

Development of Tax Avoidance Research in Asia through Bibliometric Analysis

Loso Judijanto
IPOSS Jakarta

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ABSTRACT

This research employs a bibliometric analysis to investigate the development and trends in tax avoidance research, focusing specifically on the Asian context. Utilizing data from Google Scholar, the study covers literature published between 1938 and 2024. The analysis identifies key thematic clusters including corporate tax avoidance, international tax strategies, and legal frameworks, highlighting the evolution of research focus from foundational legal issues to complex multinational tax practices and ethical considerations. The study also uncovers underexplored areas such as the incentives driving tax avoidance behavior and the role of audit committees, presenting opportunities for future research. Furthermore, the author collaboration network reveals a landscape with significant yet underutilized potential for interdisciplinary cooperation. This comprehensive overview not only enhances understanding of the tax avoidance research landscape but also underscores the need for continued scholarly exploration and collaboration to address emerging challenges in the field.

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Corresponding Author:

Name: Loso Judijanto
Institution: IPOSS Jakarta
e-mail: losojudijantobumn@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Tax avoidance is a complex issue that has attracted substantial attention within the academic community, especially in Asia, where the rapid economic transformations and diverse fiscal policies create a fertile ground for its study [1]. Unlike tax evasion, which is illegal, tax avoidance consists of leveraging the intricacies of the tax system to legally minimize one's tax liabilities [2]. This practice, while legal, raises profound ethical questions about the moral obligations of taxpayers and the role of governance in ensuring fiscal equity [3]. The distinction between evasion and avoidance, though clear

in legal terms, often blurs in public discourse, complicating the efforts to address these issues effectively [4]. The ethical implications of tax avoidance are significant, as they touch upon the fundamental principles of fairness and responsibility in financial contributions to society [5]. By exploiting gaps and loopholes in the tax system, both corporations and individuals may reduce their tax burden, but at a potential cost to public services and infrastructure, which are funded by tax revenues. This raises questions about the balance between legal rights and societal obligations, highlighting the delicate interplay between individual interests and the

common good. The issue is further complicated by the varying interpretations of what constitutes 'fair' tax avoidance, which can differ vastly from one jurisdiction to another, influenced by cultural, economic, and legal contexts.

Moreover, the strategies employed by corporations and individuals to minimize taxes have become increasingly sophisticated alongside the growth and evolution of Asian economies [6], [7]. These strategies often involve intricate schemes and financial instruments that challenge traditional taxation frameworks [8]. For example, the use of offshore financial centers, transfer pricing, and complex corporate structures can obscure the true amount of tax owed, making it difficult for authorities to ascertain and collect revenues effectively [9]. The evolution of these methods reflects not only advancements in financial expertise but also gaps in the regulatory frameworks that govern international and domestic taxation [10].

The impact of tax avoidance extends beyond national boundaries, affecting global economic stability and the distribution of wealth. In Asia, where many countries are still classified as developing, the repercussions can be especially profound. Tax revenues are crucial for funding development projects and public services that can lead to improved socio-economic outcomes. However, when substantial amounts of potential tax revenue are minimized through avoidance strategies, it can hinder progress and exacerbate inequalities. This is particularly pressing in nations where public resources are already limited, and the fiscal capacity is stretched thin [11]. Governments and international bodies have been grappling with these challenges, attempting to tighten regulations and close loopholes. Initiatives like the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) project by the OECD aim to tackle tax avoidance on a global scale by setting international standards and promoting transparency and fairness in tax practices [12]. Yet, the effectiveness of such measures often depends on the cooperation and commitment of individual countries to implement and enforce them, which can vary

significantly across the diverse political and economic landscapes of Asia [13].

The academic interest in tax avoidance has led to a burgeoning field of research that seeks to understand, map, and critique the dynamics of these practices within different Asian contexts. Bibliometric analysis, which quantifies connections and themes within academic literature, provides a structured way to review the extensive studies on tax avoidance. This approach can help identify the dominant narratives, key contributors, and pivotal research that has shaped the understanding of tax avoidance. Furthermore, it can illuminate gaps in the literature where additional research is needed, particularly in areas that may be underexplored or emerging due to new economic and technological developments.

