

Research Trends on Islamic Education Learning Intensity and Students' Religiosity : Implications of Democracy in Education

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze research trends and knowledge mapping on *Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity* during 2000–2025, with a particular emphasis on their implications for democracy in education. Using a bibliometric approach with data sourced from Scopus, 115 journal articles were analyzed through Biblioshiny for R to identify annual scientific production, leading authors, influential journals, collaboration networks, and thematic developments. The findings reveal a significant increase in publications after 2019, with dominant contributions from social sciences and humanities, and highlight interconnected themes such as religiosity, spirituality, ethics, and global issues like digital transformation and moral crises. The novelty of this study lies in integrating bibliometric mapping with democratic values in education, showing that Islamic education not only strengthens students' religiosity but also promotes civic values such as tolerance, justice, and inclusivity. These insights provide both theoretical and practical contributions for policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers in shaping effective Islamic education that is relevant to global challenges and supportive of democratic principles in education.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, Islamic religious education has undergone significant developments amidst global social, economic, and technological changes. The global Muslim population grew from 23.8% in 2010 to 25.6% in 2020, underscoring the strategic role of Islamic education in shaping the identity and morality of younger generations [1]. Meanwhile, an IPSOS survey (2023) reported that 61% of people across 26 countries still affirm belief in God or a spiritual entity, reflecting the continued relevance of religiosity in modern life. In the Indonesian context, 87.06% of the population identifies as Muslim, with an average Islamic Education Development Index (IEDI) score of 45.13 in 2019. However, national education outcomes remain challenging: the 2018 PISA results revealed that fewer than one-third of students could solve mathematics problems at Level 2, and TIMSS 2015 showed that 27% of fourth graders failed to meet basic mathematics competencies. These findings highlight the need for deeper examination of learning intensity and its relationship to students' religiosity [2]–[6].

Islamic education plays a strategic role in strengthening human resource development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [7], particularly Quality Education and Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. Within the framework of the National Research Master Plan (RIRN), this issue is highly relevant to priority areas such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT)—to foster digital educational innovations grounded in Islamic values—and Health, through the promotion of students' mental and spiritual well-being. Furthermore, it is aligned with Asta Cita priority 4, which emphasizes the advancement of human resources, science, technology, education, and health, while ensuring equity and youth participation [8]. At this juncture, it is also crucial to consider the implications for strengthening democracy in education, as high-intensity Islamic education not only nurtures individual religiosity

but also instills values of equality, deliberation, and respect for diversity—the foundations of democracy. The orientation of Islamic education toward quality and justice thus reinforces personal religiosity while simultaneously contributing to democratic education through the cultivation of civic values such as justice, equality, and appreciation of diversity. In this way, Islamic religious learning that remains relevant to global contexts can foster a generation that is both religious and democratic within multicultural societies [9]–[11].

Previous studies on Islamic education have largely focused on the integration of religious values into curricula, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and their impact on students' character formation. Bibliometric research by several scholars has mapped the global and national trends of Islamic education studies, yet relatively few have examined the relationship between learning intensity and students' religiosity. Contemporary scholarship has also highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary approaches, combining quantitative analyses of scientific publications with visual mapping using scientometric tools such as VOSviewer and Bibliometrix, in order to better understand the intellectual landscape and collaboration networks within this field. The general findings emphasize that Islamic education contributes to strengthening morality; however, challenges remain regarding the intensity of learning and the relevance of curricula to 21st-century contexts [12]. Despite the abundance of research on Islamic education and students' religiosity, studies that explicitly link learning intensity with religiosity (particularly through long-term bibliometric analyses spanning 2000–2025 remain scarce). Few have utilized global publication databases to map trends, identify core keywords, and analyze authorship networks on this topic. This knowledge gap is particularly significant in the context of Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority country [13]–[16].

The absence of a comprehensive knowledge map concerning the relationship between Islamic education learning intensity and students' religiosity hampers the development of evidence-based educational policies [17]. If left unaddressed, Islamic education risks falling short in shaping a generation that is globally competitive while remaining grounded in moral, spiritual, and democratic values within social life [18]. This study aims to :

1. Analyze publication trends in *Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity* in terms of annual output, disciplinary involvement, and the contributions and collaborations of countries.
2. Identify the most influential authors, journals, and articles in this field, based on publication counts, citations, and levels of contribution.
3. Reveal the main research topics within *Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity* and examine their distribution and interconnections.
4. Identify potential future research themes in the field of *Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity*.

This research contributes to the literature by offering a comprehensive mapping of research trends and the intellectual structure surrounding the relationship between learning intensity in Islamic education and students' religiosity. The findings are expected to serve as a valuable reference for further studies and can inform policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers in designing Islamic religious learning strategies that are more effective, contextually relevant, and sustainable, while simultaneously strengthening democratic values within education.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a bibliometric approach to analyze research trends and map the knowledge structure related to Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity over the period 2000–2025. Bibliometric analysis enables researchers to quantitatively identify patterns of publication, author collaboration, keyword distribution, and thematic developments within a given field. This approach is

considered appropriate as it provides a comprehensive overview of the research landscape and the developmental trajectory of studies on the investigated topics [19], [20].

