

Islamic Education Learning Methods: A Hybrid Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis

Muhammad Rofiq Anwar^{*1}, Muhammad Insan Jauhari¹, Siti Hapsoh²

¹IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

²Institute Citra International, Indonesia

muhammadrofiqa89@gmail.com*

Abstract

In response to the challenges of digitalisation, the spread of disinformation, and the need for religious moderation, this study examines the scientific landscape and contemporary trends in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teaching methods to chart the direction of future research. A hybrid approach comprising a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and bibliometric analysis based on the PRISMA guidelines was applied to examine the Scopus database up to 17 January 2026. From a keyword-based screening process using the term "Islamic education learning methods", journal articles, and English abstracts, 697 relevant studies were identified and subsequently visualised using the VOSviewer application. The macro-mapping results show an expansive growth curve in publications over the last decade, with a sharp acceleration post-2019, peaking in 2025. The geographical distribution map identifies Indonesia as the leading contributor with 550 articles, followed by Malaysia (150 articles) and Iran (62 articles). Other key findings reveal a shift in the pedagogical orientation of Islamic Education (PAI), moving away from conventional-traditional *pesantren* methods such as *sorogan* and *bandongan* towards the use of cutting-edge digital tools such as blended learning, reflective models, and STEMQ-based digital flipbooks as well as active learning strategies based on collaboration and social project-based learning informed by *fiqh al-ijtima'iyah*. The conclusion of this research affirms that studies on PAI learning retain strong global relevance. Moving forward, the reconstruction of instructional strategies must holistically integrate Al-Ghazali's concept of *tarbiyah*, digital literacy skills, and civic awareness to foster tolerant character in students within the school environment.

Keyword: Learning Methods, Islamic Education, Systematic Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

Conducting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) on the variables of teaching methods in Islamic education is currently of critical importance in identifying research gaps and emerging trends. Through the SLR approach, researchers can identify the urgent need for the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into e-learning environments (Qazi et al., 2021), as well as the transformative potential of mobile learning (m-learning), which is capable of bridging the gap between traditional and modern learning paradigms (Ahmad et al., 2025). Furthermore, this systematic literature review has successfully identified contemporary thematic clusters such as the digitalisation of Islamic education, community engagement, and psychological well-being within the context of informal education (Angraini et al., 2025). Not only does the SLR identify trends, but it also acts as a catalyst for improving teaching practices in the classroom by providing evidence-based insights. For example, a review of the research indicates that the implementation of innovative teaching methods in Indonesia can significantly improve pupils' motivation and academic achievement (Jayanegara et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the use of active learning

methods has been shown to be effective in fostering higher-order thinking skills (Karwadi et al., 2024). Through regular assessment, educators are encouraged to adopt student-centred learning strategies (Malik & Jumani, 2022) and constructivist approaches in order to address the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Rashed et al., 2025).

In addition to improving practical quality, the SLR plays a strategic role in formulating solutions to the contemporary challenges facing the world of Islamic education, including the wave of digitalisation, disinformation, and the issue of radicalism. In this context, strengthening religious moderation in educational institutions is essential to counter cyberterrorism and foster peaceful coexistence in the digital sphere (Ma'arif et al., 2023). These challenges also demand the integration of multicultural and entrepreneurial values into the Islamic curriculum to foster an innovative and socially responsible character (Mariyono, 2024). The comprehensive synthesis resulting from this SLR, in turn, provides a solid empirical foundation for policymakers and curriculum developers, as evidenced by the alignment of higher education programmes with national strategic visions such as Saudi Vision 2030 (Elkordy et al., 2025) and the reformulation of contextual Islamic education that is adaptable to modernity (Aripin et al., 2025). Ultimately, a systematic review of the literature can open up interdisciplinary horizons that bring together historical, philosophical, technological, and social dynamics (Awaludin, 2024), whilst reinforcing a perspective of global citizenship rooted in the universal values of Islam across various cultural contexts (Saada, 2023).

This investigation focuses on analysing the contemporary research framework relating to learning methods in Islamic education, as well as assessing the ongoing significance of this subject as a focal point for prospective scientific inquiry. Furthermore, this study examines the development of the scholarly dialogue regarding pedagogical approaches in Islamic education and aims to determine how these scholarly endeavours can enhance the theoretical framework concerning Islamic learning and educational methodology. The research questions formulated are:

RQ1: Will research into teaching methods in Islamic education continue to be a subject of significant relevance to the future research agenda?

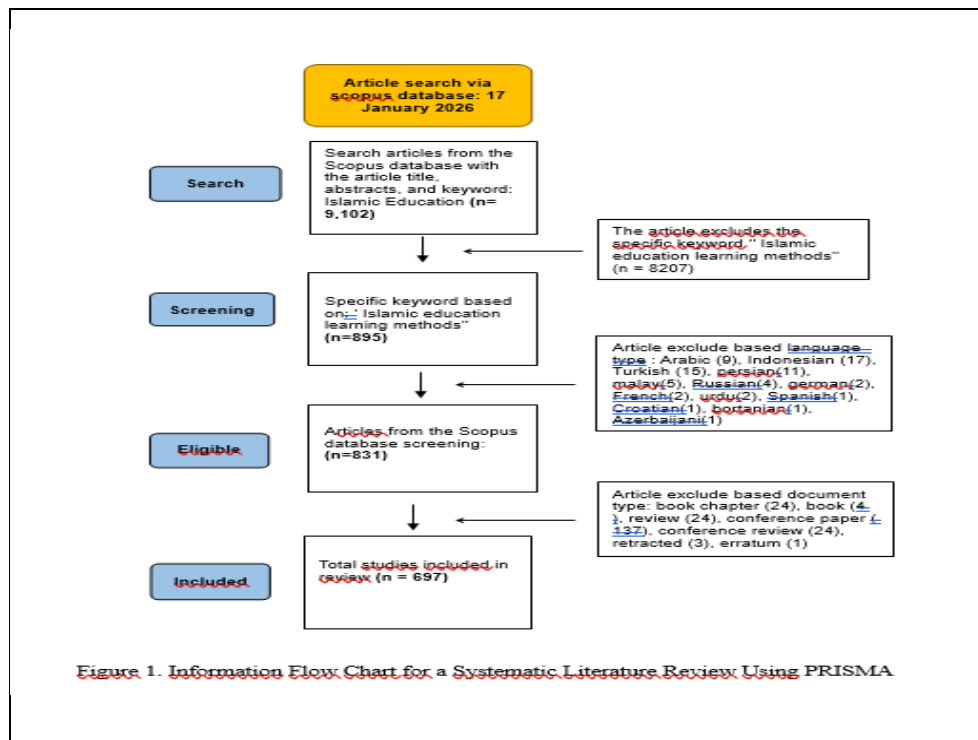
RQ2: What is the current landscape of scientific research relating to the topic of teaching methods in Islamic education?

RQ3: What are the theoretical and practical implications arising from this perspective on future research directions?