As this field of study expands, it becomes crucial to periodically synthesize the existing research to capture the latest advancements and shifts in academic discourse. A focused bibliometric analysis on tax avoidance within Asia is timely, offering insights that could aid policymakers, scholars, and practitioners in navigating the complexities of this issue. Such an analysis not only enhances the understanding of academic trends but also contributes to the broader dialogue on how best to address the challenges posed by tax avoidance in a way that promotes equity, justice, and sustainable economic growth.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The topic of tax avoidance has been extensively explored in the academic literature, particularly within the context of Asian economies. This literature review delves into the primary themes and findings from studies focused on the strategies, implications, and regulatory responses to tax avoidance in Asia. It highlights significant contributions to the field and identifies areas where further research is needed.

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives on Tax Avoidance

Theoretical frameworks are crucial for understanding the underpinnings of tax

avoidance behavior. According to scholars like [14], the decision-making process behind tax avoidance often involves a complex interplay of legal, financial, and ethical considerations. The economic theory of taxation, as discussed by [15], suggests that tax avoidance is influenced by the perceived equity of the tax system, the complexity of tax laws, and the penalties for non-compliance. In the Asian context, these factors are compounded by rapid economic changes and diverse fiscal environments across countries, which can vary widely in their tax policies and enforcement mechanisms.

2.2 Empirical Studies on Tax Avoidance in Asia

A wealth of empirical research has focused on specific strategies employed by corporations and individuals to minimize their tax liabilities in various Asian countries. A common theme in this literature is the use of transfer pricing, which has been identified as a prevalent method for shifting profits to jurisdictions with more favorable tax rates. Studies by [16] in Hong Kong and [17] in Singapore have documented how multinational corporations exploit regulatory discrepancies between different Asian jurisdictions to reduce their overall tax burdens. Additionally, the role of tax havens has been highlighted in the literature as a significant element of tax avoidance schemes. [18] discuss how jurisdictions such as Hong Kong and Singapore have become attractive destinations for funneling profits due to their low tax rates and non-stringent regulatory frameworks. The impact of these practices on national revenues is profound, as outlined by [19], who estimate substantial revenue losses for countries like China and India due to these avoidance tactics.

2.3 Regulatory and Policy Responses

In response to the challenges posed by tax avoidance, many Asian governments have begun to reform their tax systems to close loopholes and enhance compliance. The introduction of the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) actions by the OECD has been a critical step forward, with many Asian countries adopting these guidelines to curb aggressive tax planning. Research by [20]

evaluates the effectiveness of such international cooperation in increasing transparency and reducing profit shifting activities. Moreover, some studies focus on the domestic reforms within individual Asian countries. For example, research by [21] on South Korea's adoption of stricter transfer pricing documentation requirements showcases a successful case of national policy tightening to discourage tax avoidance. However, the effectiveness of such measures often varies, as indicated by studies on India and Indonesia, which show ongoing struggles with enforcement and compliance [22], [23].

The body of literature on tax avoidance in Asia provides valuable insights into the complexities of managing fiscal policies in rapidly changing economic landscapes. As the region continues to evolve, ongoing research will be essential to understand the shifting dynamics of tax avoidance and to devise effective strategies to mitigate its impacts. This review underscores the importance of both international cooperation and robust national policies in combating tax avoidance and ensuring equitable tax systems.

3. METHODS

This study employs a bibliometric analysis to investigate the development of tax avoidance research in Asia. We collected data from Google Scholar, focusing on articles published from 1938 to 2024. The search terms used included "tax avoidance," "Asia," "tax strategies," and "fiscal policies." Inclusion criteria were set to select only peer-reviewed articles that specifically address tax avoidance practices, impacts, or regulations within Asian countries. The extracted data were then analyzed using VOSviewer software, which allowed for the construction of co-citation and co-authorship networks, helping to identify the most influential authors, articles, and research themes. Furthermore, the software facilitated the examination of trends over time, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of the research landscape.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Citation Metrics

Publication years:	1938-2024
Citation years:	86 (1938-2024)
Papers:	980
Citations:	104151
Cites/year:	1211.06
Cites/paper:	106.28
Cites/author:	55303.81
Papers/author:	520.28
Author/paper:	2.35
h-index:	151
g-index:	283
hI,norm:	112
hI,annual	1.30
hA-index	49
Papers with ACC \geq 1,2,5,10,20:	974,958,786,477,197

Source: Publish or Perish Output, 2024

The bibliometric data presented in Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of tax avoidance research spanning from 1938 to 2024, covering a wide array of metrics that highlight the depth and impact of scholarly contributions in this field over an 86-year period. This extensive timespan showcases how research on tax avoidance has not only evolved but has also maintained a significant level of academic interest and relevance, particularly within the complex realms of economics and fiscal policies.