Data were collected from the Scopus database, which is widely recognized for its broad and credible coverage of international scholarly literature. The search was conducted in August 2025 using the following query : ALL (Students' Religiosity) AND ALL (Islamic Education) AND ALL (Learning Intensity). The initial search yielded 178 documents. The dataset was subsequently refined using the criteria *PUBYEAR > 1999 AND PUBEYEAR < 2026* and limiting document type to journal articles *LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "j")*, resulting in 115 documents eligible for analysis. This filtering process ensured both relevance and quality of the data.

All bibliographic records were exported from Scopus in BibTeX format and analyzed using Biblioshiny for R, a web-based interface of the Bibliometrix package in R, which facilitates bibliometric analysis without requiring advanced programming skills [20]. The analysis covered bibliometric indicators such as annual scientific production, most relevant authors, most productive countries, as well as co-authorship and keyword co-occurrence networks to capture research trends and thematic foci.

Visualization of the results was conducted through thematic maps, co-authorship networks, and keyword co-occurrence maps. These techniques uncover the intellectual structure, inter-topic relationships, and potential future research directions [21]. The visualizations are presented to provide a clearer understanding of conceptual linkages and the evolution of research over time. Accordingly, this study not only identifies quantitative trends but also offers a structured knowledge map that can serve as a foundation for advancing research on Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity, with implications for strengthening democratic values in education [22]–[25].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Main Findings

Publication Trends: Annual Output, Disciplines, Contributions, and Global Collaboration

The bibliometric analysis reveals clear patterns in publication output and international collaboration on the topic of *Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity*. The findings indicate a consistent increase in the number of publications, growing cross-disciplinary engagement, and the expansion of global research networks.

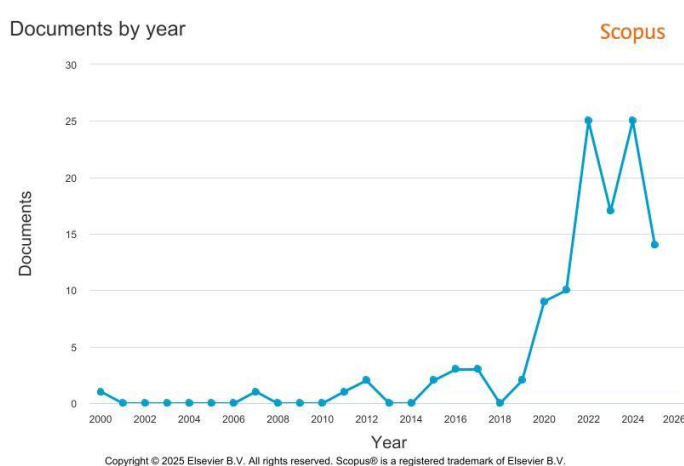


Figure 1. Number of Documents per Year

As illustrated in Figure 1, the annual volume of scientific publications has shown a marked upward trajectory over time. In the early stage of the period, particularly between 2004 and 2008, the number of articles was relatively limited, reflecting the nascent phase of scholarly interest in this domain. During 2009–2013, a steady rise in publications

became evident, corresponding to the emergence of preliminary studies and initial findings that began to draw greater academic attention.

A sharper surge occurred between 2014 and 2017, likely driven by advancements in technology, the availability of new research methodologies, and the intensification of international collaboration. The most significant growth, however, was observed from 2018 to 2022, when publication output increased dramatically. This trend suggests that the field had evolved into a global research focus, supported by substantial contributions from diverse countries and academic institutions [26], [27]. Overall, the trajectory from 2004 through 2022 demonstrates not only a stable interest but also an accelerating pace of scholarly production. This reflects the growing academic relevance of Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity as critical themes in contemporary educational and interdisciplinary research.

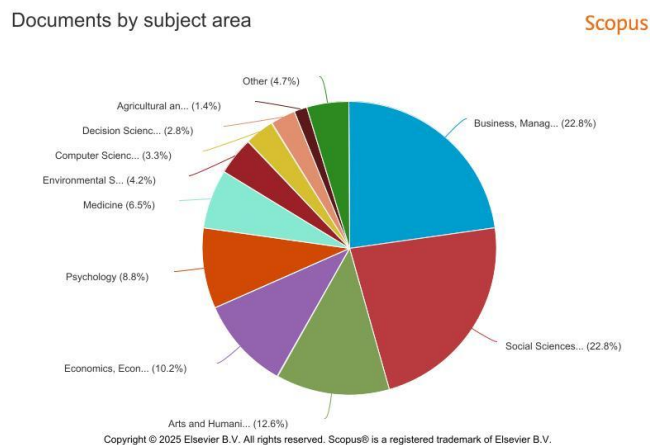


Figure 2. Fields of Study

The pie chart in Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of publications by subject area based on Scopus data. The two fields with the highest proportions are Business and Management (22.8%) and Social Sciences (22.8%), which together account for nearly half of all publications. Arts and Humanities ranks next with 12.6%, followed by Economics and Econometrics (10.2%) and Psychology (8.8%). Meanwhile, Medicine contributes 6.5%, followed by Environmental Science (4.2%), Computer Science (3.3%), Decision Sciences (2.8%), and Agricultural and Biological Sciences (1.4%). The Other category accounts for 4.7%, representing smaller proportions from diverse disciplines. This distribution indicates that research on this topic is predominantly anchored in the social sciences, management, and the humanities, although contributions from the natural and applied sciences remain evident [28].