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) combined with Bibliometric Analysis to comprehensively address the three research questions. The systematic review methodology was applied appropriately to synthesise the existing scientific literature and facilitate the identification of gaps, trends, and future research directions, whilst providing evidence-based insights that can serve as a reference for future policy, practice, and research efforts (Jailani, 2026; Kraus et al., 2020). This approach ensures that conclusions are drawn from a diverse and representative range of studies, whilst highlighting areas that require further exploration. Bibliometric analysis will serve as a complementary aspect of this review by quantitatively assessing the distribution and impact of publications relating to Islamic education learning methods. Using VOSviewer and the Scopus database (Brignardello et al., 2024), this study will examine publications on Islamic educational methodology from various academic journals (Rojon et al., 2021), focusing on articles published up to 17 January 2026. This methodological framework facilitates a comprehensive mapping of the evolution of this discipline and provides a deeper understanding of its development and future research directions (Kirby, 2023).

METHOD

A bibliometric approach in systematic literature reviews enables a quantitative assessment of the literature to identify trends, established patterns, and key research topics within a specific academic field (Gusenbauer & Gauster, 2025). The application of the PRISMA guidelines in this methodology ensures that the literature search is conducted in a comprehensive, transparent, and reproducible manner (McAllister et al., 2021). The scope of this study is defined by three main inclusion criteria, namely: (1) official publications issued before 17 January 2026, (2) those written in English, and (3) those focusing on the topic of teaching methods in Islamic education. The exploration of intellectual structures and dynamics within this domain was mapped using the VOSviewer application, which visualises bibliographic data in the form of citation networks, author collaboration patterns, and keyword relationships (Mukhtar et al., 2024; Zulaikhah et al., 2025). Through this dual methodological integration, researchers can synthesise empirical evidence, map the research landscape at a macro level, and identify key figures and current trends in a more comprehensive manner.



Based on the PRISMA flowchart (Figure 1), a comprehensive literature search was conducted on 17 January 2026 using the Scopus database. During the initial search phase, a total of 9,102 articles were identified through the application of parameters such as article title, abstract, and the keyword “Islamic Education.” Proceeding to the screening phase, 8,207 articles were excluded for not including the specific keyword “Islamic education learning methods”, resulting in a remaining set of 895 articles. Furthermore, during the eligibility stage, several articles were excluded based on language, including Arabic (9), Indonesian (17), Turkish (15), Persian (11), Malay (5), Russian (4), German (2), French (2), Urdu (2), Spanish (1), Croatian (1), Bosnian (1), and Azerbaijani (1), thereby reducing the total to 831 articles. In the final stage, further exclusions were applied based on document type, specifically book chapters (24), books (4), reviews (24), conference papers (137), conference proceedings (24), retracted articles (3), and errata (1). Following the

completion of this rigorous process, a total of 697 studies meeting the criteria established at the inclusion stage were selected for the systematic review. These documents were then analysed further in this study to answer *RQ1: Does research into teaching methods in Islamic education remain a subject of significant relevance to the future research agenda? RQ2: What is the current landscape of scientific research relating to the topic of teaching methods in Islamic education? RQ3: What are the theoretical and practical implications arising from the perspective of future research directions?*

Literature review

The transformation of teaching methods in Islamic education is currently moving away from a historical approach that focuses merely on the rote learning of religious texts and dogmatic adherence (Mujahidin et al., 2025). The contemporary paradigm calls for a holistic approach that is in line with Al-Ghazali's concept of *tarbiyah*, moving beyond the mere acquisition of cognitive knowledge towards the integral development of intellect, character, and spirituality (Sahib et al., 2026). The integration of technology is a key catalyst in this transition, in which innovations such as digital flipbooks based on the STEMQ approach are used to bring spiritual values and scientific education together, whilst balancing cognitive and ethical dimensions (Handayani et al., 2026). In practice, this technology-based pedagogical intervention involves reflective and hybrid learning that facilitates the construction of collective knowledge through experience, with a view to enhancing ethical and moral reasoning (Muzaki & Nurhayati, 2026). Nevertheless, the success of this digitalisation absolutely requires learners to develop critical awareness of the internet in order to avoid misinformation, alongside the need for institutions to address the challenges posed by infrastructure disparities (Sahib et al., 2026).

From an epistemological perspective, this methodological reform calls for the development of an Islamic cognitive framework that integrates the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains in a balanced manner, in accordance with religious principles (Zulkifli et al., 2025). To achieve this balance, traditional pedagogy is combined with an active approach that prioritises mastery of the subject matter alongside its contextual relevance to real-world issues, such as the dynamics and disruption of ecological systems (El Batri et al., 2026). Instructional design has become highly student-centred, proactively engaging learners in dialogue, reflection, and collaborative problem-solving to link philosophical principles with contemporary challenges (Sayekti et al., 2026). This active engagement, enriched by regular feedback, has been analytically shown to reduce one-way transmission of knowledge, ensure the internalisation of critical thinking skills, and guarantee the sustainability of a dynamic learning process in the classroom (Zulkifli et al., 2025).

At the macro level, the effectiveness of Islamic teaching methods is assessed by their ability to foster social awareness and a sense of citizenship. The Islamic education curriculum now strategically integrates the values of *fiqh al-ijtima'iyah* through a social project-based learning model, with the aim of fostering justice, solidarity, and brotherhood amongst pupils (Adiyono & Sholeh, 2025). Furthermore, this issue of social justice is intended to ensure that religious education can respond to the plurality of society in a practical manner. However, an analytical examination of core teaching materials suggests that the contribution of Islamic education to shaping an inclusive civic identity remains a matter of ongoing debate (a contested contribution) (Essabane et al., 2026). In conclusion, the future revitalisation of instructional methods must systematically integrate holistic cognition, critical digital literacy, and civic responsibility in order to meet comprehensive standards of academic achievement and social benefit.

Table 1. Defining elements of Islamic education learning methods

No	Defining factor of Islamic education learning methods	Reference
1	Teaching methods in Islamic education emphasise a balanced approach that integrates the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, in line with Islamic principles, to develop students' knowledge, skills and values	(Zulkifli et al., 2025)
2	Teaching methods in Islamic education are characterised by innovative, technology-based approaches that foster students' moral awareness and ethical reasoning. These methods include reflective learning, blended learning, and project-based learning, which are aligned with Islamic moral values and facilitate the development of shared knowledge through experience and reflection	(Muzaki & Nurhayati, 2026)
3	Teaching methods in Islamic education are characterised by a blend of traditional and active pedagogical approaches, which emphasise both mastery of the subject matter and contextual relevance.	(El Batri et al., 2026)
4	Islamic education teaching methods emphasise the integration of the values of <i>fiqh al-ijtima'iyah</i> , with a focus on social solidarity, justice, and community engagement through approaches such as social project-based learning, which fosters cooperation and camaraderie among students	(Adiyono & Sholeh, 2025)
5	Islamic education methods emphasise a holistic approach that develops intelligence, moral character, and spirituality, in line with Al-Ghazali's concept of <i>tarbiyah</i> , which views education as a process that goes beyond the mere acquisition of cognitive knowledge	(Sahib et al., 2026)
6	Historically, teaching methods in Islamic education have focused on rote learning, memorising religious texts, and adherence to established dogmas.	(Mujahidin et al., 2025)
7	Teaching methods in Islamic education are characterised by a student-centred approach, which actively engages learners in dialogue, reflection and collaborative problem-solving. These methods aim to integrate critical thinking skills into various topics and link philosophical principles to contemporary challenges, thereby ensuring relevance and sustained engagement through regular input and feedback from students	(Sayekti et al., 2026)

8	Islamic education methods emphasise the integration of spiritual values with scientific education, and promote a holistic approach that balances cognitive and ethical dimensions in the learning process	(Handayani et al., 2026)
---	---	--------------------------

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings of this study focus on insights derived from 697 academic articles in the Scopus database relating to the examination of pedagogical approaches in Islamic education. This information is derived from an assessment of the total number of publications, the temporal distribution of these publications, and the journal sources. Furthermore, this study will highlight the most significant factors in Islamic education learning methods, including leading authors, affiliated institutions, and the countries represented.

