

Global Landscape of Qur'anic Studies (2000–2025): Science Mapping, Collaboration, and Thematic Evolution

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ABSTRACT

The research is focused on the investigation of the global development of Qur'anic studies between 2000 and 2025 through a bibliometric analysis and a science mapping approach. For data collection and analysis, a database of Scopus was utilized with the use of VOSviewer software tools. The results show that there was consistent growth in the number of publications in the field. The most noticeable feature is that many contributions came from South East Asian countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, becoming the key centers for international cooperation in scientific research. Moreover, based on the analysis of co-authorship networks, one can note that the existing system was relatively clustered, implying the existence of well-established research communities in the regions with few connections between the regions. At the same time, the citation analysis reveals the multidisciplinary character of the research area and its interlinkage with many aspects of theological, ethic, gender, health, and socio-economic studies. In addition, the analysis of keyword co-occurrences and overlay networks shows that apart from classic keywords such as 'tafsir' and 'exegesis,' digital humanities and computation approaches also gained popularity. This study underscores the evolving and interdisciplinary character of Qur'anic studies and highlights the need for stronger international collaboration and methodological innovation to enhance its global academic impact.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The study of the Qur'an has long been at the heart of Islamic scholarship, transitioning from tafsir to an interdisciplinary scientific discipline that encompasses linguistics, history, sociology, and digital humanities. During the last twenty years, Qur'anic studies have become an

integral part of world academia due to changes in the humanities and social sciences overall. It manifests itself in the incorporation of modern methods of scientific inquiry, the proliferation of indexed works, and the involvement of international scholars. The development of Qur'anic studies goes beyond religious institutions and has become an

active process of producing knowledge in world academia via databases like Scopus and Web of Science [1], [2].

From 2000 to 2025, there has been considerable growth in terms of quantity and variety of research products concerning the Qur'an. The use of bibliometrics shows a consistent increase in number of publications that highlights increased scholarly focus on this topic as well as institutional backing for such research activities. For example, when bibliometric analysis is carried out regarding publications on the Qur'an listed in relevant databases, one notices that there are thousands of publications published in hundreds of scholarly journals, showing that not only has there been a quantitative growth but also thematic variation [3].

Apart from quantitative growth, there has been significant development in themes in Qur'anic studies. Previous research was mostly concerned with classical exegesis, linguistic study, and theology of the Qur'an. Yet, recent research is turning its attention to new themes like Qur'anic teaching, digital Qur'anic studies, intertextuality, and socio-cultural aspects of the Qur'an. The use of bibliometric analysis has shown that new themes have come up including those that involve education, technology, and interdisciplinarity. There is thus an indication of the relevance of current studies to modern problems [4], [5].

Another notable trend within the international environment of Qur'anic studies is the growth in the number of scholarly collaborations. These include not only joint research but also cross-border cooperation between universities and institutions around the world. Collaborations enable exchange of information and improvement of research, making an essential contribution towards the globalization of the field. In the course of bibliometric mapping, it was found that the input into the field does not originate from a single region anymore, but comes from many parts of the world including Southeast Asia, Middle Eastern countries, Europe, etc [6].

While all these developments took place, however, there are some organizational

and conceptual issues remaining in this discipline. First of all, current research works tend to specialize in particular areas within the broad area of studying such aspects as "living Qur'an," linguistics, or pedagogical perspectives, without offering any general overview of the whole research field. In addition, bibliometrics were used in many studies, but at the same time there is still a gap in integrative research that would combine such concepts as science mapping, collaboration, and thematic changes over time.

Nevertheless, there are a number of organizational and cognitive issues related to this topic. Current research tends to deal with only certain aspects like "living Qur'an," language-related analysis, and pedagogical aspects but does not offer an overall perspective at once. Moreover, despite many applications of bibliometric methods for different purposes, there is still no study that would look at the dynamics of science mapping, cooperation, and thematic evolution in a comprehensive manner. In this way, an integrated picture of the development of this area throughout the years from 2000 to 2025 is yet to be obtained.