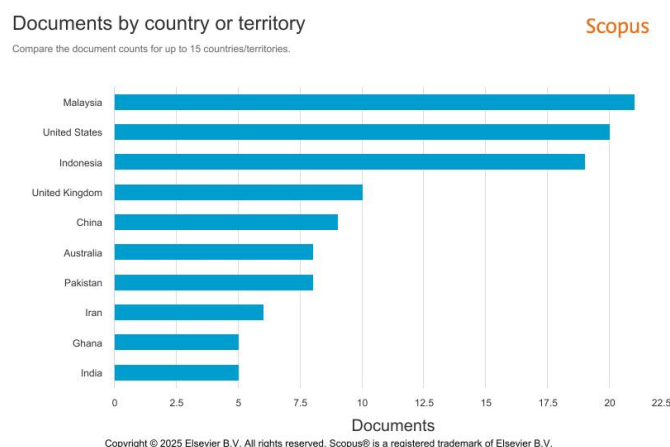


Figure 3. Country Contributions

The bar chart in Figure 3 presents the distribution of publications by country or region based on Scopus data. Malaysia ranks at the top with approximately 21 documents, followed by the United States and Indonesia, both recording nearly the same number of publications, slightly below Malaysia. The United Kingdom holds the fourth position with around 11 documents, while China, Australia, and Pakistan each contribute between 7 and 9 documents. Meanwhile, Iran, Ghana, and India are positioned at the lower end, with contributions of around 4–5 documents each. This pattern indicates that research on this topic has attracted wide global attention, with notable contributions led by Asian and Western countries [14], [29], [30].

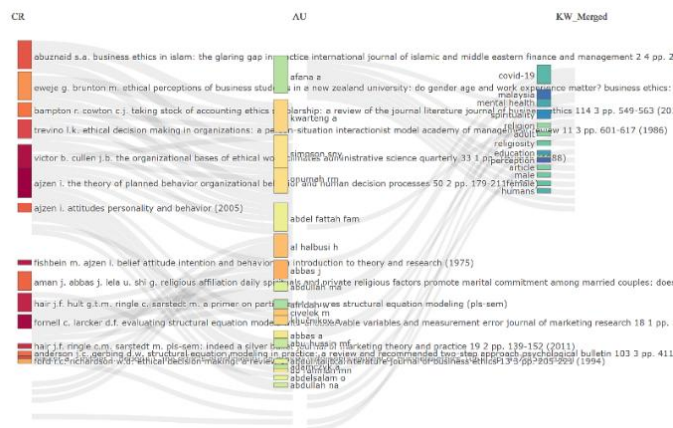


Figure 4. Collaboration (Three-Field Plot)

The visualization in Figure 4 presents a bibliometric analysis in the form of a three-field plot that connects three key elements:

1. CR (Cited References) – shown on the left, consisting of the most frequently cited references in the publications, such as Abuznaid S.A. (*Business Ethics in Islam: The Glaring Gap*), Coweige G. & Brunton M. (*Ethical Perceptions of Business Students*), and Ajzen I. (*Theory of Planned Behavior*).
2. AU (Authors) – positioned in the center, displaying the most productive or frequently appearing authors in this field, including Abel Fattah Fam, Al Helbusi, among others.
3. KW_Merged (Merged Keywords) – presented on the right, containing the most commonly recurring keywords across the publications, such as Covid-19, Ethics, Islam, Humans, Marketing, and Attitude.

The connecting lines between these three dimensions illustrate the relationships among the references cited, the authors contributing to the field, and the keywords employed in their works. This visualization enables the identification of thematic linkages, influential scholars, and foundational literature that underpin research within this domain [31].

Most Influential Authors, Journals, and Articles

Bibliometric analysis not only maps publication trends but also identifies the key actors shaping the development of a scientific field. Tracing the most influential authors, journals, and articles is a crucial step in understanding the authoritative sources that serve as primary references, uncovering patterns of collaboration, and mapping the centers of knowledge production. Such identification enables researchers to track the contributions of leading scholars, assess the reputation of journals, and evaluate the core literature that establishes the theoretical and methodological foundations of the field. Accordingly, this section provides a comprehensive overview of the scholars, publication outlets, and seminal works that have exerted the most significant impact in directing and advancing research within the domain under study [30], [32], [33].

