

Research on Islamic Education and Its Evaluation: A Keyword- Based Bibliometric Analysis

Mohd Erfino Johari

Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia

Syatila Che Saruji

syatila.saruji@uptm.edu.my

Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia

Research Article

Keywords: Islamic education, bibliometric analysis, keyword co-occurrence, thematic evolution, Scopus

Posted Date: September 1st, 2026

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-10862107/v1>

License:   This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

[Read Full License](#)

Additional Declarations: No competing interests reported.

Abstract

Purpose:

This study aims to provide a comprehensive bibliometric mapping of Islamic education research over more than five decades, examining its intellectual structure, thematic dominance, and longitudinal evolution. Specifically, it characterises the document profiles and publication dynamics of Islamic education research from 1970 to 2025, and identifies the dominant keywords and thematic clusters that structurally interconnect the field.

Method:

A bibliometric research design was adopted, drawing on bibliographic data retrieved from the Scopus database using a title-restricted search strategy on the term "Islamic education". A total of 471 publications (1970–2025) were screened following the PRISMA framework. Data cleaning was performed using OpenRefine; performance analysis using BiblioMagika; and network visualisation, thematic mapping, thematic evolution, treemap, word cloud, and multiple correspondence analyses using VOSviewer and Biblioshiny.

Findings:

Islamic education research progressed through three phases: a foundational period (1970–2008), a consolidation phase (2009–2018), and a rapid expansion phase (2019–2025). The field accumulated 2,713 citations (h-index = 23; g-index = 37). Four major clusters were identified: pedagogical- institutional development, religious-philosophical foundations, learner-centred outcomes, and emerging digital and sustainability discourses. Indonesia dominated contributing countries, while themes progressively shifted from theological foundations toward pedagogical innovation and technology integration.

Recommendations:

Future research should expand to multi-database analyses, include underrepresented regional contexts, and strengthen evaluation-related and technology-oriented strands within Islamic education scholarship.

1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic education represents one of the most enduring and influential educational traditions in the world, with roots tracing back over fourteen centuries. As a field of inquiry, it encompasses the philosophical, theological, pedagogical, institutional, and socio-cultural dimensions of education grounded in Islamic principles and practices. From its early formulations in classical institutions such as the *kuttab*, *madrasah*, and *pesantren* to its contemporary expressions in modern schools, universities, and digital

learning environments, Islamic education has continuously evolved in response to shifting religious, cultural, political, and technological contexts. In recent decades, the field has gained significant scholarly attention as researchers and policymakers seek to understand how Islamic educational systems can effectively respond to contemporary challenges, including curriculum reform, globalisation, digital transformation, multiculturalism, and the cultivation of moral and civic values among Muslim learners.

The growing global interest in Islamic education is reflected in the rapid expansion of academic publications across diverse subdomains, including Islamic character education, Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), Islamic religious schools (*madrasah*), non-formal Islamic education, religious moderation, multiple intelligences in Islamic schools, and Islamic banking and finance education. This proliferation of research has produced a rich but increasingly fragmented body of knowledge,

making it essential to systematically map the intellectual structure and thematic development of the field. Bibliometric analysis offers a robust quantitative approach for this purpose, enabling researchers to identify publication trends, citation patterns, influential contributors, and conceptual linkages that shape the trajectory of a discipline (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Russo & Vistocco, 2026; van Eck & Waltman, 2014).

1.1 Problem Statement

Despite the growing volume of bibliometric studies on Islamic education, the existing literature remains structurally fragmented and thematically narrow. Prior bibliometric reviews have predominantly focused on specific subdomains, such as Islamic character education (Kistoro et al., 2023; Nirwana et al., 2024), Islamic education management (Ariona et al., 2023), Islamic religious schools (Hussin et al., 2024), Islamic banking and finance education (Wahyudi et al., 2023), multiple intelligences in Islamic schools (Kadis et al., 2023), non-formal Islamic education (Pratama et al., 2025), religious moderation (Zamroni et al., 2025), and quality assurance in pesantren (Lathifah et al., 2025). While these studies have contributed valuable insights into individual segments of the field, they tend to be sector-specific, geographically concentrated, and methodologically descriptive. As a result, no existing bibliometric study has provided a comprehensive, large-scale, longitudinal mapping that captures the entire intellectual landscape of Islamic education across its full historical trajectory.

Furthermore, evaluation-related constructs including teacher assessment, quality frameworks, self-efficacy, and performance measurement remain weakly positioned within the broader intellectual landscape of Islamic education research. The absence of a consolidated bibliometric framework limits researchers', educators', and policymakers' ability to identify dominant thematic clusters, trace longitudinal evolution, and detect emerging research frontiers. There is therefore a pressing need for an integrative bibliometric study that systematically examines the structure, dynamics, and conceptual evolution of Islamic education research across more than five decades.

1.2 Research Objectives

To address the identified gaps, this study pursues two primary objectives. First, it aims to provide a structured overview of Islamic education research by examining its bibliometric characteristics through document statistics, including publication volume, citation performance, authorship patterns, and impact indices. Second, it seeks to conduct a comprehensive, large-scale keyword-based bibliometric mapping of Islamic education research spanning 1970–2025, integrating performance analysis with science-mapping techniques to identify dominant themes, conceptual clusters, and longitudinal trajectories.

1.3 Research Questions

By integrating bibliometric profiling with keyword-based thematic mapping, the study addresses the following questions:

1. What are the document profiles and publication dynamics of Islamic education research from 1970 to 2025?
2. What are the dominant keywords and thematic clusters in Islamic education research, and how are they structurally interconnected?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study makes several important contributions to the field of Islamic education. Theoretically, it offers the first integrated, large-scale bibliometric mapping of Islamic education research spanning more than five decades, thereby bridging the fragmentation between pedagogical, institutional, and evaluative discourses. Methodologically, it advances bibliometric scholarship by combining performance analysis with multi-layered science-mapping techniques, including keyword co-occurrence networks, overlay and density visualisations, thematic mapping, thematic evolution analysis, tree-map visualisation, and factorial conceptual modelling. Practically, the findings offer valuable guidance for researchers seeking to identify research gaps and emerging frontiers, for educators aiming to align their pedagogical practices with evolving disciplinary trends, and for policymakers tasked with shaping the future of Islamic education systems in an increasingly globalised and digitalised world.

2. METHOD

This study adopts a bibliometric research design to systematically examine the intellectual structure, thematic evolution, and emerging research trends in Islamic education. Bibliometric analysis offers a quantitative and objective approach for mapping scientific knowledge by analysing publication outputs, citation patterns, and conceptual linkages through co-occurrence and network visualisation techniques (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Russo & Vistocco, 2026; van Eck & Waltman, 2014). This method is particularly suitable for a multidisciplinary field such as Islamic education, which intersects with religious studies, pedagogy, sociology, and public policy. By integrating performance analysis with science-mapping techniques - including co-authorship, co-occurrence, thematic evolution analyses, tree-map, and factorial analysis - this study identifies the most impactful publications, dominant research clusters, collaborative networks, and evolving thematic directions that have shaped Islamic education research over time.