The objective of this study is to conduct an exhaustive examination of the world's current state of affairs in Qur'anic studies between the years 2000 and 2025 using a science mapping methodology. To be specific, the research will focus on the following areas of interest: first, analyzing the development and diffusion of academic publications within Qur'anic studies; second, evaluating patterns of author, institutional, and national collaborations; and third, revealing the thematic development of the field through keyword co-occurrence and clustering. The study hopes to contribute to an integrated picture of the development of Qur'anic studies globally by conducting this multifaceted investigation.

2. METHODS

The current study uses a quantitative bibliometric methodology along with science mapping strategies to investigate the

evolution of Qur'anic studies at an international level between 2000 and 2025. The use of bibliometrics is ideal for such purposes since it can be applied to evaluate large amounts of scholarly literature and discover certain tendencies in regards to productivity, impact, and the organization of scientific knowledge in a particular area. Moreover, the application of science mapping tools will help reveal interrelations between authors, institutions, countries, and topics of interest in Qur'anic studies.

Data collection for this paper will be carried out from Scopus, whose reliability and comprehensive nature have been proven by many users. Keywords like "Qur'anic studies," "Quran," "tafsir" and other similar terms will be used as a basis for search with publication year range set between 2000 and 2025. Peer-reviewed papers from journals, conference proceedings, and reviews written in English will be considered, whereas other types of publications and duplicates will be filtered out. Post-data extraction process involves cleaning and standardization of names, institutions, and keyword variants, making it possible to increase the effectiveness of later bibliometric and network analysis.

In order to analyze the data, the researchers use VOSviewer to analyze the performance of science mapping and visualization. In terms of analyzing performance, it helps the researchers assess the number of publications, citation impact,

and leaders in publications, which includes authors, affiliations, and countries. On the other hand, science mapping involves using co-authorship analysis, co-citation analysis, and keyword co-occurrence analysis in examining collaboration networks as well as topic structures.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Co-Author Analysis

A study of co-authors is conducted to determine the pattern of collaboration in the study of the Quran, focusing on the nature of scholarly interactions between authors, institutions, and countries. With this, this segment of the discussion will be able to reveal how much collaboration takes place and the research clusters in the area.

1. Author-level Visualization

The co-authorship graph visualization serves as an excellent way of capturing all the collaborative networks between researchers working on the study of the Qur'an. Through this graph, one can easily visualize the social structure of knowledge creation via research collaboration by plotting authors as nodes and the connections between them as edges. The different clusters of authors based on different colors signify that there are research communities involved, where authors often collaborate with one another.

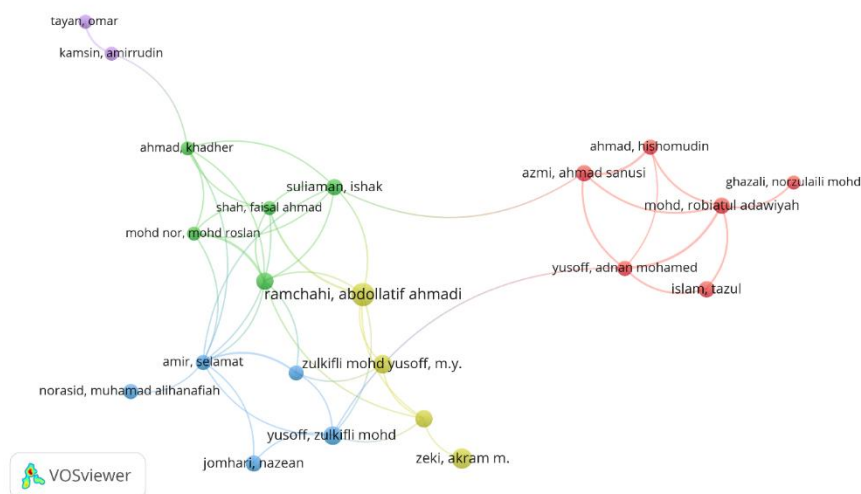


Figure 1. Author-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

The graph shows a number of clusters indicating various levels of collaboration and centrality within the network. For example, the green cluster looks like one of the most densely connected communities with Ramchahi and Abdollatif Ahmadi being located in the middle and playing the part of a collaborative hub in this community. As it can be seen from the picture, this means high productivity as well as high involvement of these authors in collaboration with numerous co-authors. It is also worth mentioning the presence of dense clusters of authors such as Ahmad Khadher, Sulaiman Ishak, Shah Faisal Ahmad who are very close to each other in terms of collaborative connections. At the same time, the red cluster on the right-hand side also looks quite compact; however, it looks more inwardly oriented because of strong connections between such authors as Azmi Ahmad Sanusi, Mohd Robiatul Adawiyah, Yusoff Adnan Mohamed.