RQ1: Will research into teaching methods in Islamic education continue to be a subject of significant relevance to the future research agenda?

Based on data obtained from the Scopus database, it has been established that, over more than two decades, scholarly work on Islamic education learning methods comprises 697 articles; this indicates that there has been a considerable amount of research into Islamic education learning methods, as illustrated in Figure 1. Research into Islamic education learning methods has seen progressive growth over the last decade, particularly since 2019. The database shown in Figure 1 indicates that the first study began in 1992 and was titled “Vasectomy project launched in Turkey.” Turkey’s first VSC clinic; this topic clearly does not fit the category of this research, so we excluded it and searched again, thereby identifying the first study relevant to our research theme, namely “Islamic education learning methods,” conducted by M. Aat in 1996 and titled ‘Ma’had al-Juntûr bayna al-Tajdid wa al-Taqlid’ (A’ad, 1996), which marked the birth of Islamic educational reform in Indonesia, traditionally rooted in two sources of influence: the Middle East and the West. Researchers’ interest in Islamic education teaching methods has seen significant development, reflecting broader social and technological changes. Initially, the focus lay on preserving traditional pedagogy as practised in *pesantren*, which emphasised classical methods such as *Sorogan* and *Bandongan*. Over time, this focus has shifted towards the integration of technology-supported modern approaches to address globalisation, inclusivity, and the demands of contemporary education (Suresman et al., 2025; Nurtawab, 2019). This development highlights the importance of balancing heritage with innovation, as researchers strive to modernise Islamic education whilst maintaining its cultural and religious integrity, which ultimately contributes to its relevance in a rapidly changing world (Faqihuddin et al., 2025; Suresman et al., 2025; Aripin et al., 2025).

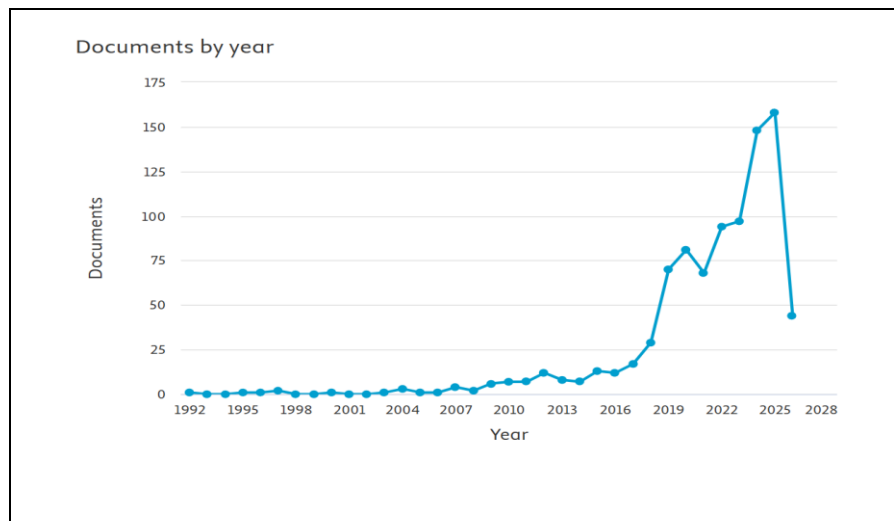


Figure 2. Annual documentation of the results of the Scopus analysis

The evolution of articles on Islamic education learning methods shows fluctuations, as illustrated in Figure 1. The number of publications peaked in 2019, with a total of 70 documents, and rose again to 80 documents in 2020. Over the past five years, research on Islamic education learning methods has shown an upward trend, producing 159 articles and accounting for 18% of the total articles on Islamic education learning methods published over the past two decades. At the same time, publications from 2026 up to 17 January totalled 37. Although the research trend for this topic peaked in 2025 and declined in 2026, overall, this trend has consistently risen over the past five years and remains at a fairly high level, indicating that Islamic education learning methods remain highly relevant and hold promising prospects for future scientific exploration.

Furthermore, an analysis of the evolution of research into Islamic education learning methods requires the identification of leading journals with a high number of publications. Table 1 lists the titles of the sources (journals) that have published articles on Islamic education learning methods.

RQ2: What is the current landscape of scientific research relating to the topic of teaching methods in Islamic education?

To analyse the distribution of research in the field of Islamic education learning methods, articles were classified according to country, region, affiliation, source of literature, and author, limiting the analysis to the top eight entities in each category. Information regarding the distribution of these relevant scholarly works provides valuable insights for practitioners and scholars to project the direction of future research, particularly in supporting the sustainability of innovation in Islamic education learning methods.

Based on the classification of countries or regions illustrated in Figure 3, Indonesia leads the way in research contributions in the field of Islamic education learning methods, with a total of 550 articles. The next position is held by Malaysia, which recorded 150 articles, followed in turn by Iran (62 articles), Saudi Arabia (30 articles), and Turkey (24 articles). Meanwhile, Pakistan and Brunei contributed 19 and 16 articles, respectively, with an additional 23 articles that have not been specifically defined.

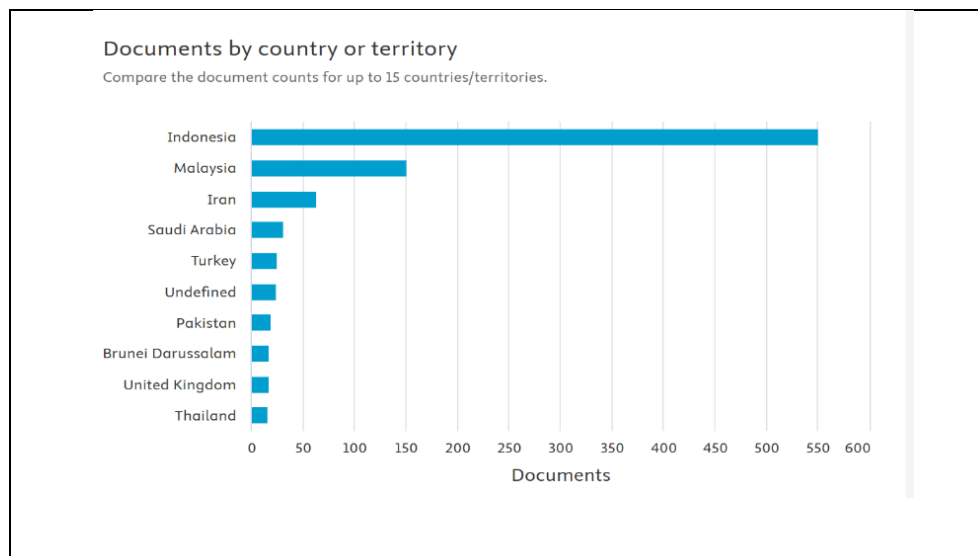


Figure 3. Documentation of countries and territories in Scopus

The compiled publication data shows that Indonesia leads the literature landscape on Islamic education teaching methods with 550 articles, followed by Malaysia with 150 articles (see Figure 2). In addition to these two countries, the strengthening of this research database is also supported by contributions from Iran (62 articles), Saudi Arabia (30 articles), Turkey (24 articles), Pakistan (19 articles), and Brunei (16 articles), as well as 23 unidentified articles. This empirical phenomenon indicates that the geopolitical boundaries of the research have shifted beyond merely the domestic Muslim regions of the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Academic engagement from predominantly non-Muslim countries, particularly the United Kingdom and Thailand, reinforces the global relevance of this topic. In order to formulate a measurable agenda for future research, an analysis of the network of partnerships between countries was conducted using VOSviewer. This visual exploration demonstrates the existence of active patterns of connectivity and mutualism between countries in exploring this field of education (as presented in Figure 4).