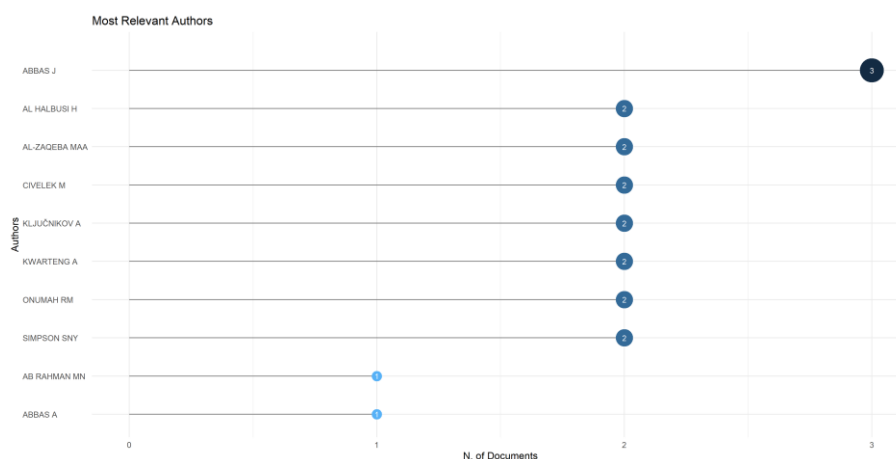


Figure 5. Most Relevant Authors

The graph in Figure 5 illustrates the most relevant authors based on the number of documents they have published. Abbas J emerges as the most productive contributor, with a total of three publications. Several other authors, including Al Malushi H, Al-Zagba MAA, Cvelek M, Kljuchnikov A, Kwatrenga A, Onumah RM, and Simpson SNY, each contributed two publications. Meanwhile, authors such as Ab Rahman IN and Abbas A are represented with a single publication. These findings highlight the distribution of scholarly contributions within the field under study and underscore the central role of Abbas J in advancing research on this topic [34], [35].

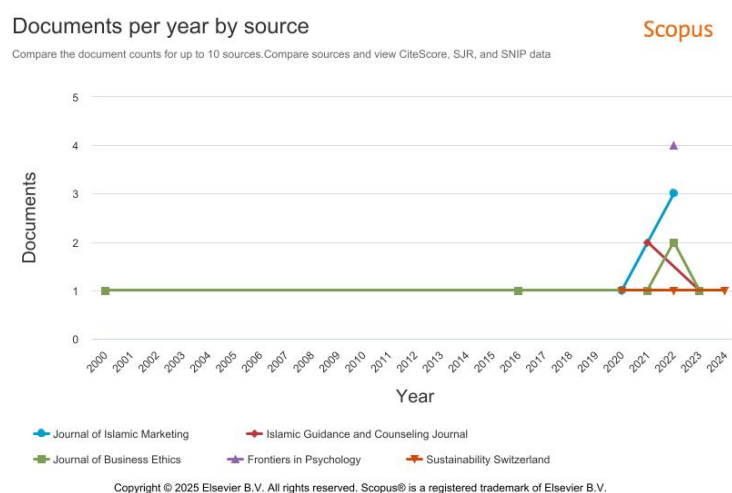


Figure 6. Most Relevant Sources

The data presented in Figure 6 illustrate the annual number of documents published by selected journals, based on Scopus records. The *Journal of Islamic Marketing* has maintained a relatively stable output, with a modest increase in recent years. The *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal* experienced a sharp surge in publications in 2023, whereas the *Journal of Business Ethics* has shown consistent contributions over time. Both *Frontiers in Psychology* and *Sustainability Switzerland* also recorded noticeable growth in 2023, with *Sustainability Switzerland* showing a particularly sharp rise. Overall, these patterns reflect a significant expansion of journal publications in 2023, especially in fields related to psychology and sustainability [36].

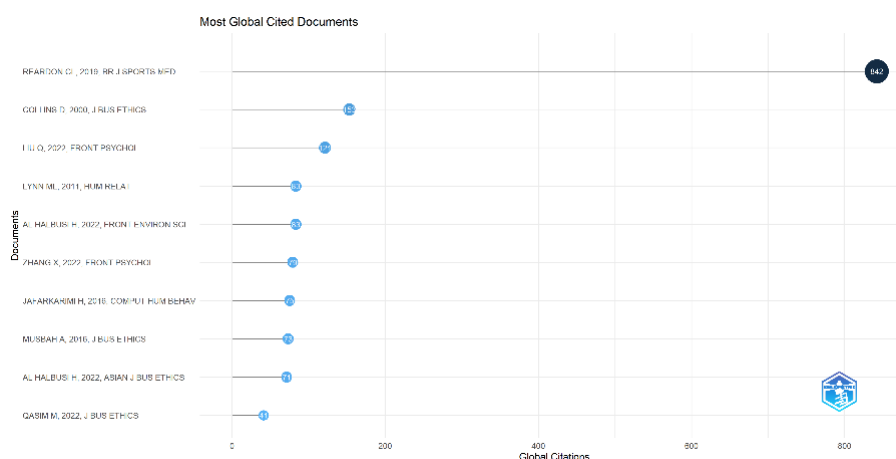


Figure 7. Most Globally Cited Documents

Figure 7 presents the documents with the highest global citation counts. The work by Saffron D. (2019) ranks at the top, with more than 800 citations, indicating its substantial influence in the field. Several other documents also demonstrate significant impact, each receiving between 200 and 500 citations, and are primarily published in journals closely aligned with psychology and ethics. These findings highlight the central role of highly cited works in shaping the intellectual foundation and theoretical direction of research on Islamic education, learning intensity, and students' religiosity.