Beside these major clusters, there are also minor clusters like the blue and yellow

clusters, which show limited yet still significant collaboration tendencies. This is because these minor clusters are centered on one or two individuals who form the core, for example, Zulkifli Mohd Yusoff and Yusoff Zulkifli Mohd. It should also be noted that there are weak or peripheral links in the network, including isolated nodes and authors.

2. Institution-level Visualization

The institution-level coauthorship network shows the collaborations amongst the institutions participating in the study of Qur'anic scholarship. In this visualization, institutions are represented by dots, while links indicate the collaboration between institutions. This graph clearly displays the distribution of knowledge production across institutions as well as the influence of collaborations between institutions on the development of the field. The clustering pattern in this network shows the clusters of institutions collaborating among themselves.

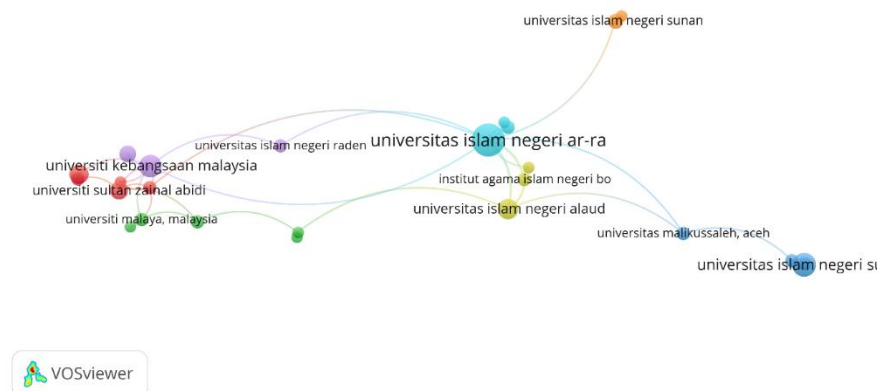


Figure 2. Institution-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

From the figure above, it can be seen that Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry is centrally positioned in the network since it forms part of the hubs within the network and connects different groups of institutions together. It has strong ties to other institutions

such as Institut Agama Islam Negeri Borneo, Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin, and Universitas Malikussaleh Aceh, which implies that it participates in a collaboration network with other institutions. In particular, its position as the central hub suggests that

Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry plays a crucial role in fostering relationships between research institutions and may become a leading institution for the development of Quranic studies in the region.

At the opposite end of the network, institutions from Malaysia, like Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, and Universiti Malaya, constitute another cluster. This shows the presence of an independent yet related research cluster, with their own set of collaborative patterns within themselves. These institutions, although in contact with their counterparts in Indonesia, show weaker

connections, implying that intercountry collaboration does exist, albeit on a lower scale.

3. Country-level Visualization

This visualization represents a macro-level analysis of collaborations in the area of Qur'anic studies. The network diagram shows countries as nodes and their interactions as edges, thus allowing us to trace not only the geographical locations of the research activity but also the level of collaboration that takes place on an international scale. The division of nodes into various colors indicates different levels or types of collaboration in this area.