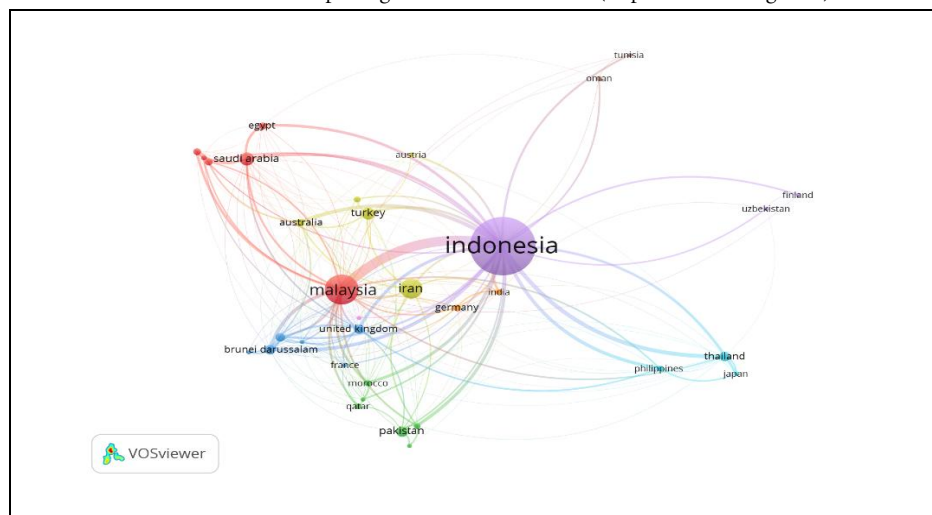


Figure 4. Inter-country network connections via VOSviewer

Furthermore, an analysis of the distribution of scholarly outputs on Islamic education learning methods by sponsoring institution reveals the dominance of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, with 35 articles, followed by the University of Malaya with 29 articles. This pattern of contributions is further complemented by the International Islamic University Malaysia (27 articles), the Indonesian University of Education (25 articles), and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (24 articles). Meanwhile, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Islamic Azad University both recorded 23 articles, followed by UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim (22 articles) and UIN Ar-Raniry (20 articles), as shown in Figure 4. Generally, the publication of this scientific literature is centred on higher education institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia. This mapping provides a strategic advantage for researchers to identify future research collaboration partners at institutions with strong academic authority in the field of Islamic leadership. To examine the connections between affiliations within this discourse, further analysis was conducted using the VOSviewer software. Figure 5 visualises the network of mutualistic interactions between institutions in examining this topic.

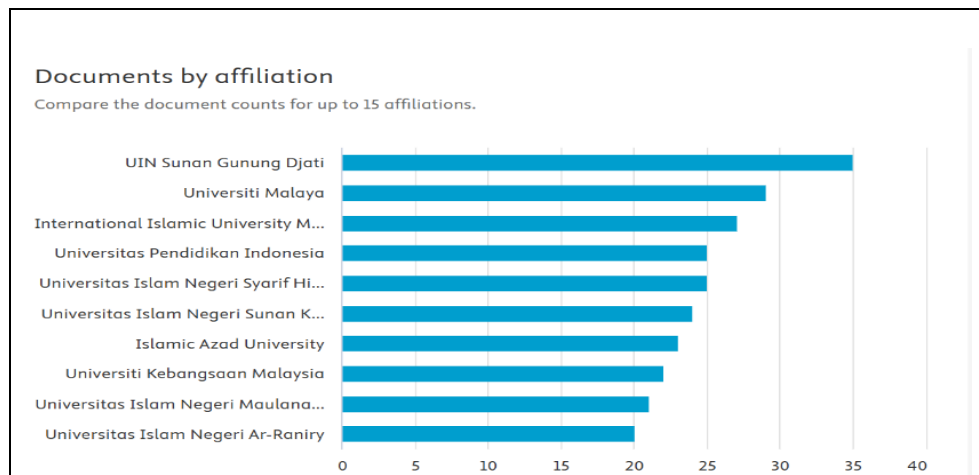


Figure 5. Data on the number of articles by affiliation

The distribution of the top ten scientific publications by affiliation confirms that the discourse on Islamic education learning methods is a key area of research for higher education institutions in predominantly Muslim regions. This phenomenon is reflected in the fact that research is predominantly centred on academic institutions in countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Iran.

Based on the visualisation in Figure 6, the classification of literature sources in studies on Islamic education learning methods reveals a dominance of the Journal of Islamic Education, which published 57 articles between 2019 and 2025. The Journal of Islamic Education ranks second, with a total of 36 articles published during the same period. In addition to religion-specific journals, scientific discourse on this topic is also widely featured in international conference proceedings platforms, such as the Journal of Physics: Conference Series with 32 articles (2017–2021) and AIP Conference Proceedings with 27 articles (2017–2024). This publication map is rounded off by the International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, which comprises 19 articles from 2019 to 2026.

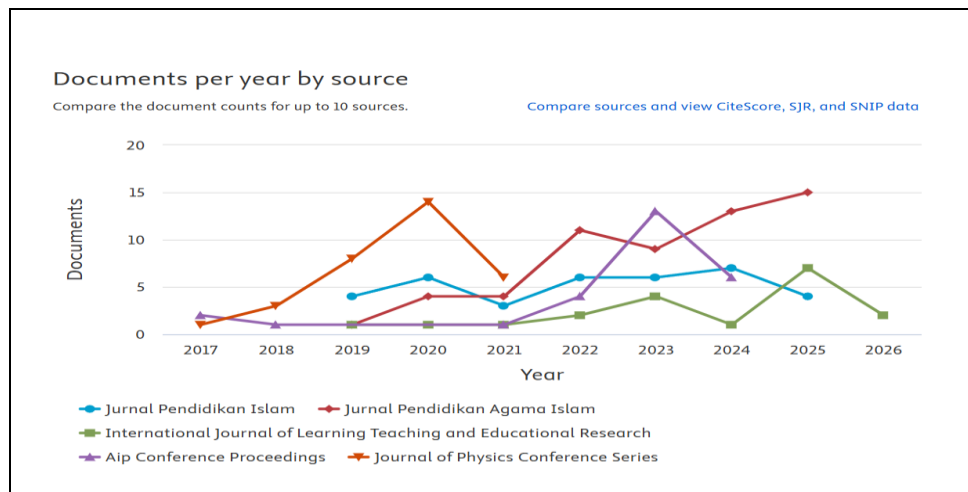


Figure 6. Data based on journal sources

RQ3: What are the theoretical and practical implications arising from this perspective on future research directions?