Main Topics and The Interrelationship

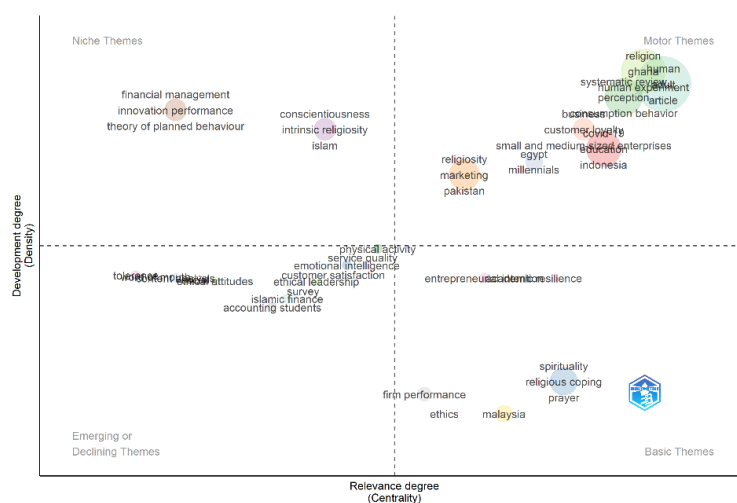


Figure 8. Mapping of Main Topics

Figure 8 illustrates the thematic map of research topics plotted across two dimensions: relevance (centrality) and degree of development (density). Within the “Niche Themes” quadrant, topics such as *financial management*, *innovation performance*, and the *theory of planned behavior* appear. These themes are less developed but retain research relevance, indicating their potential for future scholarly advancement.

Conversely, the “Motor Themes” quadrant highlights highly developed and relevant areas, including religion, spirituality, and marketing. This suggests that studies on religious practice, spiritual behavior, and marketing applications are well-established and have attracted considerable scholarly attention. The “Basic Themes” quadrant comprises topics such as ethics and Malaysia. While these themes remain relevant, their developmental momentum appears to have slowed, suggesting a stabilization in scholarly inquiry. Finally, the “Emerging or Declining Themes” quadrant includes topics such as entrepreneurship, resilience, and self-efficacy. These themes either represent emerging research frontiers gaining rapid momentum or areas experiencing a decline in scholarly interest. Overall, this

thematic map provides a comprehensive overview of the developmental trajectories and relevance of key research topics. It offers valuable insight into the evolving priorities of scholarship across disciplines and highlights areas where future research may be strategically directed [10], [23], [37], [38].

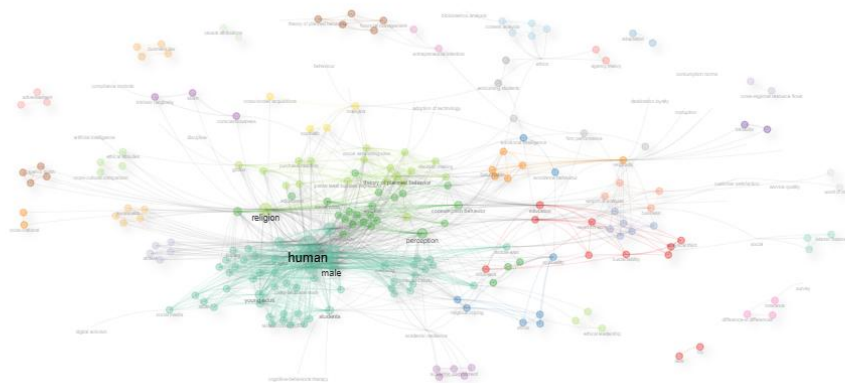


Figure 9. Topics Interconnections

Figure 9 presents a visual network map illustrating the interrelationships among research topics. At the center of the map, two dominant nodes—human and male—emerge as the most interconnected concepts, indicating that a substantial proportion of the literature links to themes of humanity and gender, particularly male identity. Surrounding these central nodes, several other topics are connected through linking lines, reflecting direct conceptual associations. For instance, adjacent to human are topics such as region, religion, health, and gender, which collectively underscore the multifaceted dimensions of human-centered research. The nodes are color-coded to denote clusters, representing groups of topics that share thematic or conceptual similarities. This clustering highlights how domains such as religion, health, and human behavior are deeply interwoven, forming a dense intellectual network within the broader body of literature. Overall, the map demonstrates that studies on religion, health, and human behavior are not isolated fields but are highly interconnected, thereby offering a more integrated picture of how these concepts influence and reinforce one another across diverse research contexts [39]–[42].