2.1 Data Source and Rationale for Scopus Selection

Bibliographic data were obtained exclusively from the Scopus database. Scopus was selected due to its broad coverage of peer-reviewed journals in education, social sciences, religious studies, and interdisciplinary research areas central to Islamic education scholarship. Compared with the Web of Science (WoS), Scopus provides wider journal inclusion, detailed author profiling, and comprehensive citation tracking, facilitating more accurate performance analysis and science- mapping procedures (Abdelwahab et al., 2024; Cabanillas-Lazo et al., 2022; Misuraca, 2026). Furthermore, Scopus metadata are highly compatible with established bibliometric tools such as VOSviewer and Biblioshiny (Kafi et al., 2023; Loberas-Abilar, 2026; Oware & Moulya, 2022). Limiting the dataset to a single database also reduces the risk of duplicate records and metadata inconsistencies, strengthening data consistency, replicability, and analytical reliability (Hallinger, 2023; McKay, 2026; Sajovic & Podgornik, 2022).

2.2 Search Strategy and Scope

The search strategy was confined to the article title field using the query TITLE("Islamic education"), ensuring that all retrieved publications explicitly addressed Islamic education as the central focus. Restricting the search to titles enhances thematic accuracy and minimises the inclusion of peripheral studies, thereby improving conceptual precision in bibliometric mapping. The analysis covers the period from 1970 to 2025, capturing more than five decades of scholarly development. The search was restricted to English-language publications, with no limitations imposed on document type, source type, or subject area, ensuring broad and cross-disciplinary coverage of the field. The initial search retrieved 636 records from the Scopus database. Following a systematic screening procedure guided by the PRISMA framework, 165 records were excluded based on three criteria: duplicate entries, publications thematically irrelevant to Islamic education as the primary focus, and articles employing a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology. The exclusion of SLR-based articles was deliberate, as this study aims to map the empirical and primary research landscape of Islamic education rather than synthesising existing secondary reviews. The final dataset comprised 471 unique publications, which were subsequently exported for bibliometric analysis.

2.3 Data Collection and Screening

The search was conducted on 2 October 2025 and initially retrieved records from the Scopus database. The screening procedure followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework (Moher et al., 2009) to ensure methodological transparency and replicability. After the cleaning and validation process, the final dataset comprised 471 unique publications. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram of the search and screening process.

2.4 Data Cleaning, Harmonisation, and Analytical Tools

A comprehensive data cleaning and harmonisation process was conducted using OpenRefine (Ahmi, 2023) to standardise variations in author names, institutional affiliations, and keywords. For performance and citation analysis, BiblioMagika (Ahmi, 2024) was employed to generate key descriptive indicators,

including annual publication trends, citation metrics, highly cited documents, prolific authors, and source title distributions. Network visualisation and relational analyses - including co-authorship and keyword co-occurrence - were conducted using VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2014). Thematic mapping, conceptual structure analysis, and thematic evolution were performed using Biblioshiny, the web-based interface of the Bibliometrix R package (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

2.5 Ethical Considerations

All data utilised in this study were obtained from publicly accessible bibliographic databases and did not involve human participants, confidential information, or sensitive data. Consequently, formal ethical approval was not required.

3. RESULT

This section presents the findings of the bibliometric analysis of Islamic education research based on 471 Scopus-indexed publications spanning 1970 to 2025. The results are organised beginning with document profiles and citation performance, followed by publication trends, influential documents, and science-mapping outputs.

3.1 Document Profiles

Table 1 summarises the main citation metrics and descriptive characteristics of the dataset. The analysis covers 56 citable years encompassing 471 publications, indicating sustained long-term scholarly engagement. A total of 1,316 authors contributed, yielding an average of 2.79 authors per paper - indicating moderate research collaboration. Of the 471 publications, 329 have received at least one citation. The dataset accumulated 2,713 total citations, with an average of 5.76 citations per paper and 8.25 citations per cited paper. The field records an h-index of 23, a g-index of 37, and an m-index of 0.411, while the citation sum within the h-core amounts to 2,083. These indicators reveal that Islamic education research has developed into a structured and increasingly collaborative field with measurable scholarly influence.

Table 1. Citation Metrics

Main Information	Data
Publication Years	1970 - 2025
Total Publications	471
Citable Year	56
Number of Contributing Authors	1316
Number of Cited Papers	329
Total Citations	2,713
Citation per Paper	5.76
Citation per Cited Paper	8.25
Citation per Year	49.33
Citation per Author	2.06
Author per Paper	2.79
Citation sum within h-Core	2,083
h-index	23
g-index	37
m-index	0.411

Source: Generated using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)

3.2. Publication Trends

The annual distribution of publications reveals a clear three-phase evolution. During the early development phase (1970-2008), publication output remained low and sporadic, with most years recording only one to three publications. Despite the limited volume, several early works achieved substantial citation impact - notably Eickelman (1978) with 208 citations. The consolidation phase (2009-2018) saw annual output rise steadily from six publications in 2009 to 15 in 2018, accompanied by increasing author collaboration and stronger citation performance, with 2018 recording 249 citations. A rapid expansion phase (2019-2025) saw output surge from 31 publications in 2019 to a peak of 76 in 2024, reflecting intensified global engagement and thematic diversification. Figure 2 illustrates the cumulative growth trajectory, with a fitted polynomial trendline confirming systematic acceleration.

3.2 Highly Cited Documents

Table 2 presents the top 10 most cited publications. The citation profile reveals a field shaped by foundational theoretical works and contemporary normative debates. Eickelman (1978) leads with 208 citations, establishing an early sociological foundation for understanding Islamic education as cultural reproduction. Sahin (2018) ranks second with 124 citations and the highest citation rate per year (15.50 citations/year). Works on power, discourse, and modernity - notably Talbani (1996) and Lukens-Bull (2001) reflect sustained scholarly interest in tradition-modernity tensions, while more recent publications on tolerance, diversity, and governance demonstrate alignment with contemporary policy debates

Table 2
Top 10 Highly Cited Articles

No.	Authors	Title	Source Title	Cites	Cites/Year
1	Eickelman (1978)	The Art of Memory: Islamic Education and its Social Reproduction	Comp. Studies in Society & History	208	4.33
2	Sahin (2018)	Critical issues in islamic education studies: Rethinking islamic and western liberal secular values	Religions	124	15.50
3	Talbani (1996)	Pedagogy, power, and discourse: Transformation of Islamic education	Comparative Education Review	108	3.60
4	Lukens-Bull (2001)	Two sides of the same coin: Modernity and tradition in Islamic education in Indonesia	Anthropology & Education Quarterly	90	3.60
5	Niyozov & Memon (2011)	Islamic education and Islamization: Evolution of themes, continuities and new directions	J. Muslim Minority Affairs	48	3.20
6	van der Noll & Saroglou (2015)	Anti-Islam or Anti-religion? Understanding Objection against Islamic Education	J. Ethnic & Migration Studies	40	3.64
7	Hussain (2004)	Islamic education: why is there a need for it?	Journal of Beliefs and Values	40	1.82
8	Afrianty (2012)	Islamic education and youth extremism in Indonesia	J. Policing, Intelligence & Counter Terrorism	35	2.50
9	Tamuri (2007)	Islamic Education teachers' perceptions of the teaching of akhlāq in Malaysian secondary schools	Journal of Moral Education	35	1.84
10	Mohamed (2014)	Islamic Education, Eco-ethics and Community	Studies in Philosophy & Education	34	2.83
Source: Generated using biblioMagika® (Ahmi, 2024)					