A total of 980 papers have been published in this period, accumulating a staggering 104,151 citations. This high citation count is indicative of the substantial influence and importance of tax avoidance research. The average of 1211.06 citations per year underscores a consistent interest and engagement with this topic across decades, reflecting the ongoing pertinence of tax strategies and their implications in economic studies. The cites per paper ratio, standing at 106.28, further validates the quality and impactful nature of the research produced; such figures suggest that the field not only generates a considerable volume of work but that each piece significantly contributes to the broader academic and practical understanding of tax avoidance.

The citation metrics reveal intricate details about the collaborative nature and productivity of the authors involved. The average citations per author is remarkably high at 55,303.81, which might suggest prolific output and high engagement within research clusters or could indicate a core group of papers and authors who have made landmark contributions to the field. The figure of 520.28 papers per author, although unusually high, could be reflective of extensive collaborative networks that are typical in fiscal policy research, where multiple authors frequently share credits across numerous publications. Additionally, an average of 2.35 authors per paper indicates a moderate level of collaboration, typical of this research area, which often combines detailed fiscal analysis with broader economic insights.

The indices used to measure influence and productivity offer further insights into the stature and consistency of contributions within this field. An h-index of 151 is exceptionally high and points to the profound impact of this body of research, affirming that at least 151 papers have each garnered citations in triple digits. The g-index at 283 emphasizes that the top-cited papers have significantly shaped academic discourse and policy discussions related to tax avoidance. The normalized individual h-index (hI,norm) of 112 further highlights the consistent and significant contributions of individual researchers in the field.

and the annual h-index ($h_{I,annual}$) at 112 and 1.30, respectively, highlight the enduring influence and regular contributions of researchers over the years. Moreover, the distribution of citations across papers reflects a healthy engagement with the literature. A vast majority of the papers have been cited, with 197 of them achieving more than 20 citations each, indicating both the breadth and depth of influential research within the field.

Overall, table 1 illustrates a dynamic and impactful academic landscape surrounding tax avoidance research in Asia. This field has not only addressed crucial economic and ethical issues but has also fostered robust scholarly communication and collaboration. The data underscore the necessity for continued research to navigate the challenges posed by tax avoidance, particularly as global economic structures continue to evolve.

Table 2 Top Cited Literature

Citation	Author and Year	Title
3313	[24]	Corporate tax avoidance and high-powered incentives
3117	[25]	Long-run corporate tax avoidance
2323	[26]	The effects of executives on corporate tax avoidance
2311	[27]	Corporate tax avoidance and stock price crash risk: Firm-level analysis
1960	[28]	Corporate tax avoidance and firm value
1661	[29]	Tax avoidance, evasion, and administration
1627	[30]	Tax-avoidance activities of US multinational corporations
1435	[31]	Corporate governance, incentives, and tax avoidance
1226	[32]	Tax avoidance and the deadweight loss of the income tax
1176	[33]	Pengaruh return on assets, leverage, corporate governance, ukuran perusahaan dan kompensasi rugi fiskal pada tax avoidance

Table 2, titled "Top Cited Literature," enumerates the most influential research papers in the field of corporate tax avoidance, showcasing the seminal works that have shaped scholarly discourse and policy debates. The citation counts and diversity of topics within this list reflect both the depth and the complexity of issues surrounding tax avoidance. At the top of the list, with 3,313 citations, is the paper by Desai and Dharmapala titled "Corporate tax avoidance and high-powered incentives." This work is pivotal in illustrating how corporate governance and incentive structures, particularly executive compensation, influence companies' tax avoidance strategies. The high citation count indicates the paper's significant impact, likely because it addresses the intersection of finance, governance, and tax law, offering insights into how executive incentives align with shareholder interests through tax planning strategies.

