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Trends in Public Administration Research in Indonesia: A Bibliographic Study

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ABSTRACT: Research on Public Administration in Indonesia has evolved substantially over the past two decades, driven by the increasing complexity of governance challenges, the digitalization of the public sector, and the increasing demand for evidence-based policymaking. This research aims to map the evolution, thematic structure, and intellectual landscape of Public Administration research in Indonesia through a comprehensive bibliographic analysis. Using publication data extracted from the Scopus database for the period 2000–2024, the study applied bibliometric techniques, including descriptive performance analysis, keyword co-occurrence mapping, co-authorship networks, and thematic evolution analysis. VOSviewer and Bibliometrix are used to visualize structural patterns and research clusters. The results reveal a significant increase in publication volumes starting in 2015, followed by a noticeable shift in research orientation towards digital governance, public service innovation, collaborative governance, and performance management. Four main thematic clusters are identified, reflecting growing scientific interests in policy governance and implementation, innovation and service delivery, digital transformation, and inter-organizational collaboration. Network visualizations show that research productivity is concentrated in a small number of Indonesian universities, despite the increasing international collaboration. This analysis also shows a transition from normative and descriptive research to a more empirical and data-driven approach. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the intellectual development of Public Administration in Indonesia and highlight some gaps in areas such as equity, evaluation frameworks, and evidence-based policies. Future research should expand methodological diversity and enhance interdisciplinary collaboration to strengthen the theoretical and practical impact of the field.

KEYWORDS: Public Administration, Indonesia, Bibliometric Analysis, Digital Governance, Collaborative Governance, Public Service Innovation, Thematic Evolution, Research Trends

INTRODUCTION

Public Administration as an academic field in Indonesia has experienced significant expansion over the past two decades, along with the increasing complexity of governance systems, the pressure of public sector modernization, and the rapid development of information and communication technology. As governments face multidimensional challenges—from decentralization to digital transformation—the need to understand the governance landscape through rigorous empirical studies is becoming increasingly important. In this context, assessing the intellectual development of Public Administration scholarships is essential not only to track scientific progress but also to identify emerging trends, conceptual gaps, and potential pathways to advancing theory and practice. Bibliographic studies serve as an instrumental approach to this goal because they offer a systematic and measurable means of mapping the evolution of knowledge, the structure of scientific networks, and the development of research themes over time.

The increasing importance of Public Administration research in Indonesia is closely related to major reforms in the country's political and administrative system. The post-1998 decentralization movement fundamentally changed the locus of public decision-making and created a new institutional configuration that prompted scholars to examine issues such as policy implementation, governance effectiveness, accountability, and public service performance. This transformation stimulates academic interest in understanding how institutional arrangements shape administrative behavior and outcomes. Over time, Public Administration scholarship has increasingly incorporated interdisciplinary perspectives from political science, sociology, public policy, information systems, and organizational studies, thus reflecting a shift towards a more integrative and empirically based research paradigm.

Although many studies have examined various aspects of Indonesian public governance, a comprehensive analysis of the overall trajectory of Public Administration research is still limited. Existing work tends to focus on narrow thematic areas such as bureaucratic reforms, e-government initiatives, or innovations in the delivery of public services. Although these studies provide valuable insights, they do not capture

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the intellectual structure of the broader field, nor do they reveal patterns of scholarly interaction, the influence of specific authors or institutions, or the evolution of conceptual frameworks in the discourse of Indonesian Public Administration. Bibliographic analysis offers a solution by allowing researchers to map scientific production, visualize knowledge networks, and identify dominant schools of thought. Through such an approach, it becomes possible to understand how research interests have shifted over time, which topics have become well-known, and how scientific communities have formed and interacted.

The advent of digital tools for academic analysis, especially platforms such as VOSviewer and Bibliometrix, further strengthens the capacity to conduct bibliometric studies. These tools allow for detailed visualizations of co-authorship networks, citation patterns, and thematic clusters, allowing researchers to observe how knowledge is organized and how different research domains converge or diverge. In the Indonesian context, where the Public Administration research community is characterized by a strong institutional concentration but increased international engagement, such analysis provides important information about collaborative dynamics and scientific influence. In addition, this method helps highlight the extent to which Indonesian science aligns with or deviates from global trends in Public Administration, including the shift towards data-driven governance, collaborative policymaking, and innovation-oriented public sector management.