3.4. Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis

3.4.1 Network Visualisation

Figure 3 presents the VOSviewer network visualisation of author keyword co-occurrence. The map reveals a structured yet interconnected intellectual landscape. Islamic education occupies the centre as the dominant and most interconnected node, confirming its role as the conceptual anchor. Three prominent clusters emerge: (1) a pedagogical and institutional cluster linking Islamic schools, teaching and learning, educational technology, e-learning, and Malaysia; (2) a student- and outcome- oriented cluster connecting students, learning outcomes, sustainable development, and socio- economic themes; and (3) a normative and philosophical cluster including Islam, religion, curriculum, character education, and tolerance. An additional cluster around Islamic education teachers, self- efficacy, and instrument suggests growing interest in teacher-related competencies and empirical measurement.

3.4.2 Overlay Visualisation

Figure 4 presents the overlay visualisation, in which the colour gradient (blue to yellow) represents the temporal evolution of themes. Foundational themes such as Islam, religion, philosophy, and madrasa are associated with earlier periods, reflecting the field's strong roots in theological and institutional analyses. More recent keywords - educational technology, e-learning, sustainable development, self-efficacy, and innovation - appear in lighter shades, indicating emerging research directions aligned with digital transformation and global development agendas.

3.4.3 Density Visualisation

Figure 5 presents the density visualisation. The strongest density is centred on Islamic education, with surrounding high-density areas including education, religion, Islam, curriculum, and students. Moderate-density zones appear around educational technology, e-learning, learning outcomes, and sustainable development, while terms such as self-efficacy, instrument, and strategy appear in lower-density regions, indicating emerging or more specialised research directions.

3.5 Thematic Analysis

3.5.1 Thematic Map

Figure 6 presents the thematic map classifying themes based on centrality (relevance) and density (development maturity). In the motor themes quadrant (upper-right), clusters such as Islamic religious education-knowledge-learning model and education-Islam-Indonesia-teaching-curriculum represent both highly central and well-developed themes, constituting the intellectual core of the field. The basic themes quadrant (lower-right) includes management-Islamic boarding school-educational innovation and Islamic education teachers-instrument-self-assessment - foundational yet still consolidating areas. Niche themes (upper-left) such as human-adolescent-female, moderate Islam, and multiculturalism are well-developed but relatively isolated. The emerging quadrant (lower-left) contains information technology,

online learning, artificial intelligence, and progressive Islam, signalling evolving directions that have not yet achieved centrality.

3.5.2 Thematic Evolution

Figure 7 illustrates thematic evolution across four periods: 1970–2017, 2018–2020, 2021–2024, and 2025. During 1970–2017, the field was anchored in Islamic education, education, teaching, Arabic language, and Indonesia, reflecting institutional and linguistic analyses. The 2018–2020 period saw greater differentiation, with curriculum, Islamic religious education, and Islamic education teachers gaining prominence alongside emerging sustainable development themes. Between 2021 and 2024, new themes such as higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), computer-aided instruction, COVID- 19, and students emerged, reflecting responsiveness to digital transformation and pandemic-related disruptions. By 2025, Islamic schools, Islamic education teachers, and Islamic religious education consolidate as leading themes, suggesting increasing emphasis on implementation and governance.

3.5.3 Word Cloud and Tree-map

Figure 8 presents the word cloud visualisation. The largest terms - education, Islam, Indonesia, religion, curriculum, teaching, and students - confirm the field's anchoring in religious-educational discourse with significant geographical concentration in Indonesia. Emerging themes including e- learning, educational technology, COVID-19, self-efficacy, and innovation indicate increasing engagement with digital transformation. Figure 9 presents the treemap, with Islamic education (28%) overwhelmingly dominating the field, followed by education, Indonesia, Islam, teaching, curriculum, and religion.

3.5.4 Factorial Analysis

Figure 10 presents the factorial analysis using multiple correspondence analysis (MCA). Two dimensions explain 47.4% and 15.77% of variance, respectively. Four primary conceptual clusters emerge: (1) a pedagogical-institutional dimension centred on teacher development, educational practice, and assessment frameworks; (2) a context-specific and reform-oriented strand integrating digital transformation and environmental discourse within national settings; (3) a learner-centred and methodological dimension focused on student performance and empirical research; and (4) an emerging macro-level policy and development-oriented discourse that remains partially fragmented from core pedagogical clusters.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Summary of Key Findings

This study offers a comprehensive bibliometric mapping of Islamic education research from 1970 to 2025, drawing on 471 Scopus-indexed publications authored by 1,316 scholars. Three discernible developmental phases were identified: a foundational period (1970–2008) marked by low publication volume but high-impact seminal works; a consolidation phase (2009–2018) characterised by steady

growth and maturing scholarship; and a rapid expansion phase (2019–2025) driven by accelerated global engagement and interdisciplinary diversification. The field accumulated 2,713 citations, an h-index of 23, and a g-index of 37. Four interrelated thematic clusters were identified: pedagogical-institutional development, religious-philosophical foundations, learner-centred outcomes, and emerging digital and sustainability discourses.

4.2 Interpretation of Findings

The longitudinal trajectory observed mirrors broader transformations in global educational scholarship. The early dominance of seminal works by Eickelman (1978), Talbani (1996), and Lukens-Bull (2001) reflects the foundational role of sociological and anthropological inquiry. The transition into pedagogical specialisation during the consolidation phase coincides with growing international interest in religious education curricula, teacher professionalisation, and comparative studies. The surge in publications from 2019 aligns with global acceleration of digital learning, curriculum reform, and policy debates on religious moderation and sustainable development. The dominance of Indonesia as the leading contributor reflects the country's institutionalised commitment to Islamic education, yet also reveals an imbalance in the global research landscape - with limited contributions from the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia.

The strong presence of Western-based theoretical frameworks in highly cited works further suggests an asymmetric integration of classical Islamic scholarship with contemporary educational theory. The relative peripherality of artificial intelligence, online learning, and modernisation themes within the thematic map indicates that these areas remain emerging rather than central, presenting opportunities for deeper theoretical synthesis.

4.3 Implications for Practice

The centrality of pedagogical and teacher-related themes underscores the importance of investing in teacher development, instructional design, and competency-based assessment frameworks within Islamic educational institutions. The growing prominence of educational technology and innovation signals that Islamic schools must continue to integrate digital tools without compromising their foundational religious and moral commitments. The alignment of recent research with sustainable development, tolerance, and character education highlights the field's potential to contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 on quality education. For policymakers, the findings provide an evidence-based foundation for designing curriculum reforms, accreditation frameworks, and quality assurance mechanisms that reflect both enduring religious foundations and evolving contemporary priorities.