Following closely is the paper by Dyreng, Hanlon, and Maydew, "Long-run corporate tax avoidance," which has accrued 3,117 citations. This study extends the understanding of tax avoidance by examining its persistence over time within firms. The authors delve into how organizational characteristics influence tax strategies, highlighting the role of corporate culture and internal policies in shaping long-term tax avoidance behaviors. The robust methodology and longitudinal analysis provide a valuable framework for understanding the durability of tax strategies, which has evidently resonated with many researchers. Another significant contribution by Dyreng, Hanlon, and Maydew, "The effects of executives on corporate tax avoidance," with 2,323 citations, explores the personal impact of corporate leaders on their organizations' tax behaviors. This paper complements their earlier work by focusing more directly on the role of individual

executive decisions in shaping tax outcomes, thereby personalizing the study of corporate tax avoidance. Such insights are crucial for understanding the micro-level dynamics of tax strategies within the broader macroeconomic and regulatory frameworks.

Kim, Li, and Zhang's study on "Corporate tax avoidance and stock price crash risk: Firm-level analysis," which has garnered 2,311 citations, introduces a novel perspective by linking tax avoidance to financial risk. This paper suggests that aggressive tax strategies can increase a firm's risk of stock price crashes by obscuring true financial performance from the market, thereby contributing to greater volatility and uncertainty. This research has evidently filled a significant gap by connecting tax practices with investment and risk considerations, areas of keen interest to both academics and practitioners. Desai and Dharmapala make another appearance with "Corporate tax avoidance and firm value," cited 1,960 times. This work assesses the broader economic implications of tax avoidance, specifically its impact on firm valuation. By analyzing how the market perceives and values the tax avoidance strategies of firms, this paper offers critical insights into the economic consequences of tax planning, highlighting a direct link between tax strategy and shareholder value. Slemrod and Yitzhaki's "Tax avoidance, evasion, and administration," with 1,661 citations, provides a comprehensive review of tax compliance from a behavioral economics perspective. Their analysis extends beyond mere avoidance to include evasion and the administrative burden, thereby broadening the scope of fiscal compliance studies.

Rego's "Tax-avoidance activities of US multinational corporations," cited 1,627 times, focuses on the global dimension of tax avoidance, particularly how U.S. multinationals manage taxes across different

jurisdictions. This paper is pivotal for understanding the international strategies employed by large corporations to minimize their global tax liabilities. The paper by Armstrong, Blouin, Jagolinzer, et al., titled "Corporate governance, incentives, and tax avoidance," which has 1,435 citations, revisits the themes of governance and incentives, further exploring how these factors influence tax strategies. Their work adds to the growing literature that connects corporate governance structures to financial policy decisions, including tax planning. Feldstein's work on "Tax avoidance and the deadweight loss of the income tax," with 1,226 citations, provides an economic analysis of tax avoidance, discussing its implications for economic efficiency and welfare. This study is fundamental in the economic policy discourse, offering a critical evaluation of how tax policies affect overall economic health. Lastly, the study by Kurniasih, Sari, and Maria, "Pengaruh return on assets, leverage, corporate governance, ukuran perusahaan dan kompensasi rugi fiskal pada tax avoidance," cited 1,176 times, brings a regional perspective, examining how various financial and governance factors influence tax avoidance strategies in Indonesia. This paper enriches the understanding of how local corporate practices and the regulatory environment interact in the context of emerging markets.

Together, these papers form a rich tapestry of research that addresses various aspects of tax avoidance from multiple angles, including its causes, mechanisms, consequences, and regulatory challenges. The diversity of topics and the high citation counts reflect the importance and complexity of tax avoidance issues, demonstrating their central role in the broader discussions of corporate finance, governance, and public policy.

of tax avoidance on governmental policies and revenues. These connections underscore the ongoing dialogue between policymakers and the academic community on how to effectively regulate tax avoidance.

The lines (or edges) between the nodes represent citations or thematic linkages, indicating how these topics are discussed in relation to one another within the

academic literature. Thicker and more numerous lines between certain nodes suggest stronger or more frequent associations. For example, the strong connections between "corporate tax avoidance," "governance," and "incentives" suggest a well-established literature examining how governance structures and incentive systems within corporations influence tax avoidance tactics.

