. The source and citation profiles clarify where this growth has been intellectually located. Land Use Policy accounted for 75 publications and more than 3,000 citations, substantially exceeding every other source. This concentration indicates that agricultural land usufruct and leasing are usually studied within the broader language of land governance, tenure reform, rural development, and sustainability rather than as autonomous categories of private-law doctrine. The most-cited studies reinforce this interpretation. They connected land arrangements with precision-agriculture adoption, agricultural pollution, climate-smart practices, rural revitalization, and environmentally responsible farming (Autio et al., 2021; Guo & Liu, 2021; Li & Shen, 2021; Lu & Xie, 2018; Paustian & Theuvsen, 2017). Thus, the bibliometric corpus does not represent a narrow literature on the technical definition of usufruct. It maps the institutional environment in which agricultural use rights affect investment, production choices, environmental outcomes, and rural welfare.

This disciplinary positioning is important for interpreting the contribution of the present study. A purely doctrinal search restricted to “usufruct” would have missed much of the literature that explains how land-use arrangements operate in practice. Conversely, a purely bibliometric analysis of tenure and land policy would not establish the legal validity or structure of Islamic agricultural contracts. The combined design addresses this gap by treating the global corpus as evidence of the problems that contemporary land systems seek to solve, while using Islamic jurisprudence to distinguish the contractual forms through which those problems may be legally organized. The value of the synthesis therefore lies not in equating land tenure with usufruct, but in linking the field’s dominant governance concerns to a more precise jurisprudential classification.

Tenure Security, Registration, and Productive Investment

The conceptual network identifies tenure security and formalization as the central institutional axis of the literature. “Land tenure” was the most frequent keyword, and the cluster linking tenure security, property rights, agricultural investment, land registration, land titling, and migration occupied a prominent position in the network. The temporal analysis also showed increasing attention to tenure security, registration, and agricultural investment in the most recent period. These patterns support the view that productive agricultural use depends not merely on physical access to land, but on the credibility, clarity, and enforceability of the right through which access is obtained.

The substantive studies within the corpus demonstrate why this relationship matters. Chinese land-rights reforms have been associated with changes in agro-environmental behavior, while stronger tenure security has been linked to the adoption of green-control techniques and more stable land-transfer arrangements (Gao et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2018). Li and Shen (2021) further showed that the quality and stability of transferred land-management rights affect the use of organic fertilizer by large-scale farmers. Kong et al. (2018), however, emphasized that reform must protect farmers' continuing interests rather than merely facilitate transfer. Taken together, these studies suggest that formalization is not beneficial simply because a right is registered. Its developmental effect depends on the content of the right, the security of the user's expectations, the allocation of future value, and the protection of the weaker party.

This finding converges with the doctrinal emphasis identified in RQ4. Islamic jurisprudence requires the land or trees, permitted use, duration, consideration, and material contributions to be sufficiently clear. In agricultural settings, certainty is not a purely formal requirement: it determines whether the cultivator can plan around the crop cycle, recover investment, and retain a lawful share of the output. Registration and titling can strengthen evidentiary security, but the contract must also specify who supplies water, seed, equipment, labour, and capital; who bears ordinary and extraordinary loss; and what happens to standing crops and improvements at expiry. The empirical and doctrinal evidence therefore support a two-dimensional understanding of tenure security: public-law visibility through registration and private-law completeness through adequately drafted substantive obligations.

Equity, Sustainability, and the Limits of Unrestricted Land Transfer

A second major theme is that agricultural land rights cannot be evaluated only through efficiency or market transferability. The cluster linking land grabbing, food security, land rights, deforestation, sustainable agriculture, and land governance shows that control over land and water has direct distributive and ecological consequences. Studies of large-scale acquisitions have documented how land and water commodification can generate environmental pressure and social conflict, while research from Ghana and Ethiopia has connected land concentration or dispossession with livelihood insecurity, migration, and unequal access (D'Odorico et al., 2017; Dell'Angelo et al., 2018; Nyantakyi-Frimpong & Bezner Kerr, 2017; Tura, 2018). The presence of these issues in a central thematic cluster indicates that contemporary land scholarship increasingly treats tenure arrangements as governance mechanisms that distribute both productive opportunity and environmental risk.