4.4 Positioning Against Prior Studies

Table 3 positions the current study relative to existing bibliometric reviews on Islamic education. A review of prior studies reveals a consistent pattern of thematic narrowness and methodological limitation. Studies such as Kadis et al. (2023), Kistoro et al. (2023), and Ariona et al. (2023) are domain-

restricted, confining their analyses to specific subdomains such as multiple intelligences in Islamic schools, Islamic character education, and Islamic education management, respectively. Hussin et al. (2024) and Nirwana et al. (2024), while broader in scope, remain constrained by limited time coverage or geographical concentration, and none of the prior studies employed factorial analysis (MCA) as a conceptual structure mapping technique. Furthermore, no existing study has provided a longitudinal mapping spanning the full historical trajectory of Islamic education from 1970 to the present.

The current study addresses these gaps by offering the first integrated, large-scale, longitudinal bibliometric mapping of Islamic education research spanning 1970–2025. Methodologically, it is the only study to combine eight complementary science-mapping techniques performance analysis, keyword co-occurrence, overlay, density, thematic map, thematic evolution, treemap, and factorial analysis (MCA) within a single unified framework. In doing so, it bridges the fragmentation between pedagogical, institutional, and evaluative discourses that has characterised prior bibliometric reviews, thereby providing a consolidated and holistic framework for understanding the intellectual trajectory and future direction of Islamic education scholarship.

Table 3
Positioning of the Current Study Against Prior Bibliometric Reviews

Author(s)	Domain	Source / Coverage	Attributes Examined	Key Gap Addressed
Kadis et al. (2023)	Multiple Intelligences in Islamic Schools	Scopus (1982–2022)	Publication trends, co-authorship, keyword co-occurrence	Limited to MI-Islamic school nexus only
Kistoro et al. (2023)	Islamic Character Education	Scopus (2010–2023)	Co-authorship, keyword networks, citation analysis	Geographically concentrated; no longitudinal evolution
Ariona et al. (2023)	Islamic Education Management	Scopus (1983–2023)	Publication trends, co-occurrence, overlay analysis	Domain-restricted; no thematic evolution or factorial analysis
Hussin et al. (2024)	Islamic Religious Schools	Scopus (1995–2022)	Thematic mapping, bibliographic coupling	No factorial analysis; limited time coverage
Nirwana et al. (2024)	Islamic Education & Character in Indonesia	Scopus (1970–2024)	Keyword networks, collaboration, citation analysis	Narrowed to Indonesia context; no factorial analysis (MCA)
Current Study (2026)	Islamic Education (holistic)	Scopus (1970–2025) - 471 publications	Performance analysis, co-occurrence, overlay, density, thematic map, thematic evolution, tree-map, Factorial analysis (MCA)	First integrated longitudinal mapping; bridges pedagogy-institution-evaluation fragmentation
Source: Compiled by the authors				

5. CONCLUSION

This study set out to provide a comprehensive bibliometric mapping of Islamic education research over more than five decades. Drawing on 471 Scopus-indexed publications, the analysis reveals that Islamic education has progressed through three developmental phases - foundational (1970–2008), consolidation (2009–2018), and rapid expansion (2019–2025), accumulating 2,713 citations with an h-index of 23 and a g-index of 37. The thematic landscape is anchored by Islamic education as the dominant conceptual core, surrounded by four interrelated clusters: pedagogical- institutional development, religious-philosophical foundations, learner-centred outcomes, and emerging digital and sustainability discourses. Indonesia consistently emerged as the leading contributing country, while the field's emphasis has progressively shifted from theological foundations toward pedagogical innovation, technology integration, and alignment with global development agendas.

This study makes three distinct contributions to the field of Islamic education. First, it offers the first integrated, large-scale keyword-based bibliometric mapping of Islamic education research spanning 1970–2025, addressing the structural fragmentation that has characterised prior bibliometric reviews limited to specific subdomains. Second, it advances bibliometric scholarship by being the only study to combine eight complementary science-mapping techniques namely performance analysis, keyword co-occurrence, overlay, density, thematic mapping, thematic evolution, treemap, and factorial analysis (MCA), within a single unified framework, going beyond the methodological scope of all prior studies including Kadis et al. (2023), Kistoro et al. (2023), Ariona et al. (2023), Hussin et al. (2024), and Nirwana et al. (2024). Third, it provides a consolidated framework that bridges the fragmentation between pedagogical, institutional, and evaluative discourses, connecting traditional institutional discourse with contemporary pedagogical, technological, and policy-oriented research in a manner that no prior bibliometric study on Islamic education has achieved.

Future research should expand to multi-database analyses incorporating Web of Science and Google Scholar, include underrepresented regional contexts such as the Middle East, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, and deepen empirical exploration of emerging themes including artificial intelligence, online learning, and evaluation frameworks in Islamic education. Complementing bibliometric methods with systematic literature reviews and qualitative meta-syntheses will provide a more holistic understanding of this vibrant and evolving field.

Declarations

Author Contribution

S.C.S. and M.E.J. conceived and designed the study. M.E.J. performed data collection and cleaning. S.C.S. conducted the bibliometric analyses, including VOSviewer, Biblioshiny, and BiblioMagika. S.C.S. and M.E.J. wrote the main manuscript text. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

References

1. Abdelwahab S, Taha M, Jerah A, Farasani A, Abdullah S, Aljahdali I, Babiker Y. Artificial intelligence and microbiome research: Evolution of hotspots, research trends, and thematic-based narrative review. *Cell Mol Biol.* 2024;70(10):182–92. <https://doi.org/10.14715/cmb/2024.70.10.24>.
2. Ahmi A. (2023). OpenRefine: An approachable tool for cleaning and harmonizing bibliographical data. 11th International Conference on Applied Science and Technology 2022 AIP Conference Proceedings, 2827, 030006. <https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0164724>
3. Ahmi A. (2024). BiblioMagika. <https://bibliomagika.com>
4. Aria M, Cuccurullo C. bibliometrix: An R-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis. *J Informetrics.* 2017;11(4):959–75. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2017.08.007>.