A total of 697 manuscripts obtained from the Scopus repository formed the database for this study. Through VOSviewer visualisation, this research highlights the theoretical and practical significance for future investigations in the field of Islamic education learning methods. The results of this metadata analysis serve as a guide for researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the propositions and findings. Furthermore, this bibliometric approach highlights well-established research variables whilst revealing research gaps that have rarely been addressed. In practical terms, the outputs of this research support the continuation of studies in this field whilst serving as a promotional tool for educational institutions worldwide to adopt and develop these learning themes more widely.

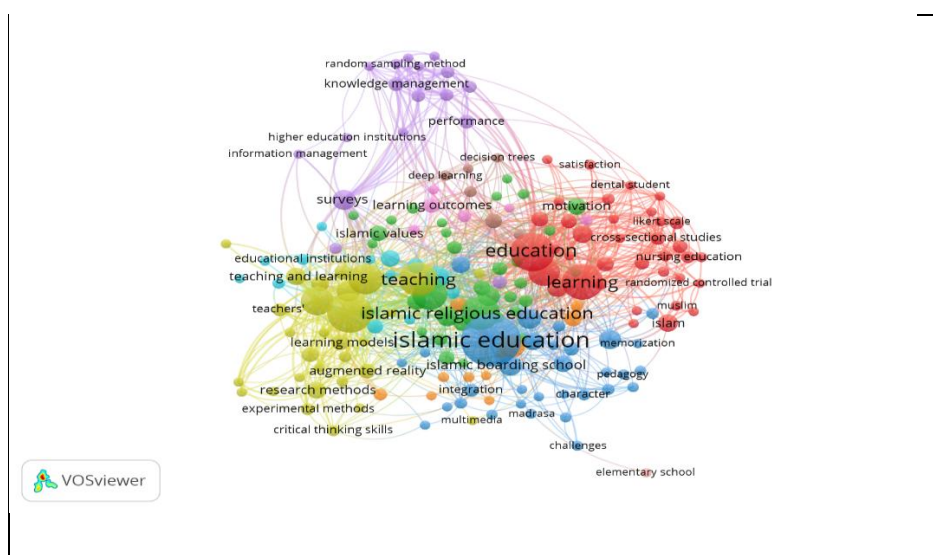


Figure 7. Analysis using VOSviewer

Referring to the results of the keyword analysis conducted by the author, summarised in Figure 7 and Table 2, the most dominant term is “Education,” with a total link strength of 408. The next positions are occupied by “Learning” and “Student,” which recorded values of 399 and 357, respectively. Apart from these three main terms, the frequency distribution is also concentrated on the keywords “Teaching” (296), “e-learning” (230), “curriculum” (217), “Learning system” (195), and “Islamic education” (190). Meanwhile, the ninth and tenth positions are occupied by “Cross-sectional studies” (139) and “Knowledge” (135). This data confirms that the current direction of scientific research remains heavily focused on the core areas of education, teaching strategies, and learning subjects.

Table 2. Keywords by author

Rank	Keyword	Total link strength
1	Education	408
2	Learning	399
3	Student	357
4	Teaching	296
5	e-learning	230
6	curriculum	217
7	Learning system	195
8	Islamic education	190
9	Cross-sectional studies	139
10	Knowledge	135

Source: Output VOSviewer software

Discussion

Currently, teaching methods in Islamic education are undergoing a significant period of renewal in order to adapt holistically to the global dynamics of the 21st-century without compromising the essence of Islamic teachings. This transformation is shifting the conventional, one-way teaching paradigm towards an active learning system that empowers learners to think critically through a focus on higher-order thinking skills. The acceleration of this change is driven by the integration of information technology and curriculum flexibility based on the principles of constructivism, local values, and references to the holy scriptures. Amidst the challenges of disruption, the integration of professional competence and the spiritual maturity of educators plays a crucial role in steering the learning process. Therefore, this reform of teaching methods is designed not merely to pursue students’ cognitive outcomes, but also as a humanitarian instrument in building an academic atmosphere that is inclusive, tolerant of pluralism, and oriented towards the principle of religious moderation or *wasathiyah*, in order to shield future generations from the influence of radicalism. See Figure 8.

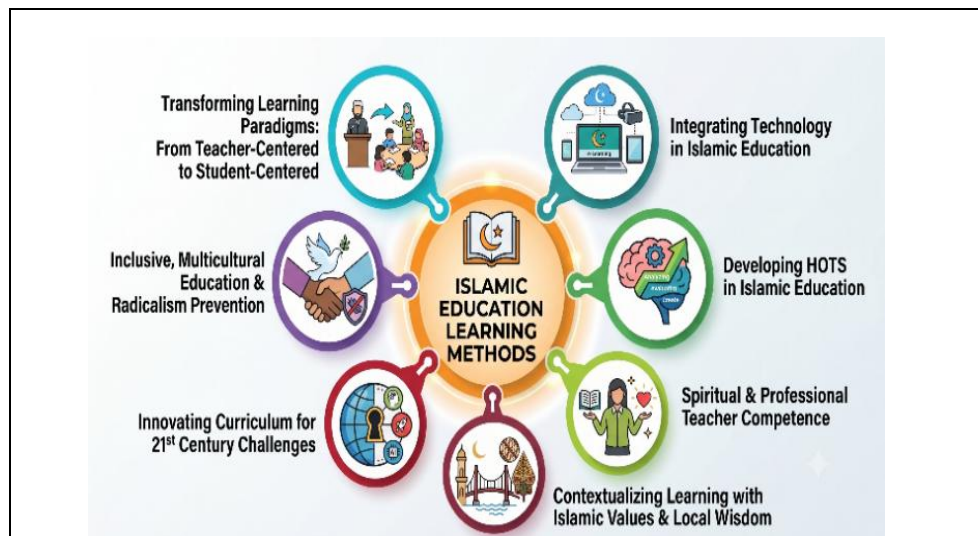


Figure 8. future generations from the influence of radicalism

Paradigm Shift in Learning: From Teacher-Centred to Student-Centred

Future research in Islamic educational methodology must anticipate a fundamental paradigm shift, moving away from instructor-led teaching towards a learner-centred approach. Historically, the transmission of Islamic knowledge has been dominated by conventional lecturing techniques and rote memorisation (Omar, 2022). Nevertheless, recent empirical evidence confirms that the implementation of strategies based on active student engagement, such as problem-solving, can significantly boost academic achievement (Omar, 2022). This premise is reinforced by Karwadi et al. (2024), who found that the development of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) flourishes through active learning, with the blended learning model demonstrating the most accelerated impact. Theoretically, this dynamic demands a reorientation of the pedagogical framework of Islamic education to align with the principles of constructivism, positioning students not as passive vessels for information, but as autonomous agents in the construction of meaning (Omar, 2022). In practical terms, educators are required to master a diverse range of active methods, including the “learning by doing” approach, which has proven crucial in constructing an adaptive classroom environment for strengthening critical thinking, collaborative synergy, and communication skills (Riyanto et al., 2023).