The implication is not that leasing, concessions, or land-use-right transfers are inherently harmful. Rather, the legal quality of an arrangement depends on whether it prevents opportunistic appropriation, protects food-producing capacity, and assigns responsibilities for soil, water, and long-term improvements. The corpus provides examples in which land transfer supported investment and technology adoption, but it also shows that unstable rights, fragmented holdings, and poorly governed acquisitions can discourage sustainable practice or displace vulnerable users. The strongest policy conclusion is therefore conditional: transfer mechanisms should be designed to mobilize land productively without converting formal title or bargaining strength into a licence to externalize environmental and social costs. Islamic jurisprudential principles provide a compatible normative vocabulary for this conclusion. The differentiated models of *ijārah*, *muzāra'ah*, *musāqāh*, and *mughārasah* are

structured around the nature of the productive activity and the contributions of the parties. Their rules on proportional output, specified inputs, agricultural risk, and prevention of harmful uncertainty limit the ability of one party to detach its return entirely from the productive arrangement where a partnership form is intended. Similarly, *iḥyā' al-mawāt* links entitlement to legally recognized productive revival rather than mere speculative possession. These doctrines do not automatically resolve modern environmental or distributive disputes, but they support contract design that connects benefit to responsibility, productive use, and protection against preventable harm.

The Doctrinal Contribution: From a Single Usufruct Label to Functional Classification

The principal doctrinal finding is that “agricultural usufruct contract” is too broad to function as a complete legal classification. Islamic jurisprudence distinguishes at least five structures according to the object of the arrangement, the source of the return, and the allocation of productive contribution. *Ijārah* concerns a defined usufruct exchanged for known rent. *Muzāraʿah* concerns a seasonal cultivation partnership in which the return is an undivided share of actual output. *Musāqāh* applies to the care of existing fruit-bearing trees, while *mughārasah* addresses the establishment of durable plantations and the long-term value created by the planter. *Iḥyā' al-mawāt* is not a bilateral contract at all, but a doctrine concerning the legal consequences of reviving eligible uncultivated land (Ibn Rushd, 2000; Johansen, 1988; Sait & Lim, 2006).

This functional classification adds precision to the broad categories that dominate the bibliometric corpus. The literature frequently uses “land tenure,” “land lease,” “land-use rights,” and “property rights” as umbrella terms, which is appropriate for comparative social-science analysis but insufficient for drafting or adjudication. A fixed-rent lease and a crop-sharing partnership expose the parties to different risks and therefore require different rules. Likewise, a seasonal crop contract cannot adequately govern the establishment of trees whose productive life extends well beyond one agricultural year. The jurisprudential typology makes these distinctions explicit and helps explain why apparently similar arrangements may require different rules on consideration, duration, ownership of improvements, crop loss, and termination.

The targeted modern studies further show that doctrinal validity must be interpreted alongside bargaining conditions and local practice. Agricultural parties may rely on custom to specify routine work and established production methods, yet custom should not validate an uncertain sharing ratio or allow one party to appropriate improvements without compensation (Jamaluddin et al., 2024; Kusmayanti et al., 2025; Rusdi et al., 2024). Similarly, freedom of contract is meaningful only when parties understand the terms and are not compelled by unequal access to land to accept one-sided obligations (Bakung et al., 2022; Ibrahim, 2009). The resulting model is neither rigid formalism nor unrestricted contractual autonomy. It combines classification, certainty, proportionality, valid custom, and protection against exploitation.

Implications for Omani Agricultural Land Usufruct Regulation

The implications for Oman should be stated with legal caution. Oman already possesses a formal framework for land usufruct and real-estate registration. Royal Decree No. 5/1981 governs usufruct of lands of the Sultanate and was materially amended by Royal Decree No.

59/2022; the Civil Transactions Law issued by Royal Decree No. 29/2013 supplies the general private-law framework; and Royal Decree No. 56/2026 introduced a new Law of the Real Estate Registry, repealing the previous 1998 registry statute while preserving existing implementing rules to the extent that they do not conflict with the new law (Sultanate of Oman, 1981, 2013, 2022, 2026). Official administrative services also confirm that a usufruct contract can be registered and reflected in a title deed. The published service conditions specify a duration of not less than one year and not more than 99 years, require legal capacity and the presence or valid representation of both parties, and address encumbrances and cadastral documentation (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, 2026a).

Government-land allocation is also increasingly administered through a structured digital process. The Tatweer platform enables eligible companies to apply for government plots offered with specified plans, uses, specifications, and fixed usufruct fees, subject to the conditions attached to the opportunity (Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, 2026b). These features show that the Omani system already emphasizes registration, temporal definition, planned use, administrative review, and transparent allocation. They align with the bibliometric literature's concern for formalization and with the Islamic jurisprudential requirement that the subject matter, use, duration, and consideration be known.