5. Ariona VD, Inayati NL, Apriantoro MS, Ashfahany AE, Tjandra EA. Charting the course of Islamic education management research: A comprehensive bibliometric analysis for future inquiry. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*. 2023;4(4):950–63. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v4i4.711>.
6. Cabanillas-Lazo M, Quispe-Vicuña C, Barja-Oré J, Fernández-Giusti A, Munive-Degregori A, Retamozo-Siancas Y, Mayta-Tovalino F. A 10-year bibliometric analysis of global research on gut microbiota and Parkinson's disease. *Biomed Res Int*. 2022;2022(1). <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/4144781>.
7. Hallinger P. Bibliometric review methodology and state of the science bibliometric review of research on problem-based learning, 2017–2021. *Interdisciplinary J Problem- Based Learn*. 2023;17(2). <https://doi.org/10.14434/ijpbl.v17i2.35761>.
8. Hussin MYM, Muhammad F, Razak AA, Awang SA. Islamic religious school as an alternative education institution in the global era: A bibliometric and thematic analysis. *Int J Learn Teach Educational Res*. 2024;23(9):560–91. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.23.9.28>.
9. Kadis K, Imron A, Mustiningsih M, Sumarsono RB. Trends and insights on multiple intelligences in Islamic schools: A bibliometric analysis. *J Educ*. 2023;93. <https://doi.org/10.17159/2520-9868/i93a05>.
10. Kafi A, Zainuddin N, Saifudin A, Shahron S, Razalli M, Musa S, Ahmi A. Meta-analysis of food supply chain: Pre, during and post COVID-19 pandemic. *Agric Food Secur*. 2023;12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40066-023-00425-5>.
11. Kistoro HCA, Zamroni, Istiyono E, Latipah E, Burhan NM. Islamic character education: Mapping and networking data using bibliometric analysis. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*. 2023;20(2). <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v20i2.8027>.
12. Lathifah ZK, Fauziah RSP, Rusli RK, Indra, S., Suherman.
13. U. (2025). Quality assurance in pesantren: Modernization, adaptability, and integration into Indonesia's education system. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(1), 101–14. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v11i1.43951>
14. Loberas-Abilar CR. (2026). Mapping Research Trends in First-Generation College Student Studies: A Bibliometric Analysis of Scopus Publications Using Biblioshiny and VOSviewer. *J First-generation Student Success*, 1–31.
15. McKay AS. (2026). Common errors in bibliometric reviews and a novel method for correcting them. *Scientometrics*, 1–39.
16. Misuraca M. Text Mining in Bibliometrics and Science Mapping. *A Methodological Review*; 2026.
17. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Comput Stat*, 18(2), e70066.
18. Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG, PRISMA Group. Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: The PRISMA statement. *BMJ*. 2009;339:b2535. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.b2535>.

19. Nirwana AN, Mahmudulhassan M, Waston. Bibliometric analysis of Islamic education and character development in religious education practices in Indonesia. *Pakistan J Life Social Sci.* 2024;22(2):1231–45. <https://doi.org/10.57239/PJLSS-2024-22.2.0086>.
20. Oware K, Moulya V. The outlook of sustainability assurance in global trends: A bibliometric review and research agenda. *South Asian J Mark.* 2022;4(2):110–27. <https://doi.org/10.1108/sajm-06-2022-0039>.
21. Pratama RAR, Nisa F, Alwasi NM, Muzaiyah S, Hidayat M, Hidayat S. Exploring non-formal Islamic education: Research trends, contextual practices, and participant impacts (2015–2025). *Res J Adv Humanit.* 2025;6(4). <https://doi.org/10.58256/g65xvk90>.
22. Russo M, Vistocco D. Explainable Artificial Intelligence Through the Lens of Bibliometric Citation Analysis. *Appl Stoch Models Bus Ind.* 2026;42(3):e70091. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asmb.70091>.
23. Sajovic I, Podgornik B. Bibliometric analysis of visualizations in computer graphics: A study. *SAGE Open.* 2022;12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211071105>.
24. van Eck NJ, Waltman L. (2014). Visualizing bibliometric networks. In *Measuring Scholarly Impact*. Springer Int Publishing, 285–320.
25. Wahyudi R, Handayani L, Nuryana Z, Riduwan. Mapping the field of Islamic banking and finance education: A bibliometric analysis and future research agenda. *J Educ Learn (EduLearn).* 2023;17(4):710–8. <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v17i4.20947>.
26. Zamroni E, Handayani PG, Gudnanto, Lestari I, Azis AR, Kumara AR. Mapping religious moderation and its impact on Islamic education in Indonesia: A bibliometric approach. *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam.* 2025;6(1):55–81. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i1.1487>.

Figures

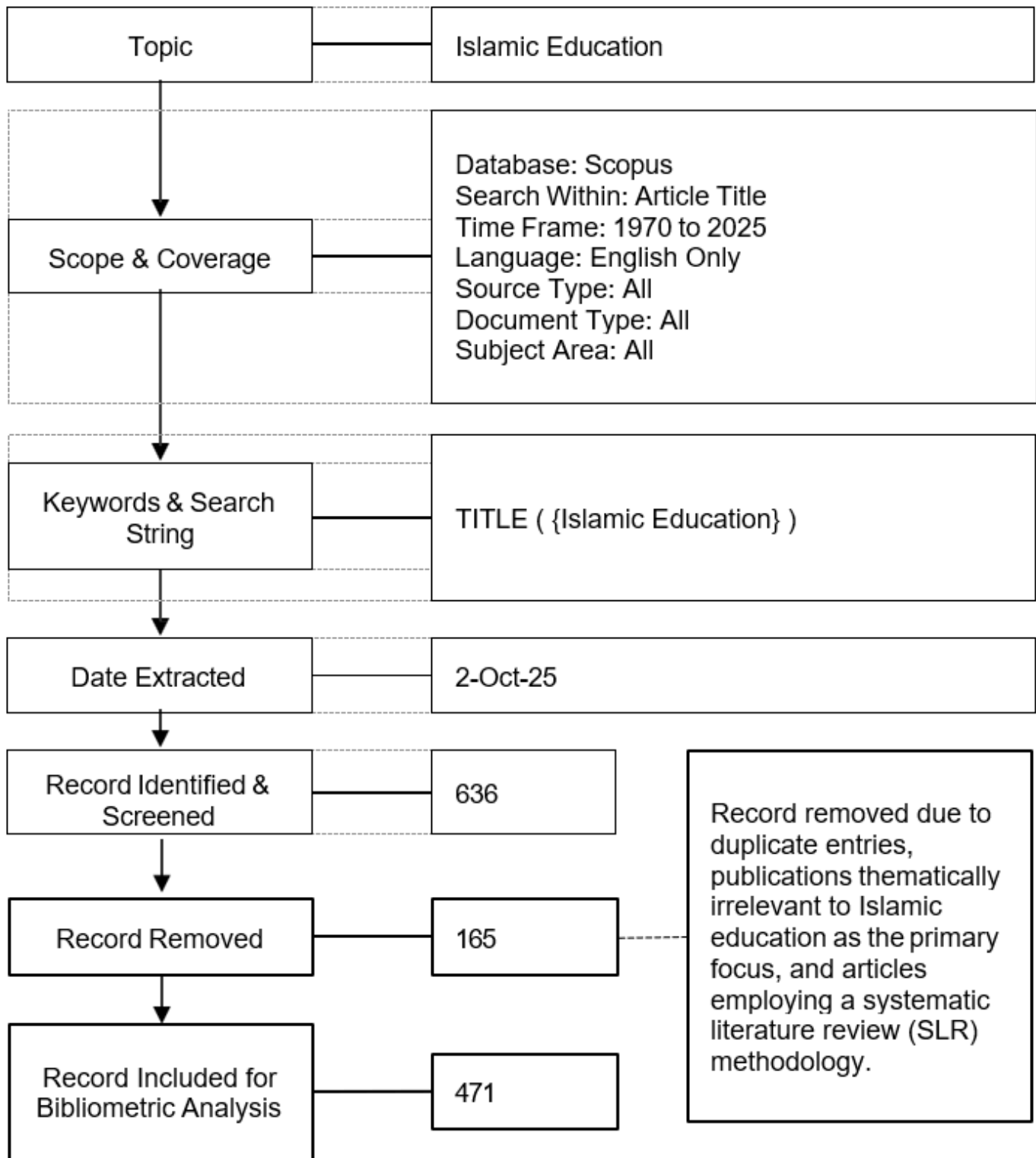


Figure 1

PRISMA Flow Diagram of the Search Strategy

Figure 3

Network Visualisation of Author Keyword Co-occurrence

Source: Generated using VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2014)