The Integration of Technology in Islamic Education

Future academic research also has fundamental theoretical implications regarding the adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) within the field of Islamic education. Based on previous systematic reviews, the application of ICT-based teaching in Islamic studies still requires comprehensive scholarly attention and more in-depth empirical testing (Qazi et al., 2021). The advent of educational technology has proven to be a catalyst for innovation, giving rise to models such as project-based learning, online learning, blended learning, and curriculum harmonisation (Nursyahidin et al., 2021). In Islamic higher education, the use of digital tools is showing a positive upward trend, with Learning Management Systems (LMS), Zoom, Google Meet, and Google Classroom dominating the channels through which teaching materials are distributed (Riyanto et al., 2023). Furthermore, the effectiveness of hybrid learning, which combines virtual and face-to-face interaction, has been shown to reduce learning deficits whilst increasing student engagement within Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) (Fakhri et al., 2023). However, the transfer of this technology still faces classic challenges, particularly regarding the readiness of human resources

as system operators and the harmonisation of the technology with the axiological values of the Qur'an and the Hadith (Nursyahidin et al., 2021). The practical implications of this discourse highlight the importance of standardising ongoing digital training for Muslim teachers and lecturers without compromising the orthodoxy of Islamic values.

The Development of Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Islamic Education

Future research should conduct an in-depth analysis of the internal mechanisms of instructional methods in stimulating higher-order cognitive skills. Evidence from the field suggests that Islamic educators at primary school level still face structural barriers to integrating higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) into the syllabus, despite widespread collective awareness of the urgent need for curriculum reform (Kosasih et al., 2022). Therefore, the deconstruction of the learning process must focus on honing students' analytical, evaluative, and creative skills (Kosasih et al., 2022). As a practical solution, the ex-add (Explain-Analyse-Do-Discuss) technique has been empirically proven to boost critical thinking skills by up to 78.23% (high category) and pedagogical performance by 59.81% (moderate category) (Mahfudz & Sukarno, 2023). Theoretically, these findings suggest the need for a contextual re-examination of the revised Bloom's Taxonomy within the epistemology of Islamic education. In practical terms, policymakers are required to prioritise the enhancement of teachers' competencies so that they are able to master the design, implementation, and evaluation of HOTS-based systems in a holistic manner (Kosasih et al., 2022).

Spiritual and Professional Competencies of Islamic Education Teachers

The attribute of spirituality serves as the key theoretical distinction that sets Islamic educational methodology apart from the secular sphere. The strengthening of teachers' spiritual competence rooted in transcendental sincerity is the primary factor driving dedication, responsibility, and work discipline, which in turn enhances the quality of learning on a broader scale (Samad et al., 2023). The professional manifestation of this competence is realised through the instillation of religious values in pupils, whilst its individual dimension is reflected in the educator's piety in carrying out their teaching duties (Samad et al., 2023). In parallel with this, a reflective teaching culture has been shown to optimise pedagogical skills through the adoption of innovative and creative strategies (Purwanto & Saepudin, 2023). On the other hand, teachers' self-efficacy plays a crucial role; individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to apply effective teaching methods in the classroom (Sholeh et al., 2024). The theoretical implications of this synthesis highlight the need for a new model of teacher competence that integrates aspects of spirituality with pedagogical, professional, personal, and social skills. In practical terms, strategic policies such as the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) programme must reformulate their curricula by placing spiritual resilience at the foundation of professionalism (Mulyana et al., 2023).

Adapting Teaching Methods to Islamic Values and Local Wisdom

Future research is called upon to examine strategies for aligning teaching methods with the teachings of the Holy Book and local wisdom. A textual analysis of the Qur'an indicates that the principles of Islamic education are based on inferential reasoning, independent thinking, and guided reasoning, with the ultimate aim of fostering good character (akhlakul karimah) (Manurung et al., 2024). Consequently, teachers must design instructional activities that maximise critical thinking, memory retention techniques, listening skills, and a strong culture of literacy (Manurung et al., 2024). This tradition is in keeping with the *pesantren* ecosystem, where the transmission of knowledge is not merely a transfer of cognitive content, but is accompanied by *riyadah* (Sufi) practices designed to shape the personality of the students, striking a balance

between the physical, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions. This alignment with Islamic values is achieved through curriculum modifications and the redesign of the institution's vision and mission, based on relevant instructional materials (Rizal et al., 2023). In theory, this has led to the emergence of a methodological framework rooted in Islamic epistemology, whilst its practical implications point to the urgent need to develop an adaptive cooperative learning model tailored to the characteristics of Generation Alpha (Khanif, 2023).

Curriculum and Teaching Method Innovations to Meet the Challenges of the 21st-century

Future academic research must be geared towards curriculum reform that responds to the global dynamics of the 21st-century. The formulation of Islamic education curricula needs to be aligned with national higher education standards and the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI), whilst adopting a paradigm of interdisciplinary integration and interconnection (Faisal et al., 2021). For example, the launch of the International Class Programme within the Islamic Education degree programme requires a phased restructuring, starting from the specialisation phase, through to the elite classes, and finally the international classes (Assegaf et al., 2022). In addition, the *Merdeka Belajar* policy has helped to accelerate the adoption of mobile learning among teachers in response to disruption and the increasing mobility of the modern education sector (Thohir et al., 2021). Experiments with project-based learning have also confirmed their positive impact on pupils' academic achievement and retention, reflecting a successful transition from conventional models to an interactive and creative learning environment (Pudjiarti et al., 2024). In practical terms, Islamic educational institutions must incorporate these innovative methodologies into the core curriculum, supported by ongoing professional development programmes for teachers (Pudjiarti et al., 2024).

Inclusive and Multicultural Education and the Prevention of Radicalism

Future strategic studies must explore the role of Islamic educational methodologies in addressing issues of inclusivity, cultural diversity, and the mitigation of extremist movements. In the realm of inclusive education, the effectiveness of religious education for children with special needs requires multidisciplinary collaboration between religious education teachers, class teachers, special needs support teachers (SNSTs), parents, and interventions from psychologists and therapists, accompanied by modifications to the curriculum and assessment systems (Hakiman et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the integration of entrepreneurial values and the principles of multiculturalism into the Islamic curriculum has proven effective in empowering students economically, stimulating creativity in teaching, and fostering ethical conduct in business (Mariyono, 2024). In the context of deradicalisation, the instructional tactics employed include raising awareness of the dangers of extremist ideologies, setting an example of tolerance, monitoring religious activities, promoting moderate theology (wasathiyah), and creating opportunities for inclusive dialogue (Tambak, 2021). Islamic boarding schools also play an active role in countering radicalism through a variety of educational approaches focusing on intellectual, vocational, and character development (Sadiah, 2022). Finally, the instillation of moral values and integrity within the boarding school environment has proven effective in shaping future leaders through an integrated learning approach and lifelong learning (Umar & Woodward, 2019). The theoretical implications call for the development of a holistic, gender, and diversity-sensitive model of Islamic pedagogy, whilst the practical implications necessitate enhancing teachers' competence in managing classroom pluralism in order to effectively instil the values of religious moderation.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the research landscape concerning teaching methods in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) possesses strong resilience and global relevance amidst the tide of digital disruption and 21st-

century pluralism. Based on bibliometric mapping and a literature synthesis of 697 reputable articles, a fundamental shift in the pedagogical paradigm has been identified, moving away from conventional, text-based approaches (such as the *sorogan* and *bandongan* traditions) towards a student-centred learning ecosystem based on digital technology (such as blended learning, reflective models, and STEMQ-based digital flipbooks). In theoretical terms, this instructional reconstruction offers a novel approach in the form of an epistemological integration between Al-Ghazali's concept of *tarbiyah*, the revised and Islamised cognitive framework of Bloom's Taxonomy, and the values of *fiqh al-ijtima'iyah*. This reconstruction positions technology not merely as a tool for disseminating information, but as a catalyst for ethical reasoning and higher-order thinking skills. At the practical and policy levels, stakeholders in Islamic educational institutions and curriculum policymakers are urged to holistically integrate the strengthening of teachers' spiritual and professional competencies with critical digital literacy. This is essential to mitigate disinformation and to contextualise the value of religious moderation (*wasathiyah*) through social project-based learning, in order to counter cyber-radicalism and foster an inclusive sense of citizenship.