Future Research Opportunities

The thematic map highlights a range of evolving topics in the literature, with particular emphasis on potential directions for future research. Within the Motor Themes quadrant, topics such as religion, human, and marketing occupy positions of high relevance and development. This indicates that research in the areas of religion, human behavior, and marketing continues to expand and maintain central importance. These themes provide substantial opportunities for further exploration, especially in relation to consumer behavior, customer engagement, and the role of religion in shaping social practices. Meanwhile, the Emerging or Declining Themes quadrant identifies topics such as entrepreneurship, resilience, and spirituality as areas experiencing notable growth. These themes suggest considerable potential for future research, particularly in examining the interplay of entrepreneurship and resilience within social and psychological contexts, as well as the role of spirituality in fostering individual well-being. Such research directions may be further enriched by incorporating recent advancements in technology, socio-cultural transformation, and mental health studies. Taken together, these thematic insights underscore that future scholarship should not only build upon established areas of inquiry but also seize emerging opportunities to address evolving challenges and needs in contemporary society [13].

Discussion

The bibliometric analysis reveals a significant surge in publications on Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity after 2019, with peak productivity recorded in 2022–2023 at more than 25 documents per year. This sharp rise reflects a shifting academic priority toward exploring learning intensity and strengthening religiosity in the face of global challenges such as digital transformation and moral crises. Within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this trend underscores growing scholarly attention to the three determinants of behavior: attitude (positive values toward Islamic education), subjective norm (social support and expectations), and perceived behavioral control (students' capacity and resources to practice religious teachings).

The distribution of subject areas further highlights this multidisciplinary nature: Social Sciences (22.8%) and Business & Management (22.8%) emerge as leading contributors, followed by Arts & Humanities (12.6%) and Economics (10.2%). This disciplinary diversity reinforces the notion that learning intensity and students' religiosity are not merely theological concerns but also social, economic, and managerial phenomena [43]. Such cross-disciplinary integration aligns closely with TPB, as socio-economic and managerial dimensions shape both subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, thereby influencing students' ability to internalize and enact religious values.

Country-level contributions highlight Malaysia, the United States, and Indonesia as the three largest producers of publications, with collaboration patterns reflecting cross-cultural knowledge exchange. This is particularly relevant for testing the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) across diverse cultural contexts, as the subjective norm variable is deeply shaped by local social values and norms. Such contextual differences enable the adaptation of Islamic education models that align with local characteristics while preserving the core values of Islam.

The analysis of the most influential authors, journals, and keywords further indicates that this research domain is highly responsive to global issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic, ethics, and humanity. Crisis situations like the pandemic can reshape perceived behavioral control (e.g., restrictions on communal worship) and subjective norms (e.g., social pressure to comply with health protocols), which in turn affect students' religious practices.

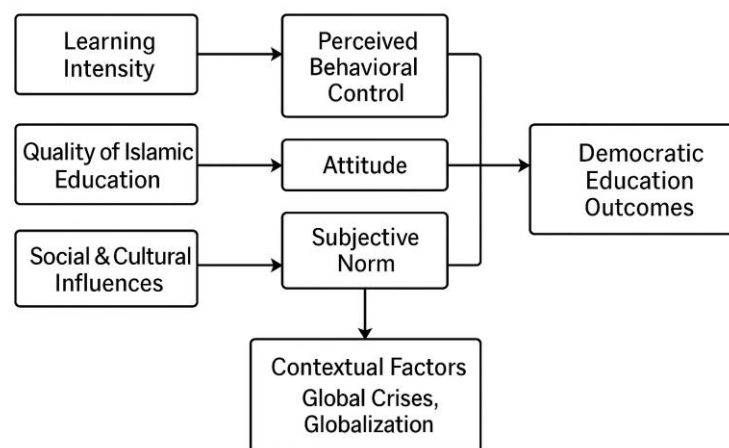


Figure 10. Conceptual Framework

The emerging conceptual model, derived from a combination of empirical findings and the grand theory of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) [44], can be outlined as follows :

1. Learning Intensity serves as a primary determinant of *perceived behavioral control*—the higher the learning intensity, the stronger students' confidence in their ability to practice religious values.

2. The Quality of Islamic Education (as reflected in multidisciplinary literature) shapes students' *attitudes* toward the importance of religious values.
3. Social and Cultural Influences (linked to national contributions and global collaborations) form the basis of *subjective norms*.
4. Collectively, the three TPB components—*attitude*, *subjective norm*, and *perceived behavioral control*—influence Students' Religiosity, which in turn is closely tied to the practice of democratic education: fostering positive attitudes toward tolerance and justice, promoting social norms that value diversity, and strengthening behavioral control that supports active participation in democratic social and political life.
5. Contextual Factors such as global crises (e.g., COVID-19) and globalization trends may serve as moderating variables that either strengthen or weaken these relationships.

The distribution of the most relevant authors contributing to the topic. The author Abbas J stands out with the highest number of documents (3), followed by other notable authors like Al Halbush H and Al-Zagba MAA, each with 2 publications. These authors have shaped the intellectual landscape of the research on Islamic education and religiosity, primarily focusing on the relationship between learning intensity and student religiosity. The rise in the number of documents produced by Abbas J indicates a growing academic recognition of the need to explore the impact of educational methods on moral development. This reinforces the idea that educational practices, particularly those involving religious education, play a crucial role in shaping students' moral and spiritual values.