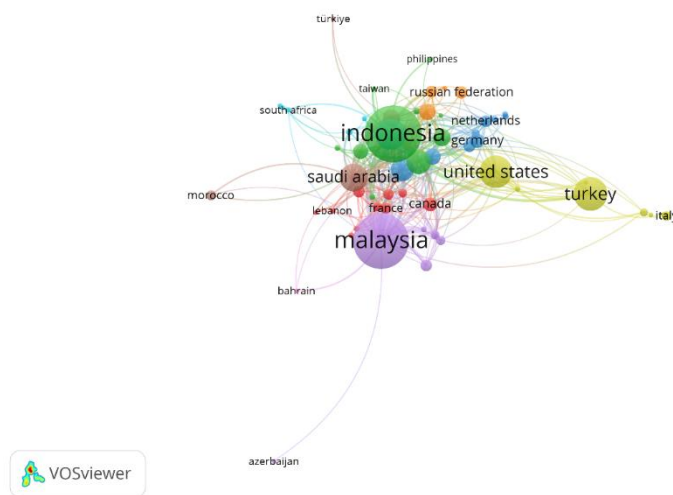


Figure 3. Country-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

As seen from the figure, Malaysia and Indonesia stand out to be the most dominating and influential contributors within the global network, evident from their bigger node sizes and numerous links to other nations. The two nations play an important role in acting as major hub points for collaboration, both within Southeast Asia and with other nations from the Middle East, Europe, and other regions. To cite an example, Indonesia exhibits a strong link with nations like Germany, the Netherlands, and the Russian Federation, while Malaysia has a close connection with nations like Saudi Arabia, France, and Canada. Apart from these major nodes, there are also other countries

like Turkey and the United States that serve as key nodes in the network. These act as links between different clusters of the network. For instance, Turkey is seen as one of the important nodes that connects the research networks of Europe and the Middle East, while the United States acts as the node that connects Western academic networks with those from Muslim-dominated nations.

3.2 Citation Analysis

Citation analysis provides insights into the intellectual structure and influence within Qur'anic studies by identifying the most impactful publications and authors.

Table 1. The Most Impactful Literatures

Citations	Authors and year	Title
353	[7]	Tolerance and coercion in Islam: Interfaith relations in the Muslim tradition
339	[8]	Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretation
247	[9]	Is religiosity an important determinant on Muslim consumer behaviour in Malaysia?
221	[10]	Islamic Biomedical Ethics Principles and Application
210	[11]	Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad
194	[12]	Therapeutic effects of date fruits (<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i>) in the prevention of diseases via modulation of anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant and anti-tumour activity
188	[13]	The Qur'an and its biblical subtext
182	[14]	How Islamic Business Ethics Impact Women Entrepreneurs: Insights from Four Arab Middle Eastern Countries
160	[15]	Jihad in Islamic history: Doctrines and practice
157	[16]	A model of using social media for collaborative learning to enhance learners' performance on learning

Source: Scopus, 2026

Table 1 highlights the most influential literatures in Qur'anic and Islamic studies, revealing a diverse and interdisciplinary intellectual foundation. The most highly cited work, Friedmann (2003), emphasizes interfaith relations, indicating that themes of tolerance and religious interaction are central to the field. Similarly, Stowasser (2011) and Reynolds (2010) reflect strong scholarly attention to Qur'anic interpretation, gender perspectives, and textual analysis, which remain core areas of inquiry. At the same time, several highly cited studies extend beyond classical religious studies into applied and contemporary domains, such as consumer behavior (Alam et al., 2011), biomedical ethics (Sachedina, 2009), and Islamic business ethics (Tlaiss, 2015), demonstrating the field's expansion into socio-economic and ethical issues. The inclusion of works on health sciences (Rahmani et al., 2014) and digital learning (Al-Rahmi & Zeki, 2017) further indicates the growing integration of Islamic perspectives into scientific and technological contexts.

3.3 Keyword Co-Occurrence Analysis

Keyword co-occurrence analysis is utilized to explore the conceptual structure and thematic development of Qur'anic studies. By analyzing the frequency and relationships among keywords, this section identifies dominant research themes, emerging topics, and shifts in scholarly focus, thereby illustrating the evolution of the field over the study period.

1. Network Visualization

This is a visual representation that captures the full essence of the concepts and theme development in the study of Qur'anic. It shows through nodes how keywords and how they relate to each other. Each node is a keyword, while connections show how frequent co-occurrence between two or more keywords occurs in any article. Thematic areas are shown in color blocks. Dominant research streams as well as new interdisciplinary themes can be identified from this network.