Despite the growth of scientific output, the field still faces structural and methodological challenges. One recurring problem concerns the dominance of descriptive and normative research, which often limits the ability to generate insights that can be generalized or contribute meaningfully to theoretical debates. While recent years have seen progress towards empirical and quantitative approaches, the adoption of advanced analytical methods has remained uneven. In addition, research productivity is disproportionately concentrated in a small number of leading universities, creating gaps in regional representation and limiting the diversity of perspectives. These challenges underscore the importance of conducting a systematic bibliographic analysis that not only documents the growth of the field but also critically assesses its intellectual strengths and weaknesses.

This study seeks to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive bibliographic mapping of Public Administration research in Indonesia from 2000 to 2024. By examining publication trends, thematic developments, collaborative networks, and citation patterns, the study provides a holistic view of how the field has evolved over the past two decades. The temporal scope is deliberately broad to capture the transition from early post-reform science to contemporary research trends shaped by technological innovation and global governance discourse. The findings of this analysis are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the structural dynamics of Indonesian Public Administration research and to identify opportunities to advance theoretical development, methodological rigor, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

In addition, this research contributes to the international literature by placing the research of Indonesian Public Administration in a global context. As countries around the world navigate similar challenges related to digital transformation, public sector innovation, and citizen engagement, insights from Indonesia offer valuable comparative perspectives. Understanding how Indonesian science interprets and responds to these challenges reveals the convergence with international developments and the unique national characteristics shaped by socio-political and institutional contexts. In this regard, the bibliographic approach not only captures the intellectual trajectory of Indonesian scholars but also positions the country's academic contributions in the broader Public Administration research landscape.

METHOD

This study adopts a bibliographic research design based on quantitative bibliometric analysis to examine intellectual development, thematic evolution, and collaborative patterns of Public Administration research in Indonesia. The bibliographic method was chosen for its capacity to systematically map scientific knowledge, measure publication trends, identify influential authors and institutions, and visualize conceptual structures within the field of research. By relying on publication metadata extracted from leading indexing databases, bibliometric analysis allows the construction of empirical representations of scientific activities that reflect the breadth and depth of academic discourse over time. In this study, bibliographic analysis is combined with network visualization techniques in order to provide an integrated understanding of how Public Administration scholarship in Indonesia has evolved from 2000 to 2024.

The data was collected from the Scopus database, which is considered a leading source of high-quality peer-reviewed publications. Scopus was chosen because of its broad coverage of international journals relevant to Public Administration, its standard metadata formats, and its compatibility with bibliometric analysis tools. The search strategy uses the terms "public administration" and "Indonesia" that appear in the author's title, abstract, or keyword. This query is designed to capture publications that explicitly focus on Public Administration in the Indonesian context while ensuring relevance to governance, public policy, public management, and institutional reform. Initial searches yielded a dataset of publications covering the years 2000 to 2024.

After extraction, the dataset undergoes a rigorous cleansing process to ensure accuracy and thematic relevance. Publications that are not directly related to the Public Administration or use Indonesia only as a cursory reference are excluded. After screening, 278 publications remained and formed the basis for bibliometric mapping. Each record includes metadata about authorship, institutional affiliation, source title, year of publication, keyword descriptors, and number of citations. This structured dataset allows for multidimensional analysis of productivity, influence, and intellectual relationships.

The analysis procedure combines descriptive bibliometrics, performance indicators, and science mapping techniques. Descriptive bibliometrics are used to examine temporal trends in publication volume and citation patterns. Performance indicators, including citation counts, h-index values, and journal impact metrics, are used to identify influential works, authors, and institutional contributors. Science mapping techniques allow for the exploration of structural relationships in datasets through keyword co-emergence analysis, co-authorship networks, and citation link mapping. These techniques provide insight into how intellectual themes are organized, how researchers collaborate, and how ideas spread in the field.