Discusses about influential journals, shows reveals a significant surge in the number of publications between 2018 and 2023, particularly in the Journal of Islamic Marketing, Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal, and Sustainability Switzerland. This trend suggests that, after years of steady research, the field of Islamic education has gained traction globally, particularly as interdisciplinary studies that combine technology, ethics, and religion have become more prevalent [45], [46]. This rise in publications aligns with the evolving educational landscape and the increasing integration of technology, such as online learning tools and digital platforms, into traditional Islamic education. It highlights the growing recognition of the need to modernise Islamic education to meet contemporary challenges while maintaining its core values.

The most cited documents shows that Saffron D, 2019 has the highest number of global citations. This signifies the impact of certain studies in shaping the academic discourse around Islamic education and religiosity. These well-cited documents likely provide foundational frameworks or methodologies, which continue to influence research on the intensity of Islamic education and its impact on religiosity. This indicates that the ongoing discourse in this field is heavily based on certain key studies that provide critical insights into how religious education, learning intensity, and ethics intertwine to form a cohesive academic foundation.

From this discussion, a theory emerged, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which plays a crucial role in understanding how learning intensity influences student religiosity. The TPB posits that human actions are driven by three key factors :

1. Attitudes: The positive or negative evaluation of the behaviour (in this case, the adoption of religious practices and values).
2. Subjective Norms: The social pressure or norms that influence an individual's decision to engage in certain behaviours.
3. Perceived Behavioural Control: The perception of the ease or difficulty of engaging in the behaviour.

These three components directly impact students' religiosity and the effectiveness of Islamic education. The learning intensity within Islamic educational settings shapes these three components. For instance, higher learning

intensity may enhance students' perceived behavioural control (i.e., confidence in their religious knowledge and practices) and influence their attitudes toward the significance of religiosity in their lives.

The bibliometric analysis indicates a growing academic interest in the relationship between learning intensity in Islamic education and student religiosity, reflecting the integration of technology and evolving educational practices. By using TPB as a lens, we see that learning intensity influences students' religiosity through increased attitude, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms. This model suggests that educational practices should consider the intensity of learning as a crucial factor in fostering students' moral and spiritual development.

In analyzing the themes of Islamic education, students' religiosity, and learning intensity, the integration of emerging research themes is essential to understand the influence of social factors on learning. Based on the thematic maps identified in recent studies, key concepts such as "spirituality," "prayer," and "ethics" hold high relevance within Islamic education. These themes are closely connected to the values taught in Islamic teachings and illustrate how such values shape students' behavior in academic contexts. Previous studies highlight that spiritual leadership and religiosity in educational settings influence students' motivation to learn while simultaneously fostering their ethical character. The integration of religiosity and learning intensity underscores that Islamic education does not merely transmit religious knowledge but also cultivates profound moral values that shape students' behavior beyond the classroom.

Through thematic mapping that includes keywords such as "religion," "spirituality," and "ethics," a strong relationship emerges between religiosity and students' prosocial behavior in learning. For instance, demonstrate that religiosity functions as a mediator that channels students' behavior toward higher ethical standards and positive contributions both inside and outside the school. This indicates that Islamic education, when integrating religious values, not only emphasizes the teaching of religious doctrines but also the broader cultivation of ethical character, which directly impacts the degree of student engagement in academic activities.

One of the most compelling aspects emerging from this study is the identification of a new dimension illustrating how technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), is shaping religious practices and rituals. Dwivedi et al. (2023) emphasize that AI has begun to be applied in the context of religious education, both through applications that support students' religious practices and through online platforms for Islamic learning. The integration of AI offers new opportunities to bring Islamic teachings closer to students via digital platforms, while simultaneously raising challenges concerning the authenticity of spiritual experiences and ethical considerations. In this respect, Islamic education can harness technology to strengthen students' engagement with religious teachings, but such innovations must be balanced with the transmission of moral values that guide students in navigating technology ethically.

Furthermore, the thematic mapping underscores the importance of linking studies on ethics and religiosity in advancing Islamic education. The interconnections among religiosity, ethics, and students' prosocial behavior point to a deeper integration between the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and scholarship on business ethics. The research demonstrates that religiosity reinforces students' ethical decision-making, both in academic contexts and in their broader social lives. Thus, the integration of religious education and ethics within Islamic education not only strengthens students' moral character but also enriches their overall academic experience.

The novelty of this research lies in its emphasis on the integration of technology, religiosity, and ethics within the context of Islamic education. While technology (particularly AI) has increasingly been applied in education, its use in religious learning and in shaping students' character through Islamic values remains a relatively underexplored area, warranting further investigation. Moreover, the convergence of religiosity with ethical and moral education provides new insights that can enrich character education in Islamic schools. This study thus paves the way for future inquiries into how the integration of religious and ethical values can foster more inclusive learning environments and cultivate a generation with a strong moral commitment.