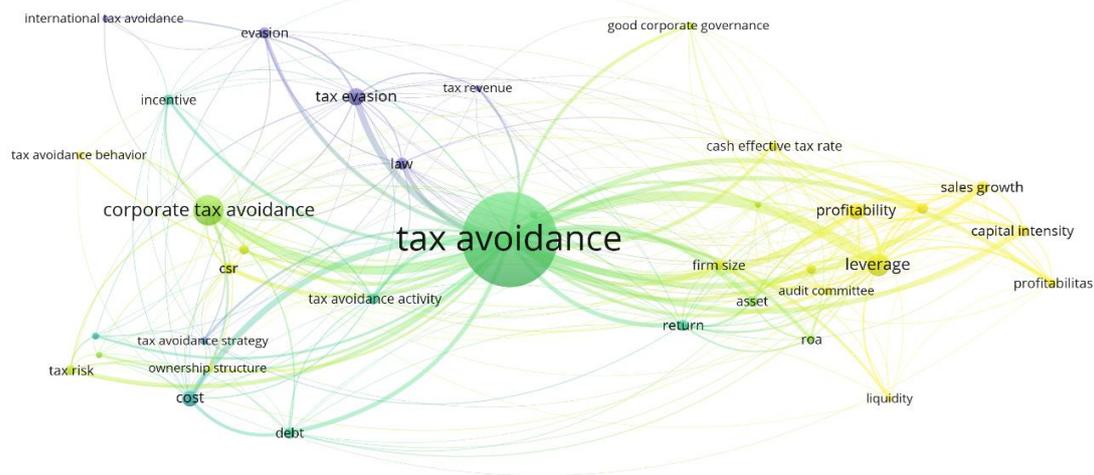


Figure 2. Overlay Visualization

Source: Data Analysis, 2024

The bibliometric visualization above represents an intricate network of research themes surrounding the topic of tax avoidance. The diagram, featuring nodes and connections between these nodes, demonstrates the interrelated nature of various research areas within the field. The intensity of node colors, progressing from blue to yellow, corresponds to more recent publication years, indicating the temporal development and shifts in research focus over time. Here's an in-depth interpretation of this figure, emphasizing the research trends and the dynamic evolution of tax avoidance studies.

At the core of the network lies the largest node, "tax avoidance," representing the primary focus of the surrounding research. Its central position and size indicate that it is a hub connecting various sub-themes and research areas. Other significant nodes like "corporate tax avoidance," "tax evasion," and "tax law" suggest that much of the research is centered around corporate

practices, legal frameworks, and the differences between avoidance (legal reduction of tax liability) and evasion (illegal practices to escape tax).

The gradation of colors from blue to yellow in the nodes denotes the shift in research focus over time. Nodes colored in warmer tones (yellow) indicate more recent research interests. It appears that recent literature has pivoted towards understanding the broader implications of tax avoidance on corporate governance, corporate social responsibility, and international regulation. This shift may reflect a global push towards more ethical business practices and tighter regulation of tax avoidance in response to public and governmental pressure. Additionally, the integration of financial performance metrics with tax behavior reflects a more holistic approach to studying tax strategies, suggesting that recent research recognizes the interconnected nature of taxation with overall corporate strategy and performance.

In the early stages of the research timeline, there was a clear distinction being made between tax evasion (illegal) and tax avoidance (legal), indicating foundational work in defining and distinguishing these concepts within the fiscal and legal frameworks. The prominence of "law" during this period signifies that initial research heavily focused on the legal aspects of tax avoidance, examining the statutes and regulations that define what constitutes legal tax minimization versus illegal evasion. As the timeline progresses, there's a noticeable shift towards more specific discussions about corporate tax avoidance. This suggests an increased academic interest in how businesses, particularly corporations, engage in tax avoidance. The terms of tax risk and ownership structure start to appear as research begins to delve into how different corporate structures impact tax strategy, including how risk is managed within corporate entities. "Cost" and "Debt" terms suggest a growing focus on the financial strategies involved in tax avoidance, particularly how debt and other cost-related strategies are employed to minimize tax liabilities. suggest a growing focus on the financial strategies involved in tax avoidance, particularly how debt and other cost-related strategies are employed to minimize tax

liabilities. The terms of international and tax avoidance underscores the globalization of the corporate landscape and the complexity of managing tax obligations across different jurisdictions, highlighting challenges like profit shifting and the use of tax havens.