To visualize these patterns, this study used VOSviewer 1.6.20 and the Bibliometrix R package. The software's grouping algorithm identifies closely related groups of keywords, revealing dominant and emerging themes. Bibliometrix provides additional analytical capabilities,

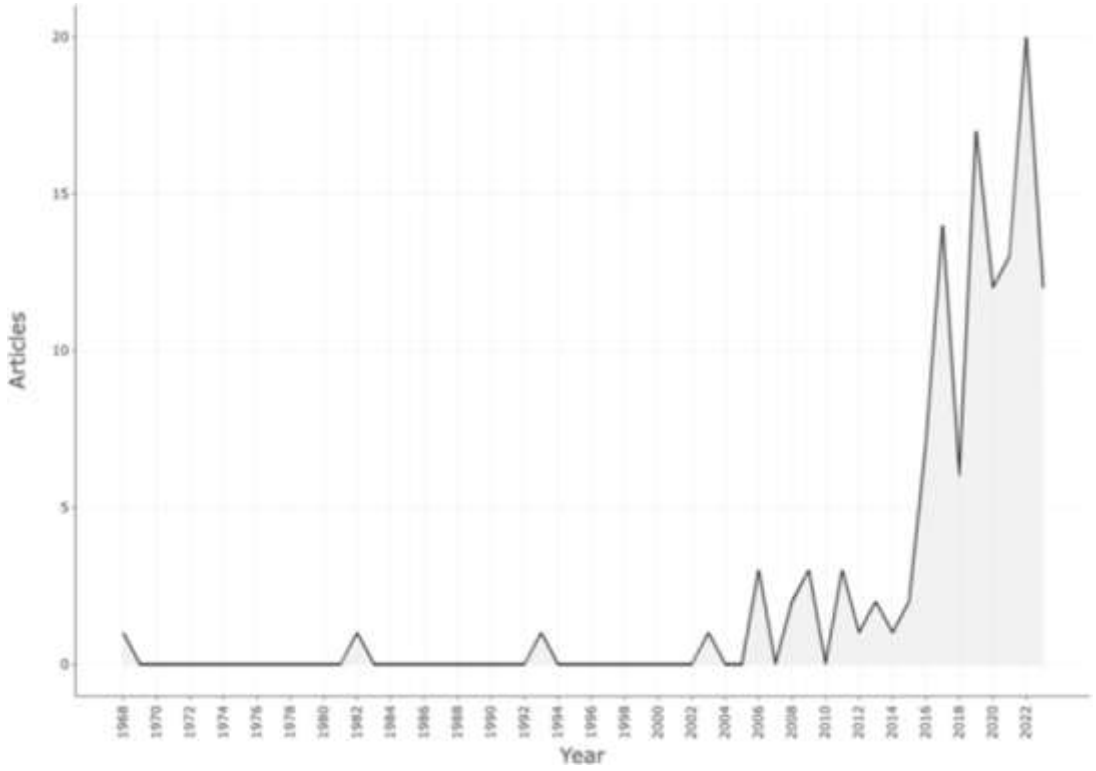
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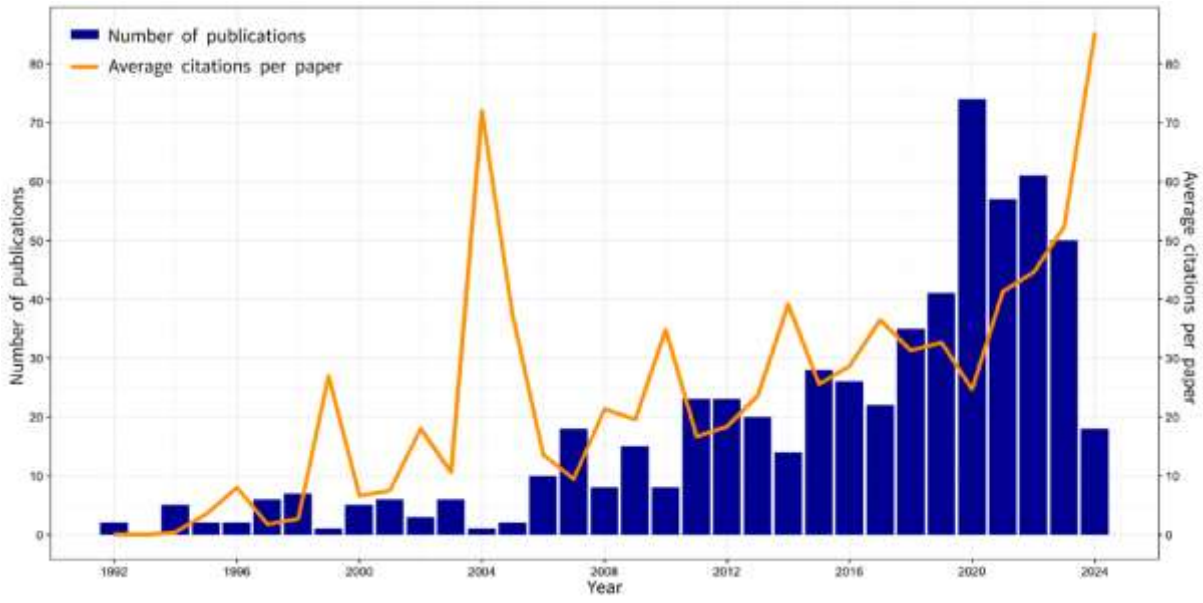
including thematic evolution plots, institutional performance metrics, and summary statistics on publication patterns. Together, these methodological components form a comprehensive empirical framework to map the development of Public Administration research in Indonesia. The following section presents the results obtained from this analysis.