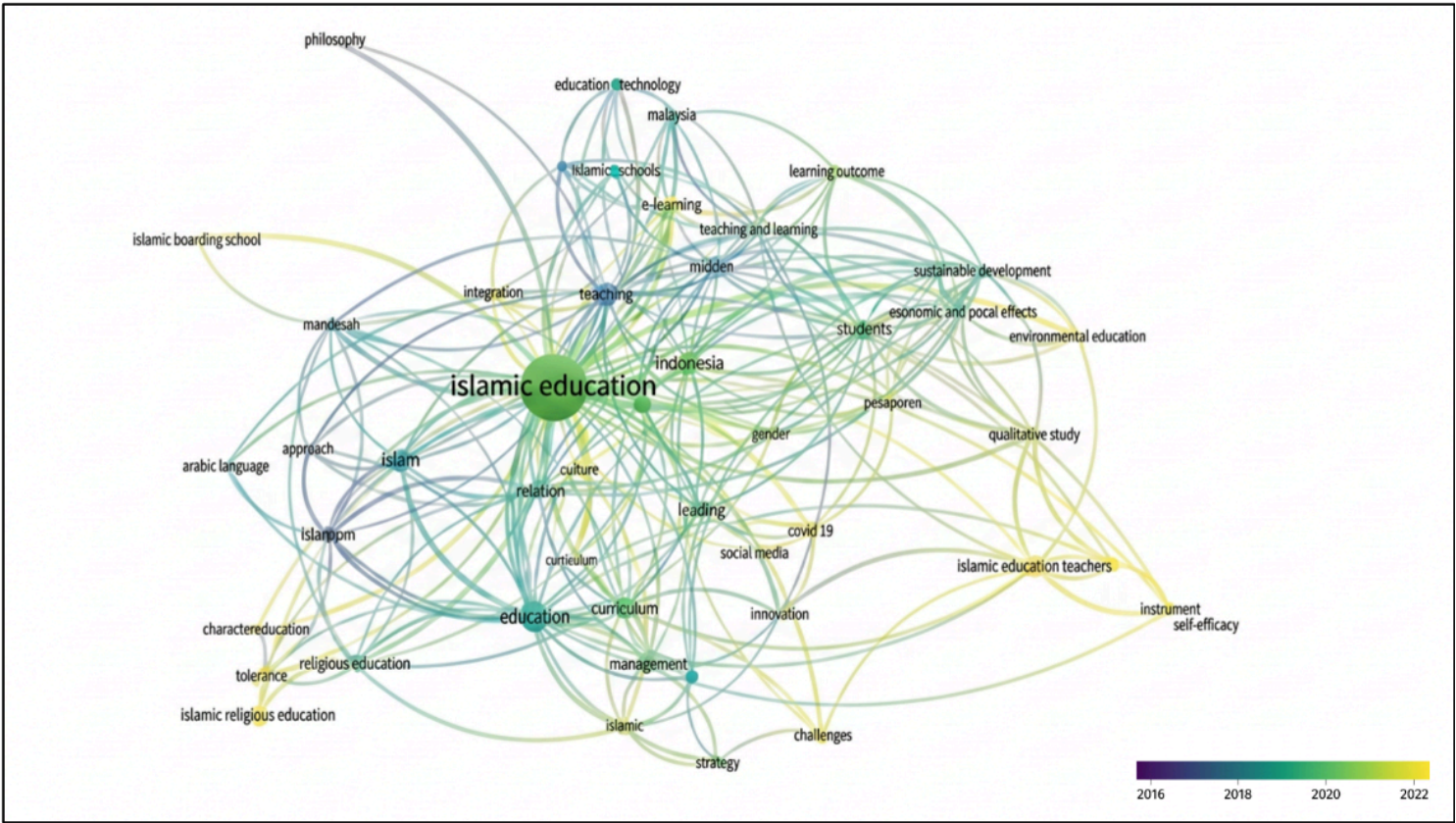
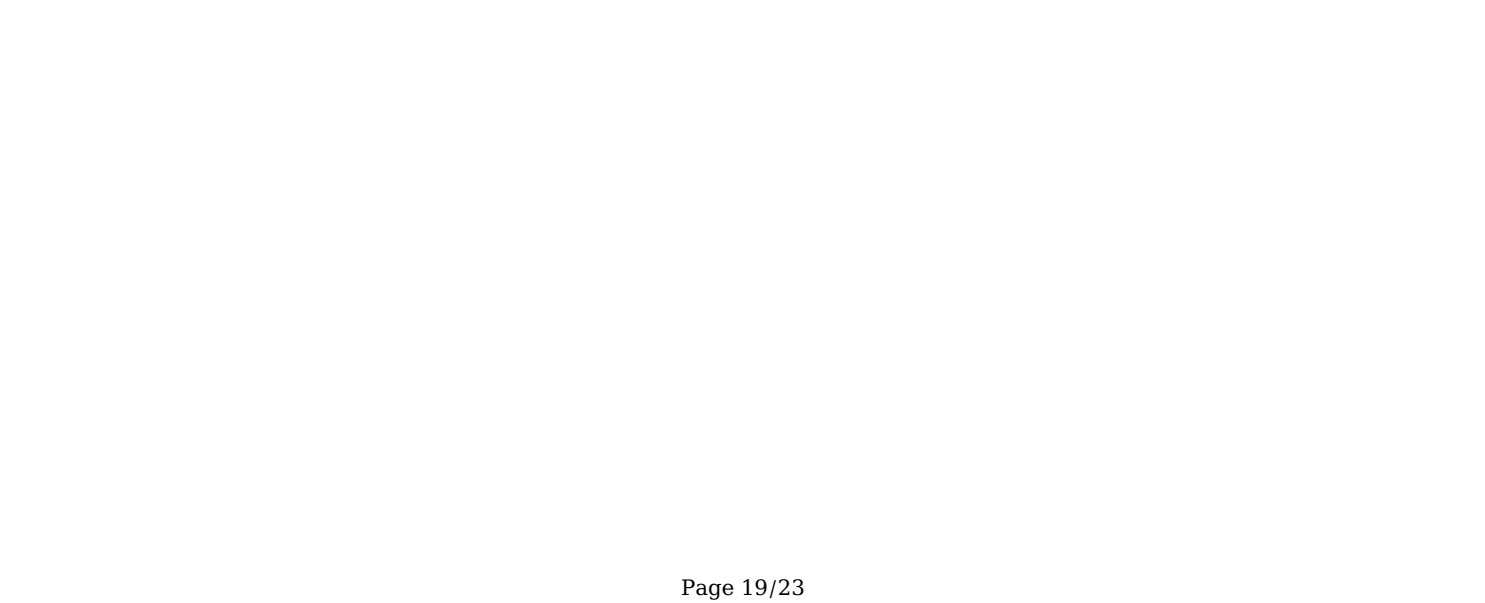