The network map's evolution from foundational legal discussions to complex interdisciplinary examinations of tax avoidance shows how the field has expanded to include a wider array of factors, including ethical considerations, corporate governance, and international complexities. This shift not only reflects changes in the global economic environment but also a deeper understanding of the impacts of tax avoidance strategies on public finance, corporate accountability, and international tax norms. The progression from blue to yellow in the network visualization not only maps out the chronological development of the tax avoidance literature but also highlights the thematic evolution from basic legal definitions and frameworks to complex multinational and ethical considerations. This trajectory is indicative of the increasing complexity of global business operations and the corresponding need for more sophisticated, ethically-grounded, and legally-compliant tax strategies.

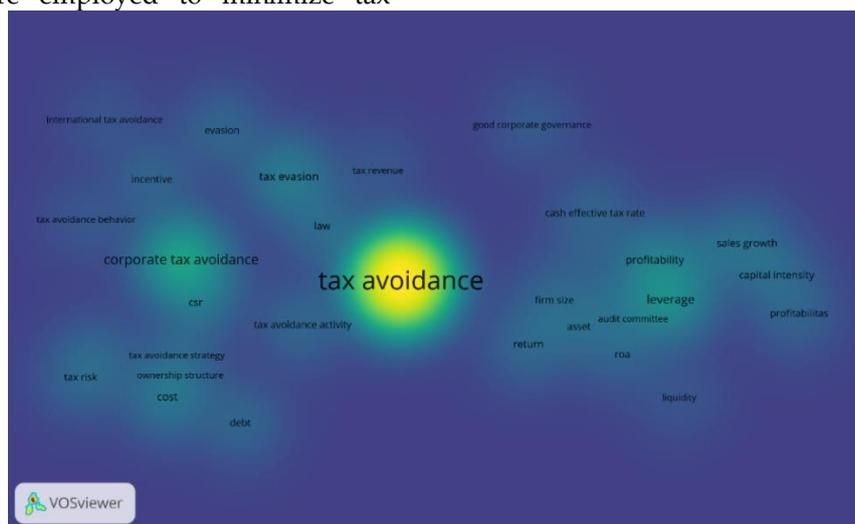


Figure 3. Density Visualization

Source: Data Analysis, 2024

The third figure above offers a fascinating lens through which we can identify less bright areas, representing

potential gaps or underexplored themes in tax avoidance research. These areas may not currently attract the bulk of scholarly

attention but present valuable opportunities for future research. By examining the less bright nodes and their interconnections in the network, we can uncover promising avenues that might provide significant contributions to the field. Let's explore these potential research opportunities in depth.

Although central themes like corporate tax avoidance and law are well-explored, there appears to be less focus on the specific incentives that drive tax avoidance behavior at both individual and organizational levels. Research could explore the psychological and financial incentives that encourage tax avoidance, examining how different compensation structures, corporate cultures, and individual ethics influence decisions to engage in tax minimization strategies. The area of ownership structure and tax risk while linked to corporate tax avoidance, also appears less saturated in current research. Future studies could delve deeper into how various ownership structures—such as family-owned versus publicly traded companies—affect attitudes and strategies towards tax avoidance. Additionally, research could explore how ownership concentration impacts risk perception and tolerance towards engaging in aggressive tax strategies.