RESULT

The bibliographic analysis produced a comprehensive data set from 278 Scopus-indexed publications on Public Administration in Indonesia covering the years 2000 to 2024. The results provide insights into the temporal evolution of scientific outcomes, thematic structures, collaborative patterns among researchers and institutions, and the intellectual underpinnings of the field reflected through a network of citations. Together, these findings illustrate the maturation of Public Administration research in Indonesia, the shift in undergraduate priorities over time, and the increasing integration of the field into the global academic discourse.

The temporal distribution of the publication shows a clear upward trajectory across the research period. Publication activity was rare in the early 2000s and was dominated by conceptual discussions around governance reform, decentralization, and bureaucratic restructuring. These topics reflect Indonesia's socio-political landscape after significant institutional changes after 1998. The number of publications began to increase gradually after 2010 and jumped significantly after 2015 due to increased research funding, institutional incentives, and the expansion of scientific networks.

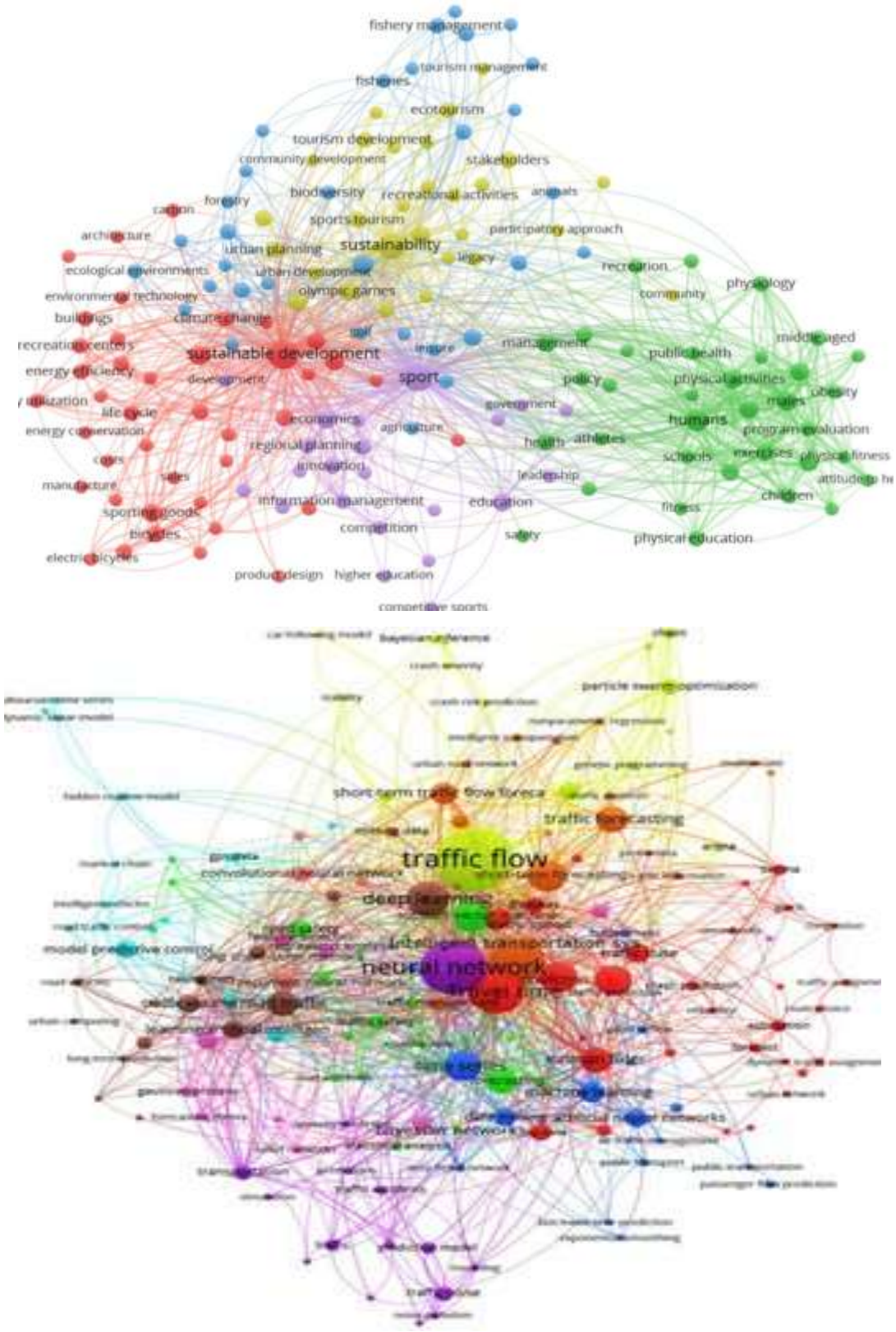




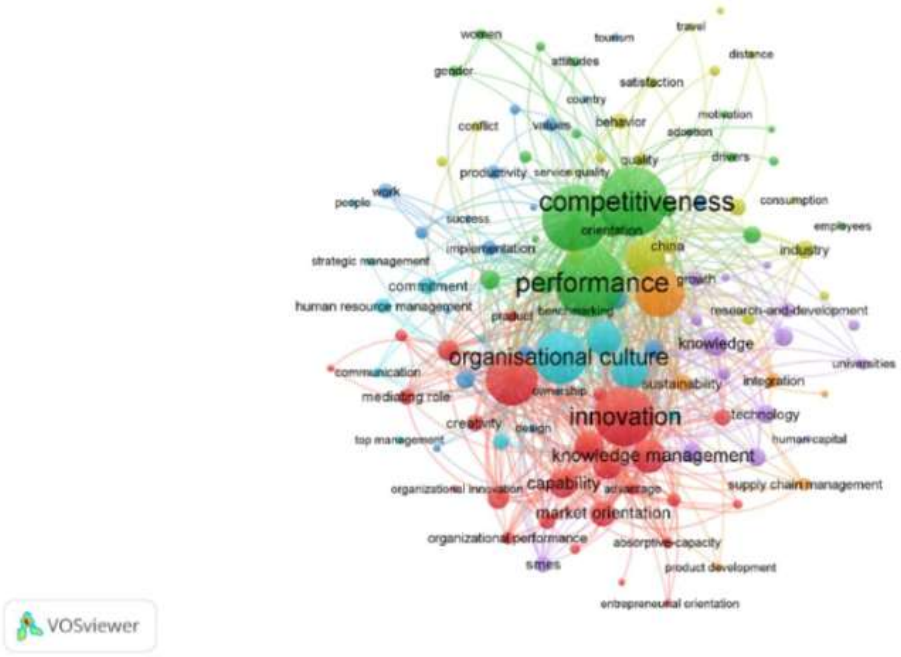
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Sustained growth peaked between 2020 and 2024, coinciding with the advent of digital governance, crisis management research during COVID-19, and the adoption of a greater mixed-methods approach in Public Administration. During this period, Indonesian scholars have become increasingly involved with global governance discourses, especially on technological transformation, adaptive policymaking, and public sector agility.

The analysis of the co-emergence of keywords reveals four main thematic clusters that represent the intellectual core of Public Administration research in Indonesia: governance and policy implementation, public service innovation, digital governance, and collaborative governance.



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The governance cluster remains fundamental, reflecting ongoing national challenges related to decentralization, accountability, and administrative effectiveness. The public service innovation cluster reflects scientific interest in improving the quality of service delivery, organizational performance, and citizen satisfaction. The digital governance cluster represents one of the most dynamic and rapidly growing areas of research, consistent with global trends in digital transformation. Meanwhile, the collaborative governance cluster highlights the growing recognition that complex public issues require multi-actor solutions and inter-organizational coordination.