Whilst providing a comprehensive research roadmap, this macro-level analysis has inherent methodological limitations. The literature search, which excluded non-English-language documents and restricted sources to the Scopus database, risks overlooking rich local dynamics, such as literature in Arabic or local languages in the regions at the epicentre of the growth examined in this study. Furthermore, the predominance of publications centred on Indonesia and Malaysia creates a geographical bias that limits the generalisation of the findings to the context of global Muslim minorities or the Middle East. To address these limitations, future research agendas should be directed towards expanding cross-border research partnership networks through multinational comparative studies that incorporate other global databases such as the Web of Science. Future researchers are also advised to explore the underlying mechanisms behind the effectiveness of active and hybrid learning methods through experimental approaches or longitudinal case studies in inclusive schools. This step is important for assessing the extent to which the integration of local values and artificial intelligence can foster tolerance and spiritual resilience in pupils in the post-digital era.

REFERENCES

- A'ad, M. (1996). Ma'had al-Juntûr bayna al-Tajdîd wa al-Taqlîd. *Studia Islamika*, 3(4), 165–193. <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v3i4.796>
- Adiyono, A., & Sholeh, M. (2025). Can fiqh al-ijtima'iyah redefine Islamic education in Indonesia? A PRISMA review of social values in curriculum reform (2017–2024). *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies*, 10(3). <https://doi.org/10.55831/ajis.v10i3.805>
- Ahmad, K. A., Asni, F., Hasbulah, M. H., Hashom, H., Mustafa, W. A., Noor, A. M., Tambak, S., & Nasir, K. (2025). Mobile learning of Islamic studies: A comprehensive review. *Journal of Advanced Research in Applied Sciences and Engineering Technology*, 48(2), 211–224. <https://doi.org/10.37934/araset.48.2.211224>
- Angraini, D., Sulistiyo, U., Haryanto, E., & Pratama, A. (2025). Project-based or problem-based learning? Unveiling Islamic university students' preferences and experiences in writing classes. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 12(3), 1427–1443. <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v12i3.40831>
- Aripin, S., Nurdiansyah, N. M., Arief, A., & Yusof, N. B. (2025). Effectiveness and reformulation of Islamic religious education in schools in the modern era. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 22(1), 215–234. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v22i1.7432>
- Assegaf, A. R., Zainiyah, H. S., & Fahmi, M. (2022). Curriculum innovation for the internationalization of Islamic education study program at higher education institutions in Surabaya, Indonesia. *Millah:*

- Journal of Religious Studies*, 21(3), 671–706. <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol21.iss3.art3>
- Awaludin, A. (2024). Documenting the half-century evolution of Islamic education research: A probabilistic topic modeling study of the literature from 1970 to 2023. *Studia Islamika*, 31(3), 439–475. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v31i3.41513>
- Brignardello-Petersen, R., Santesso, N., & Guyatt, G. (2024). Systematic reviews of the literature: An introduction to current methods. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 194, 536–542. <https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwae232>
- El Batri, B., Maskour, L., Benamar, S., Nafidi, Y., & Alami, A. (2026). Impact of active learner involvement in a contextual and relevant environmental education programme on learning effectiveness. *Journal of Turkish Science Education*, 23(1), 25–48. <https://doi.org/10.36681/tused.2026.002>
- Elkordy, E. A., Alwohaibi, M. S., AlHarbi, Y. M., Alanazi, A. M., Almojel, H. A., Altimyat, B. N., Jumaa, M. I., & Hanafy, S. M. (2025). Perceptions of medical students at Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University on histology's role in clinical course preparation: A cross-sectional study. *PLOS ONE*, 20(12). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0337894>
- Essabane, K., Sterkens, C., & Vermeer, P. (2026). The contested contribution of Islamic religious education to citizenship education: An analysis of Dutch primary school textbooks. *British Journal of Religious Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2026.2637512>
- Faisal, M., Za, T., Siswanto, R., & Darajat, J. (2021). The integration of KKNi, SNPT, and the integration-interconnection paradigm in curriculum development at PTKI. *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, 9(2), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v9i2.528>
- Fakhri, J., Sada, H. J., Saputra, M. I., Jamil, S., & Mursyidah, D. (2023). Performing hybrid learning at Islamic higher education institutions for mitigating learning loss. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 9(2), 223–240. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v9i2.28874>
- Faqihuddin, A., Suresman, E., & Abdullah, M. (2025). Overcoming the spiritual emptiness of students in the modern era through the integration of Al-Ghazali's human concepts in the Islamic religious education learning model. *Cogent Education*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2497147>
- Gusenbauer, M., & Gauster, S. (2025). How to search for literature in systematic reviews and meta-analyses: A comprehensive step-by-step guide. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123833>
- Hakiman, H., Sumardjoko, B., & Waston, W. (2021). Religious instruction for students with autism in an inclusive primary school. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 20(12), 139–158. <https://doi.org/10.26803/IJLTER.20.12.9>
- Handayani, Y., Rahmawati, R., Rufaida, S., Widiasih, W., Hasyim, M., & Ristiani, R. (2026). Integrating the STEMQ approach and digital flipbooks to enhance students' science and digital literacy in basic physics courses. *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences*, 13(2), 29–37. <https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2026.02.004>
- Jailani, A. B. (2026). Current trends and research gaps in general science: A systematic review. *International Journal of Sustainability and Advanced Integrated Research*. <https://doi.org/10.65339/ijssair.v2.i1.03>
- Jayanegara, A., Mukhtarom, A., & Marzuki, I. (2024). Innovative learning methods of Islamic education subject in Indonesia: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 13(2), 1148–1158. <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v13i2.26364>
- Karwadi, K., Zakaria, A. R., & Syafii, A. (2024). A review of the effects of active learning on high order thinking skills: A meta-analysis within Islamic education. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 18(1),