Despite its relevance in a globalized economy, there is room to expand on how companies navigate the complex web of international tax laws. Studies could focus on

4.2 Co-Authorship Network Analysis

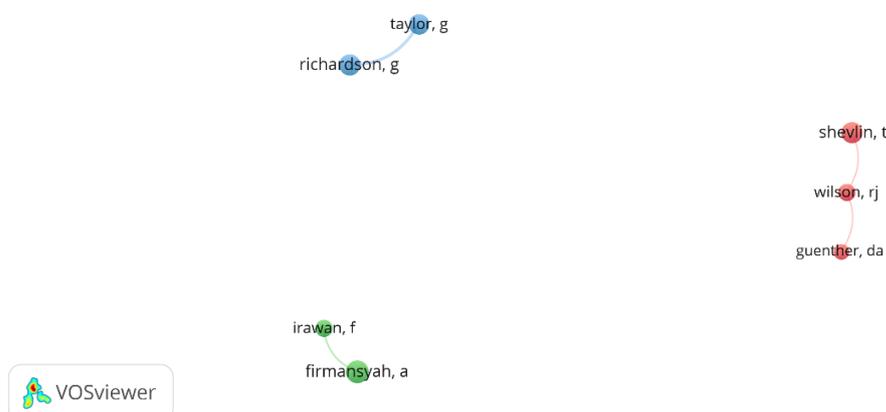


Figure 4. Author Collaboration

Source: Data Analysis, 2024

specific strategies used in different jurisdictions and the effectiveness of regulatory frameworks like the OECD's BEPS project in curbing aggressive tax practices. Comparative studies across countries could reveal insights into the efficacy of international tax policies and enforcement mechanisms. While considerable work has been done on defining and distinguishing between tax evasion and avoidance, less bright areas in the map suggest that further research could explore the boundary between legal tax avoidance and illegal tax evasion. This includes examining how legislative changes are blurring or sharpening this distinction and what that means for corporate and individual tax strategies.

The relationship between corporate financing strategies, such as leveraging debt and tax avoidance activities, also appears to be a less explored area. Future research could investigate how companies use debt to finance tax avoidance activities or how tax avoidance strategies influence a company's capital structure and vice versa. Lastly, the connection between asset management, return on assets, and tax strategies is another area ripe for exploration. Research could look into how asset-heavy versus asset-light companies approach tax avoidance differently and the resultant impacts on their financial performance and tax liabilities.

The last figure displays a network of researchers, identified by their last names, which illustrates the scholarly contributions and collaborations within a specific academic field. Each node represents an individual researcher, and the proximity of nodes to one another suggests the level of co-authorship or thematic similarity in their research. The absence of lines connecting these researchers indicates that while they are all involved in the same broad area of study, direct collaborative links between them are either minimal or non-existent within the dataset analyzed.

The layout of the nodes across the visual field can offer insights into the dispersion of research activities and the potential diversity or specialization within the field. For instance, researchers like "taylor, g" and "richardson, g" appear closer to each other, which might suggest thematic or methodological similarities in their work, even in the absence of direct co-authorship. Conversely, researchers placed further apart, such as "firmansyah, a" and "wilson, rj", may indicate distinct sub-areas of research focus or differing theoretical approaches within the same broad academic discipline.

This map serves as a starting point for identifying key contributors in the field and exploring potential gaps or opportunities for new research collaborations. It can help scholars and practitioners identify influential researchers and understand the landscape of academic contributions in their area of interest. Moreover, for someone new to the field or looking to establish new collaborative networks, this visualization highlights individuals who might hold pivotal roles in knowledge creation and dissemination within this specific academic territory.

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5. CONCLUSION

The series of bibliometric analyses we have conducted provide a rich, multifaceted view of the field of tax avoidance research. Thematic clusters identified through VOSviewer reveal a strong central focus on tax avoidance, branching into specialized areas like corporate tax avoidance, international strategies, and legal frameworks, reflecting the field's depth and the evolving nature of tax practices. Over time, the research trend has shifted from foundational legal and corporate governance issues towards intricate aspects of international tax avoidance and ethical considerations, marking a response to global economic changes and increased scrutiny of corporate behaviors. This evolution points to several underexplored areas such as the incentives behind tax avoidance behavior and the effectiveness of audit committees, presenting ripe opportunities for future research. Additionally, the analysis of author collaboration highlights a landscape where several key researchers work in parallel without strong collaborative ties, suggesting potential for greater interdisciplinary cooperation to harness diverse expertise and tackle emerging challenges in the field more comprehensively. Collectively, these insights not only enhance our understanding of tax avoidance research dynamics but also underline the importance of continued scholarly exploration and collaboration to adapt to an increasingly complex regulatory and economic environment.

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