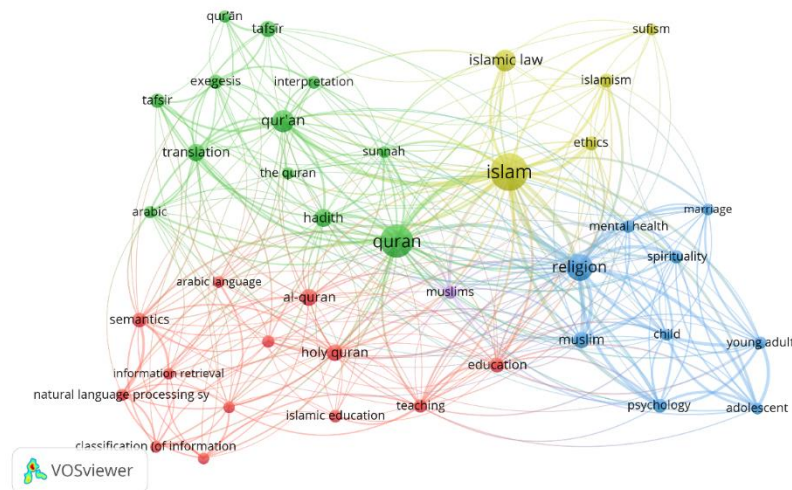


Figure 4. Network Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

It can be seen from the graph that the center of the network consists of the most frequent keywords, such as “Qur’an,” “Islam,” and “religion,” which act as major hubs for linking the different thematic groupings. It shows that the subject area is deeply embedded within its religious and theological fundamentals. From the tight cluster of links around these keywords, it can be inferred that all research subjects, whether specialized or not, are closely connected to the central themes of Islamic doctrine and Qur’anic exegesis. The green cluster is associated with more traditional approaches towards the study of the Qur’an, dealing with concepts such as “tafsir”, “exegesis”, “translation”, and “hadith”. These terms reflect the emphasis on the textual, interpretative, and linguistic aspects of the study of the holy book. The usage of the keywords “Arabic” and “interpretation” reflects the role of the language in the discussion about the Qur’an. A dense network of connections reveals that this is a developed research area.

The blue cluster is centered on religion and social science, including psychology and human development. The keyword analysis includes the words “mental health,” “psychology,” “adolescent,” and “young adult.” All these imply that the study

is concerned with how the teachings and values taught by Islam influence psychological behavior. It can be seen from this keyword analysis that there is an increased interest in studies focusing on how religion influences social behavior. These connections reveal that the study is centered on an interdisciplinary study of religion and behavioral sciences. The yellow group highlights ethics, legality, and spirituality within the context of Islam, using keywords like “Islamic law,” “ethics,” “Sufism,” and “Islamism.” The yellow group is made up of studies on the principles and morals of Islam. It also shows a link with other groups, which suggests that issues relating to morality and legislation have some relevance to traditional and modern interpretations of Islam.

2. Overlay Visualization

The overlay representation of keywords shows the chronological trend of thematic evolution in the study of the Quran. In contrast to conventional networks, this figure includes a color scheme to show the average publication year for each keyword, which can help identify whether a theme is old or new. With this method, the figure does not only depict the connections between different themes but also shows how the focus of scholars has evolved over time.