Figure 4

Overlay Visualisation of Author Keyword Co-occurrence

Source: Generated using VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2014)



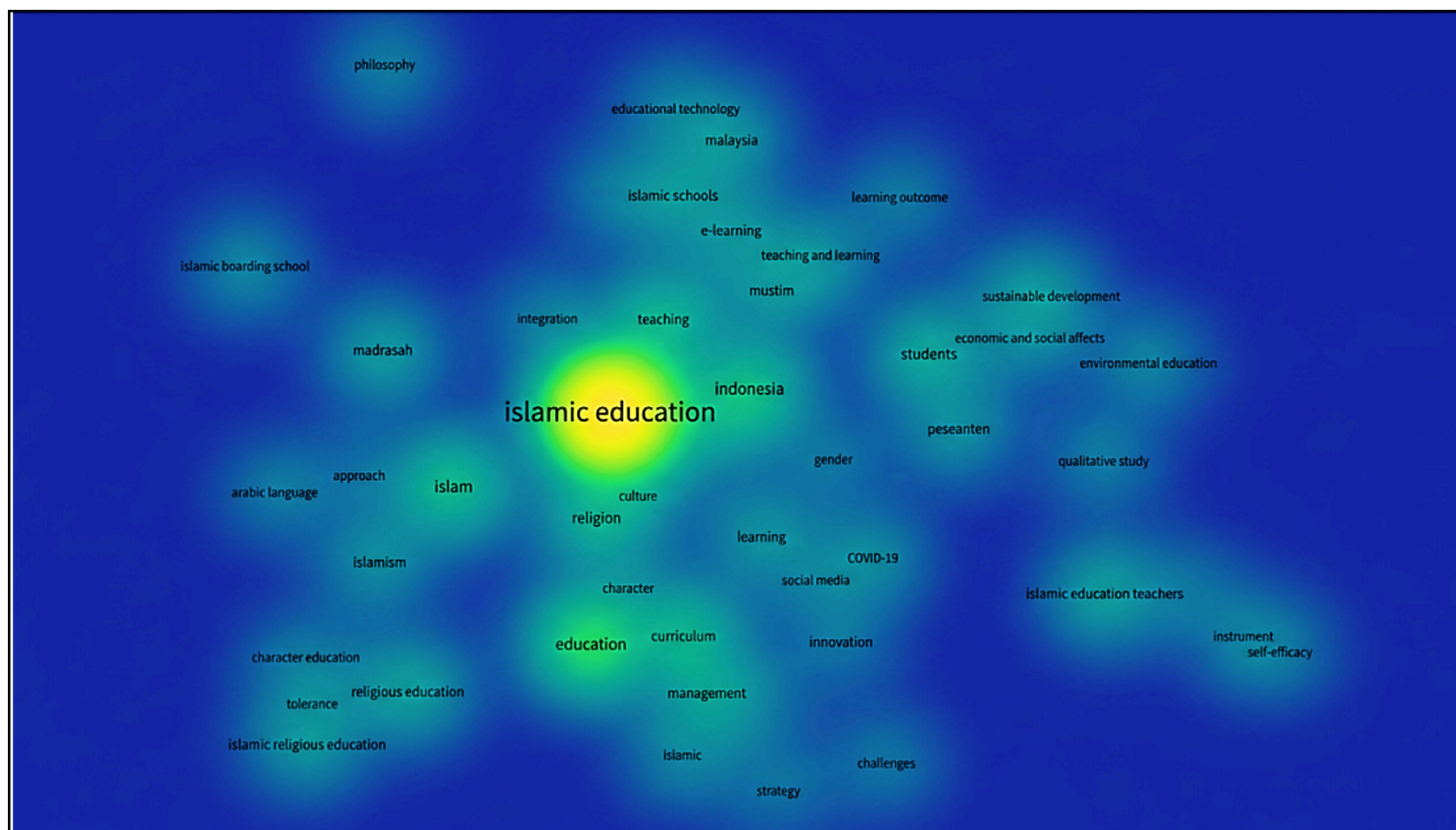


Figure 5

Density Visualisation of Author Keyword Co-occurrence

Source: Generated using VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2014)