Future Research Opportunities

Future research in the context of Islamic education and students' religiosity holds significant potential to explore underexamined areas through more innovative and "out-of-the-box" approaches. One promising direction is the exploration of artificial intelligence (AI) in supporting religious learning within Islamic education, which may transform how students engage with religious teachings and enrich their spiritual experiences. As suggested by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), where attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms influence individual behavior, the application of AI could strengthen the impact of social norms in religious instruction. AI has the capacity to create personalized religious learning experiences tailored to students' levels of understanding and spiritual needs. For example, AI-powered chatbots for spiritual guidance or adaptive learning applications could provide interactive explanations of religious concepts, thereby accelerating comprehension and enhancing student engagement.

Another promising research avenue concerns the influence of social media on students' religiosity and ethics within Islamic education. With the increasing prevalence of social media among younger generations (especially in the context of globalization that shapes perceptions of religion and ethics) there is considerable scope for examining how social media interacts with students' religiosity. Social Capital Theory offers a useful lens for such inquiries, as it emphasizes how social relationships, norms, and interdependencies shape collective behavior. Social media functions as a tool for community building and, for students, as a platform where they can test and reinforce their religious values. Research into how Muslim students negotiate their religious identities on social media could provide novel insights into the interaction between digital religiosity and the formation of social ethics, as well as its implications for their academic life.

Future research could also delve deeper into the nexus between religiosity and radicalization in Islamic education. While a substantial body of work has explored the relationship between religiosity and extremist behavior, relatively few studies have examined effective prevention mechanisms through inclusive, ethics-based Islamic curricula. Drawing on Moral Intensity Theory, which explains how individuals make ethical decisions depending on the perceived moral significance of an issue, Islamic education can be designed to cultivate deeper moral awareness within today's complex digital and social environments. Such research could inform the development of curriculum guidelines grounded in the universal values of Islam (emphasizing tolerance, diversity, and interfaith understanding) with the explicit goal of minimizing students' vulnerability to radicalization. This line of inquiry offers novelty by proposing Islamic education programs that not only reinforce students' religious identity but also foster more positive engagement with the global community.

Furthermore, new approaches in future research may lead to richer understandings of multidimensional religiosity and its role in shaping students' character formation within Islamic education. Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which highlights how intrinsic and extrinsic motivations influence human behavior, provides a useful framework for analyzing how religiosity fosters students' internal motivation for learning and ethical development. Such studies could investigate how the pursuit of inner peace through religious practice contributes to academic achievement and psychological well-being. For instance, students with a deeper understanding of religious teachings may be more motivated to uphold academic integrity and commit to learning that benefits both themselves and society.

Another promising direction is the exploration of how high-intensity Islamic education can support democracy in education, particularly through curricula that emphasize tolerance, deliberation (*musyawarah*), and equality among students from diverse backgrounds. The integration of social justice principles with religious instruction constitutes an area ripe for further exploration. In an increasingly interconnected global context, Islamic education must address challenges posed by pluralism and multiculturalism. Research that examines the relationship between social justice values and religious practice in Islamic education could yield important new insights. Within this framework, John Rawls's Theory of Justice, which emphasizes fairness and equity in the distribution of resources, may be adapted to

inform Islamic educational curricula. Studies on social justice in religious education (including how teachers and students confront societal inequalities through more inclusive religious perspectives) present a novel avenue for creating Islamic education that is both firmly grounded in religious values and widely accessible, while avoiding the pitfalls of extremism or exclusivism.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully mapped the trends and knowledge structure related to Islamic Education, Learning Intensity, and Students' Religiosity during the period 2000–2025 through a bibliometric approach. The findings reveal a significant surge in publications after 2019, a dominance of contributions from the social sciences and humanities, and strong thematic interconnections among religiosity, ethics, and spirituality with global issues such as technology and moral crises. These results affirm that Islamic education not only strengthens students' morality but also carries important implications for reinforcing democracy in education by cultivating values of justice, tolerance, and social participation. Nevertheless, this study has certain limitations. It relies exclusively on the Scopus database and a quantitative bibliometric method, thus not capturing deeper qualitative dimensions. Future research is therefore recommended to incorporate cross-database data sources (e.g., Web of Science or Google Scholar) and employ mixed-methods designs to enrich the analysis. From a practical perspective, policymakers and educators are advised to design Islamic education curricula that simultaneously reinforce religiosity and democratic civic values, while leveraging technology in an ethical manner. Such an approach is crucial for nurturing a generation that is religious, tolerant, globally competitive, and committed to inclusive and democratic social life.

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Author Contribution

All authors contributed substantially to the conception, design, analysis, and preparation of this manuscript. Muhammad Izzan Naqiba developed the conceptual framework, designed the bibliometric methodology, and supervised the overall research process. Yusuf Mukhtar Taqiyyuddin was responsible for data collection, analysis, visualization, and drafting the discussion section. Both authors contributed equally to the interpretation of results, manuscript writing, and final revision. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the paper for publication.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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