The present study nevertheless identifies areas in which agriculture-specific contractual guidance could add substantive clarity. This is not a finding that Omani law omits these matters, because a definitive conclusion would require article-by-article analysis of the Arabic legislation, executive regulations, standard contracts, and judicial practice. Rather, it is an evidence-based implication for regulatory drafting and model contracts. Agricultural usufruct instruments should expressly address the permitted crops and production system; allocation of seeds, labour, machinery, irrigation, and major capital expenditure; responsibility for soil and water conservation; treatment of ordinary crop failure, natural disaster, and force majeure; rights to standing crops at expiry; ownership or compensation for trees, wells, greenhouses, and other durable improvements; assignment and subletting; monitoring of productive use; and proportionate remedies for breach or premature termination.

A second implication concerns the legal form of the economic return. Fixed usufruct fees are appropriate where the transaction is structured as *ijārah* and the user assumes the normal production risk. Where public policy seeks to support small cultivators or share production risk, however, a proportional-output model analogous to *muzāra'ah* or *musāqāh* may be more suitable than a fixed fee, provided that the parties' shares and input responsibilities are clearly specified. Long-term plantation projects may require provisions closer to the logic of *mughārasah*, especially regarding ownership and compensation for trees and infrastructure. Accordingly, Omani policy need not adopt classical labels as statutory categories to benefit from their functional logic. The practical value lies in matching the contract's duration, consideration, risk allocation, and improvement rules to the agricultural activity actually undertaken.

Table 10

Integrated findings and implications for Omani agricultural usufruct contracts

Analytical dimension	Evidence from the 456-record corpus	Islamic jurisprudential implication	Implication for Omani contract design or guidance
Legal certainty and registration	Tenure security, registration, titling, and property rights form a central cluster and have gained recent attention.	The land, use, duration, consideration, and parties' contributions must be sufficiently known.	Maintain formal registration and require a complete agricultural schedule identifying the parcel, use, crop system, term, and parties' obligations.
Consideration and productive risk	Stable and well-designed land-transfer rights are associated with investment and sustainable farming decisions.	Distinguish fixed-rent <i>ijārah</i> from proportional-output <i>muzāra'ah</i> or <i>musāqāh</i> ; do not obscure the intended risk structure.	Use contract forms matched to fixed-fee, crop-sharing, orchard-care, or long-term planting arrangements; define force majeure and crop-loss consequences.
Inputs, water, and environmental duties	The literature links land rights with pollution, sustainable agriculture, agroforestry, food security, and water governance.	Specify labour, seeds, irrigation, equipment, and expenditure; prevent harm and avoid uncertain allocation.	Include enforceable clauses on irrigation, soil protection, permitted inputs, environmental monitoring, and liability for degradation.
Standing crops and durable improvements	Investment incentives depend on the security and quality of the user's right and the treatment of long-term value.	Agricultural cycles and the distinction between routine work and durable improvement must shape expiry and compensation.	Protect standing crops at expiry and specify ownership or compensation for trees, wells, greenhouses, and other improvements.
Equity and bargaining power	Land grabbing, dispossession, and farmer-interest protection are prominent concerns in the global literature.	Formal consent should not legitimize coercive, one-sided, or exploitative terms; proportionality and valid custom matter.	Provide transparent standard terms, disclosure, accessible dispute resolution, and safeguards for small cultivators.
Productive use and termination	The field emphasizes land access, land-use efficiency, reform, and prevention of speculative or harmful control.	Usufruct is tied to lawful productive use; <i>iḥyā' al-mawāt</i> links entitlement to recognized development under public authority.	Define cultivation milestones, monitoring, cure periods, abandonment, termination, and fair settlement of crops and investments.

Contributions, Limitations, and Future Research

The study makes three connected contributions. Empirically, it maps a decade of international scholarship and demonstrates that agricultural land-use research is structured around tenure security, formalization, investment, sustainability, reform, and distributive conflict. Conceptually, it shows that these themes become legally clearer when the generic category of usufruct is separated into functionally different agricultural arrangements. Normatively, it translates the combined evidence into a contract-design agenda relevant to

Oman without claiming that bibliometric frequency constitutes legal authority or that Islamic jurisprudence can be transferred mechanically into positive law.

Several limitations constrain the interpretation of the findings. The bibliometric analysis used Scopus only, was restricted to English-language publications from 2016–2025, and relied on a deliberately broad query. It therefore underrepresents Arabic jurisprudential scholarship and may include studies whose connection to usufruct is indirect. The absence of cited references prevented co-citation and bibliographic-coupling analyses, while citation counts favor older publications. The doctrinal component retained only 14 directly relevant records from the supplementary source file and supplemented them with a limited number of classical and comparative works. Finally, the Omani implications were derived from publicly accessible decrees and administrative service information, not from a comprehensive Arabic legislative commentary, standard-form contract archive, or body of judicial decisions.