Further overlay visualization shows the evolution of the research topic over time. The initial research theme centered on governance, decentralization, and bureaucracy. Newer themes—displayed in warmer colors—include digital transformation, smart city governance, innovation ecosystems, and data-driven policymaking. The analysis of the co-authorship network shows the concentration of scientific networks around major universities, including the University of Indonesia, Gadjah Mada University, and IPDN. These institutions serve as national hubs for research productivity and collaboration, with the expansion of international partnerships involving Malaysia, Australia, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

Institutional productivity remains uneven, with a significant gap between large research universities and smaller regional institutions. However, international collaborations are on the rise, especially in the study of digital governance and public sector innovation.

The citation analysis identifies influential works that focus on governance effectiveness, decentralized outcomes, digital service adoption, and public service performance. These works collectively form the conceptual framework of Public Administration in Indonesia.

Table 1. Distribution of Public Administration Publications in Indonesia (2000–2024, n = 278)

Time	Number of Publications	Dominan Theme
2000–2009	34	Government, decentralization, bureaucratic reform
2010–2014	56	Quality of service, performance, policy implementation
2015–2019	89	Innovation, transformation of public services
2020–2024	99	Digital governance, collaboration, crisis governance

Overall, these findings illustrate a dynamic and mature research landscape that increasingly reflects global Public Administration trends while maintaining a strong contextual foundation rooted in Indonesia's unique governance challenges.

DISCUSSION

The results of this bibliographic analysis reveal several important patterns that collectively describe the evolution and maturation of Public Administration science in Indonesia over the past two decades. These patterns, when examined in relation to broader theoretical debates and global research trajectories, show how Indonesian Public Administration research has developed its own identity while simultaneously integrating with international developments in governance, digital transformation, and public sector innovation. The following discussion contextualizes these trends, assesses their implications for the discipline, and identifies areas where further theoretical and methodological advances are needed.

One of the most obvious findings was a significant increase in publication productivity starting around 2015. This reflects not only institutional incentives but also a deeper shift towards more empirical and methodologically diverse research practices. Previous research has

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tended to be descriptive and normative, while more recent scholarship has integrated survey methods, organizational analytics, and digital governance assessments. This development aligns Indonesian science more closely with global Public Administration standards.

Thematic evolution also points to the emergence of digital governance and collaborative governance as key research boundaries. Digital governance reflects the rapid integration of technology into public administration, while collaborative governance responds to the increasing complexity of public issues that require multi-stakeholder coordination. Both themes represent a significant departure from traditional bureaucratic paradigms and signal disciplinary responsiveness to changes in global and national governance.

The pattern of co-authorship reveals strengths and limitations. While leading universities have developed strong research networks and international connections, domestic collaboration remains limited and research productivity is uneven. Expanding a collaborative culture across regional institutions will be critical to strengthening the national research ecosystem.

The citation pattern further suggests that foundational work in governance and institutional reform continues to shape the discipline, but the emergence of highly cited research in digital innovation signals a shift towards the priorities of future-oriented contemporary research.

Overall, the discussion highlighted a dynamic and increasingly sophisticated research landscape characterized by thematic diversification, methodological improvement, and expanded collaboration. At the same time, persistent gaps in methodological rigor, theoretical innovation, and equity-focused research point to important opportunities for future development.

CONCLUSION

This bibliographic study provides a comprehensive overview of the intellectual development, thematic evolution, and collaborative structures that characterized Public Administration research in Indonesia from 2000 to 2024. These findings show significant growth in publication output, diversification of research themes, and increased methodological sophistication. The initial theme centered on decentralization and governance, while the scholarship has recently shifted towards digital transformation, collaborative governance, and innovation in public service delivery. This thematic transition reflects national policy priorities and global shifts in Public Administration research.

Despite these advances, the analysis also reveals challenges, including uneven institutional productivity, limited domestic collaboration, and gaps in theoretical development and equity-oriented research. Addressing these issues will be critical to strengthen the impact of the discipline and relevance to contemporary governance challenges.

Overall, this study shows that Public Administration research in Indonesia has matured into an increasingly dynamic and globally involved field. The insights generated through this bibliographic mapping offer guidance for future research agendas and provide a basis for advancing theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions to the discipline.

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