- 97–106. <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v18i1.20895>
- Khanif, A. (2023). Islamic religious education learning strategy for alpha generation: A case study at Darul Qur'an School Elementary School Semarang City. *Ascarya: Journal of Islamic Science, Culture and Social Studies*, 3(1), 36–45. <https://doi.org/10.53754/iscs.v3i1.461>
- Kirby, A. (2023). Exploratory bibliometrics: Using VOSviewer as a preliminary research tool. *Publications*, 11, 10. <https://doi.org/10.3390/publications11010010>
- Kosasih, A., Supriyadi, T., Firmansyah, M. I., & Rahminawati, N. (2022). Higher-order thinking skills in primary school: Teachers' perceptions of Islamic education. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 9(1), 56–76. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/994>
- Kraus, S., Breier, M., & Dasí-Rodríguez, S. (2020). The art of crafting a systematic literature review in entrepreneurship research. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-020-00635-4>
- Ma'arif, S., Ibda, H., Ahmadi, F., Qosim, N., & Muanayah, N. A. (2023). Islamic moderation in education and the phenomenon of cyberterrorism: A systematic literature review. *Indonesian Journal of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science*, 31(3), 1523–1533. <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijeecs.v31.i3.pp1523-1533>
- Mahfudz, M., & Sukarno, S. (2023). The effect of ex-add learning techniques on critical thinking skills and pedagogic competence of Islamic education students. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 17(2), 221–228. <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v17i2.20782>
- Malik, S., & Jumani, N. B. (2022). Islamic instruction as a student-centred approach. In *Supporting modern teaching in Islamic schools: Pedagogical best practice for teachers* (pp. 57–67). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003193432-6>
- Manurung, P., Saragih, A. H., & Hasibuan, P. (2024). A study of the philosophy of education and analysis of the principles of implementing education according to the Al-Qur'an. *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 105(2), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.105.28>
- Mariyono, D. (2024). Multicultural values: Meeting point of two forces in developing Islamic education. *Quality Education for All*, 1(1), 46–69. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QEA-02-2024-0018>
- McAllister, J., Lennertz, L., & Mojica, Z. A. (2021). Mapping a discipline: A guide to using VOSviewer for bibliometric and visual analysis. *Science & Technology Libraries*, 41, 319–348. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0194262x.2021.1991547>
- Mujahidin, A., Abdullah, I., & Choirul Rofiq, A. (2025). Students' critical awareness of the internet and social media use as resources for Islamic learning in Indonesian public senior high schools. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 47(2), 140–155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2024.2368888>
- Mukhtar, B., Shad, M. K., Ali, K., Woon, L., & Waqas, A. (2024). Systematic literature review and retrospective bibliometric analysis on ESG research. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijppm-07-2023-0395>
- Mulyana, R., Kurahman, O. T., & Fauzi, R. (2023). Professional development for Islamic religious education and madrasah teacher. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 9(1), 55–66. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v0i0.23511>
- Muzaki, I. A., & Nurhayati, S. (2026). Reflective digital pedagogy in Islamic religious education and religious character formation in higher education. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 25(2), 763–782. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.25.2.34>
- Nursyahidin, R., Rohman, A., & Febriyanti, N. (2021). Learning innovation of Islamic education in Covid-19 pandemic. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 18(1), 145–166.

- <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.2021.181-08>
- Nurtawab, E. (2019). The decline of traditional learning methods in changing Indonesia: Trends of bandongan-kitāb readings in pesantrens. *Studia Islamika*, 26(3), 511–541. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v26i3.11026>
- Omar, M. T. M. (2022). The effectiveness of the problem-solving strategy in enhancing the academic achievement of Islamic studies students at a Saudi college. *Journal of Education and E-Learning Research*, 9(3), 129–135. <https://doi.org/10.20448/jeelr.v9i3.4101>
- Pudjiarti, E. S., Lintong, M. M., & Hamu, F. J. (2024). The power of project-based learning: A catalyst for student engagement, collaboration and academic excellence. *International Journal of Education and Practice*, 12(3), 606–621. <https://doi.org/10.18488/61.v12i3.3735>
- Purwanto, Y., & Saepudin, A. (2023). The development of reflective practices for Islamic religious education teachers. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 9(1), 107–122. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v0i0.24155>
- Qazi, A., Hardaker, G., Ahmad, I. S., Darwich, M., Maitama, J. Z., & Dayani, A. (2021). The role of information communication technology in elearning environments: A systematic review. *IEEE Access*, 9, 45539–45551. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2021.3067042>
- Rashed, Z. N., Zhaffar, N. M., Ihwani, S. S., & Iswantir, M. (2025). Driving Islamic education in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0: Challenges and strategies. *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah*, 15(1), 18–33. <https://doi.org/10.7187/GJAT072025-2>
- Riyanto, M., Danim, S., Sari, M. E., Susanto, E., & Anggereni, D. T. (2023). Online learning obstacles using Microsoft Teams in the era of Covid 19 courses class management. *AIP Conference Proceedings*, 2736(1). <https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0173220>
- Rizal, S., Nahar, S., & Al Farabi, M. (2023). Islamic values: Integration in learning mathematics and science at Man 2 level 2022/2023 academic year. *Munaddhomah*, 4(3), 732–745. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v4i3.653>
- Rojon, C., Okupe, A., & McDowall, A. (2021). Utilization and development of systematic reviews in management research: What do we know and where do we go from here? *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 23, 191–223. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12245>
- Saada, N. (2023). Educating for global citizenship in religious education: Islamic perspective. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2023.102894>
- Sadiyah, D. (2022). Developing pesantren education quality through radicalism prevention program for santri. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(1), 63–74. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i1.17947>
- Sahib, A., Gusmuliana, P., Amrina, R. D., Baihaqi, Y., Gunawan, G., & Rizal, S. (2026). Perceptions and challenges of hybrid learning in Islamic education: A comparative study of lecturers and students. *Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 20(2), 282–301. <https://doi.org/10.22329/jtl.v20i2.9569>
- Samad, S. A. A., Gade, S., Basri, H., & Ariani, S. (2023). Teacher's spiritual competence and its implication in Islamic religious education learning in Pidie, Aceh. *Ulumuna*, 27(2), 624–648. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v27i2.710>
- Sayekti, R., Arsyad, J., & Yusnaldi, E. (2026). Toward a pedagogical model: Insights from student perspectives in learning Islamic education philosophy. *Cogent Education*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2026.2645287>
- Sholeh, M. I., Haris, M., 'azah, N., Shobirin, M. S., Wahrudin, B., Muzakki, H., Ismail, T., & Ali, H. (2024). The role of teachers in increasing students' learning motivation in Islamic religious education. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 21(2), 421–441. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i2.8846>
- Suresman, E., Faqihuddin, A., & Abdullah, M. (2025). From sorogan to digital learning: A systematic literature

- network analysis of pesantren learning models. *Cogent Education*, 12(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2580776>
- Tambak, S. (2021). The method of counteracting radicalism in schools: Tracing the role of Islamic religious education teachers in learning. *Miqot: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 45(1), 104–126.
<https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v45i1.761>
- Thohir, M., Ma'arif, S., & Huda, H. (2021). From disruption to mobilization: IRE teachers' perspectives on independent learning policy. *Cakrawala Pendidikan*, 40(2), 359–373.
<https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v40i2.39540>
- Umar, M. S., & Woodward, M. (2019). The Izala effect: Unintended consequences of Salafi radicalism in Indonesia and Nigeria. *Contemporary Islam*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-019-00441-y>
- Zulaikhah, S., Gani, A., & Zain, Z. F. S. (2025). Trends of Islamic religion education in higher education: A bibliometric review. *Jurnal Iqra': Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan*. <https://doi.org/10.25217/ji.v10i3.6447>
- Zulkifli, H., Ismail, A. M., Muhamad, N. A. F., Hussin, N. H., & Zamri, H. Z. (2025). Challenges in teaching Islamic education and requirements of the development of Islamic cognitive domains. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 14(5), 3534–3545.
<https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v14i5.33565>