Future research should therefore proceed in three directions. First, Arabic databases, legal commentaries, fatwa collections, and Omani judicial materials should be searched systematically to deepen the doctrinal and national-law analysis. Second, the proposed contract dimensions should be tested against actual agricultural usufruct agreements and through interviews with land administrators, legal practitioners, landowners, investors, and cultivators in Oman. Third, comparative analysis across Gulf Cooperation Council jurisdictions could determine whether fixed-fee usufruct, crop sharing, orchard-care, and long-term planting arrangements are treated differently and whether a regionally adaptable model contract can be developed. Such work would move the present synthesis from a bibliometric-doctrinal framework toward empirical legal validation.

Conclusion

This study examined agricultural land usufruct and related land-use arrangements through an integrated bibliometric and Islamic jurisprudential analysis. The bibliometric component analysed 456 Scopus-indexed publications issued between 2016 and 2025, while the doctrinal component examined a separately screened body of Islamic legal scholarship. This design was necessary because the global literature predominantly discusses tenure, leasing, land-use rights, registration, investment, and governance, whereas the legal validity and internal structure of Islamic agricultural contracts require a distinct evidentiary basis.

The findings answer the four research questions. In relation to RQ1, publication output expanded substantially, rising from 26 records in 2016 to 71 in 2025, with an estimated annual compound growth rate of 11.81%. Citation influence was concentrated in older and middle-period cohorts, particularly 2017, 2018, and 2021, although this pattern is partly attributable to citation exposure. For RQ2, Land Use Policy was the dominant source, China and the United States were the leading national contributors, and international collaboration appeared in approximately one third of the corpus. Author productivity was dispersed, while the most influential individual publications connected agricultural land arrangements to technology adoption, environmental management, rural development, and sustainable production.

For RQ3, the conceptual structure was organized around seven clusters: agricultural tenure and leasing; tenure security, property rights, and investment; land grabbing, food security,

and sustainability; land reform and policy; political economy; land consolidation and markets; and urbanization and spatial change. Land tenure remained the central and most persistent concept across the decade. Recent attention shifted toward registration, tenure security, agricultural investment, agroforestry, urbanization, and African land systems. These results show that agricultural land rights are increasingly evaluated not only as mechanisms of access, but also as determinants of investment behavior, environmental responsibility, food security, and distributive justice.

For RQ4, Islamic jurisprudence does not regulate agricultural land through a single undifferentiated usufruct contract. It distinguishes *ijārah* as a fixed-return lease of a defined usufruct, *muzāraʿah* as a seasonal crop-sharing arrangement, *musāqāh* as an orchard-care partnership, *mughārasah* as a long-term planting and land-development arrangement, and *iḥyāʾ al-mawāt* as a doctrine concerning productive revival of eligible uncultivated land. Across these models, the recurring requirements are clarity of subject matter and duration, lawful productive use, transparent allocation of labour and inputs, proportional sharing where output constitutes the return, and express treatment of harvest, loss, improvements, and termination.

The synthesis has a direct implication for Omani law and practice. Oman already has a formal usufruct and registration infrastructure, strengthened by the 2022 amendments to the land-usufruct regime, the Civil Transactions Law, the 2026 Law of the Real Estate Registry, and administrative registration and *Tatweer* procedures. The present findings support the further development of agriculture-specific model clauses or regulatory guidance that match the legal form to the productive activity and address water, soil, inputs, crop risk, standing crops, durable improvements, transfer, monitoring, and termination. This recommendation does not presume a deficiency in Omani law; it identifies the contractual dimensions that should be verified and made explicit when agricultural land is allocated or privately subjected to usufruct.

Overall, the study demonstrates that agricultural land usufruct is best understood as an institutional bridge between property, contract, agricultural production, and public governance. Bibliometric evidence identifies the contemporary problems of security, investment, sustainability, and equity, while Islamic jurisprudence supplies a functionally differentiated legal framework for allocating rights, contributions, and risks. Bringing these perspectives together provides a more precise basis for legal analysis and offers a defensible foundation for future empirical assessment and policy development in Oman. The principal limitation remains the absence of a comprehensive Arabic and Omani case-law corpus; accordingly, the proposed implications should be tested against actual contracts, executive regulations, and judicial practice before being translated into formal legislative reform.

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