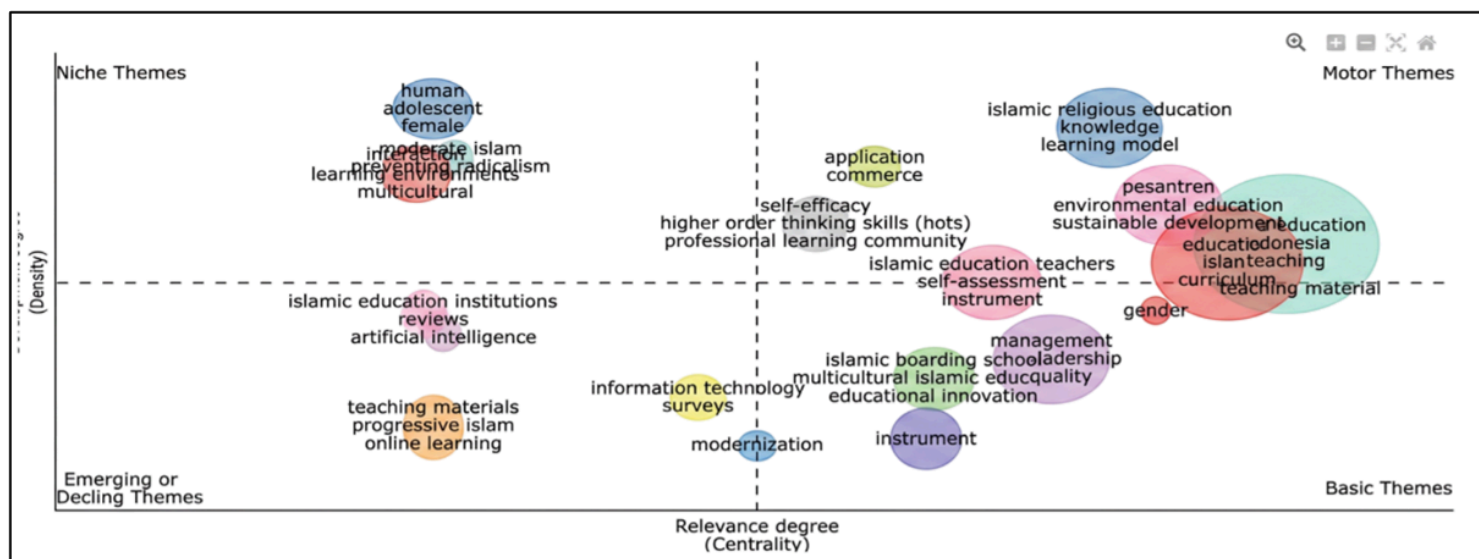


Figure 6

Thematic Map of Islamic Education Research

Source: Generated using Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

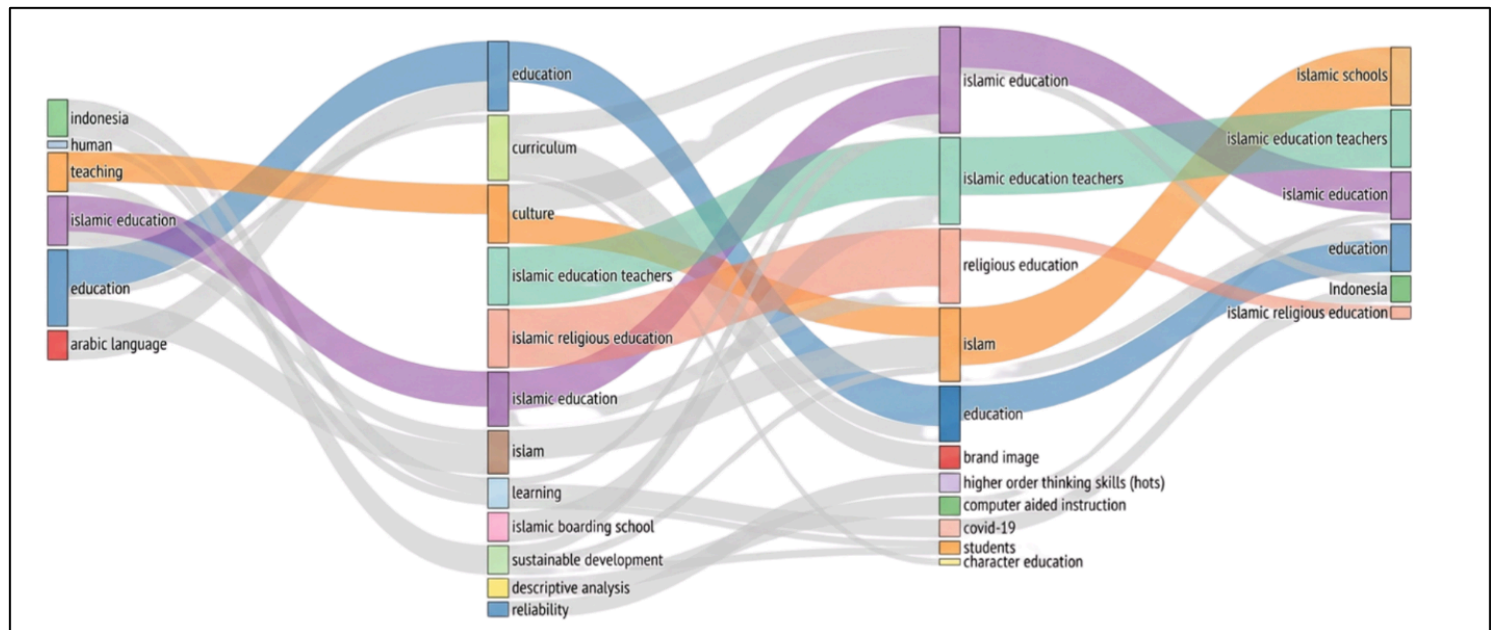
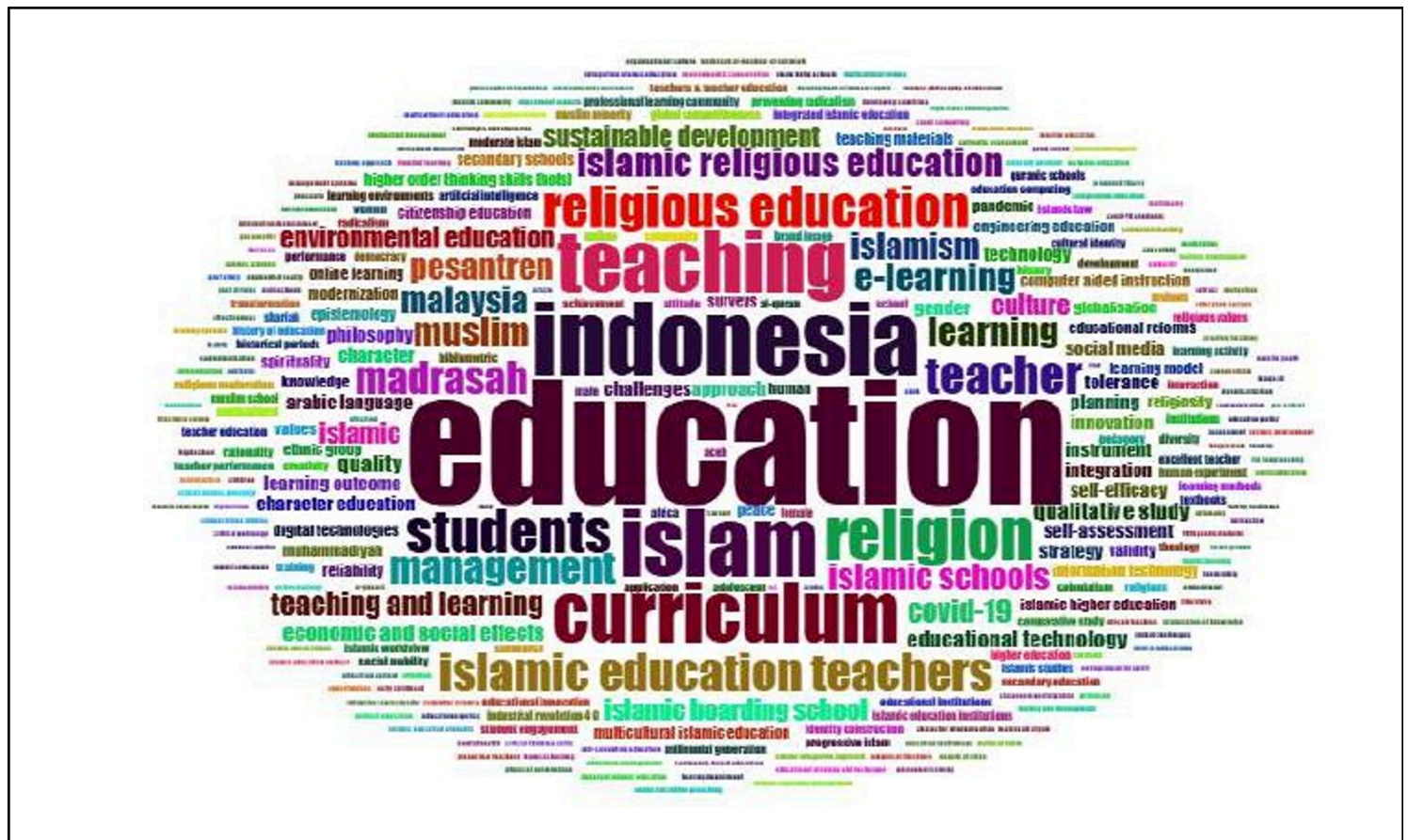


Figure 7

Thematic Evolution of Islamic Education Research

Source: Generated using Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)



Word Cloud of Author Keywords

[illegible]

Treemap of Author Keyword Frequency

Figure 10

Factorial Analysis (MCA) of Author Keywords

Source: Generated using Biblioshiny (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017)