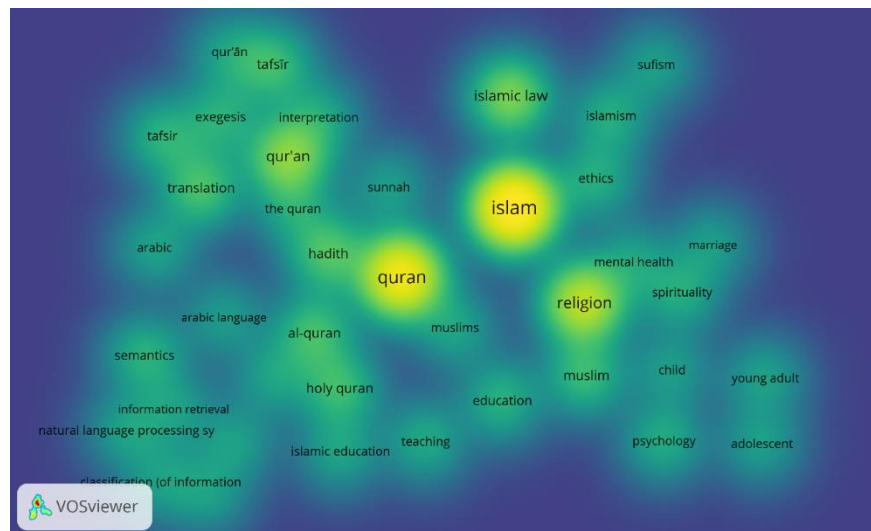


Figure 6. Density Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Indeed, it can be seen from the figure that Islam, Qur'an, and religion have emerged as the key research hotspots, since they have been highlighted through bright yellow colors and located at the center of the map. In other words, they represent the key elements of the field and imply that the bulk of the academic studies may have been centered on some fundamental aspects of the religion in question. The nodes next to the key ones include hadith, Islamic law, ethics, and interpretation, and they are presented in various shades of yellow and green colors. Apart from the focal themes, there are also some peripheral thematic areas which are relevant for understanding the data under discussion. For instance, themes like "psychology," "mental health," "education," and "spirituality" are found in the medium density zone, which indicates increasing academic interest in studying religion through the lens of social sciences. On the other hand, some niche themes like "natural language processing," "information retrieval," and "classification of information" are found in low density areas.

Discussion

The results of this research show that studies on the Qur'an have developed into a complex and internationally networked subject that is not only based on solid

foundations but also continues to diversify. From the co-authorship analysis, it is evident that collaboration remains moderately centralized, meaning that there are still some authors and universities whose role in the process is quite pivotal. It can therefore be concluded that although there are already stable research groups in the area—especially in Southeast Asia—some level of segmentation still exists, thereby preventing full integration at the international level. The importance of nations like Indonesia and Malaysia proves that they have become key forces in current Qur'anic research.

When viewed intellectually, it is evident that the works which have received much attention are not only confined to the realm of classical exegeses of the Qur'an. Works in the fields of ethics, gender, consumer behavior, and biomedical discourse form part of these works. There has been a move away from theology-based studies towards the practical study of Islamic teachings. That there exist works in several disciplines among the highly-cited publications shows that Qur'anic studies are flexible enough to solve social issues.

This transformation is highlighted even more through the keyword co-occurrence analysis that shows a well-organized but varied landscape of topics. Despite the prevalence of classical themes like

tafsir, exegesis, and translation, new research fields combining elements of technology and social sciences have emerged. Keywords such as natural language processing, information retrieval, and semantic analysis suggest the rising importance of digital humanities in Qur'anic scholarship. On the other hand, the prominence of psychological, health-related, and educational themes illustrates the rising interest in applying Qur'anic teachings to real-life situations.

The visualization through overlay helps further explain the development of trends throughout the years. As seen in the figure, there is a gradual trend from the more socially-based and fundamental study of Qur'an towards more technology-driven methodology. Older studies deal primarily with the psychological and behavioral perspectives of religion, whereas newer studies have focused on better interpretation and computation. The trend implies that not only is the field growing, but also advancing in its methods. Such progression indicates greater innovations and diversifications within the field, which might help make it more applicable.

The results of the density visualization show that even though diversification is taking place in the discipline,

the field is still very much grounded in its main topics, including Islam, Qur'an, and religion. Such key subjects keep being an important basis for further research directions. Still, the low density of emerging fields shows that these areas might still need more attention. This research shows the maturity but at the same time development of Qur'anic studies, emphasizing that for the full potential of this field to be reached, international cooperation is essential.

4. CONCLUSION

The current research offers a detailed insight into the global context of studying the Qur'an throughout the years from 2000 till 2025. Thus, the field under consideration has proved itself to be based on classical research yet characterized by its evolution towards the application of various approaches within interdisciplinary and global environments. It should be noted that besides classic topics related to the Qur'an, religion, and Islam, new directions such as ethics, psychology, and education have emerged. As for collaboration tendencies, regional cooperation has been shown to take precedence alongside a developing trend of globalization.

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