

# Charting Islamic History Research (2000–2025): Growth Trajectories and Citation Networks

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## ABSTRACT

In this paper, the intellectual structure, cooperation patterns among scholars, and theme evolution in Islamic history literature from the year 2000 to 2025 is analyzed using bibliometric and science mapping approaches. In the study, bibliographic information is examined by means of bibliometric techniques in VOSviewer software to assess influential publications, cooperation networks among authors and institutions, international research collaboration, co-occurrence of keywords, theme evolution, and research density. The results show that the field is characterized by an interdisciplinary research environment covering historical, religious, cultural, political, and socioeconomic aspects. Citation analysis has highlighted influential publications on issues such as cross-cultural knowledge transfer, Islamic political movements, religious traditions, and cultural heritage. Analysis of cooperation networks has shown the concentration of scholarly cooperation with the central role played by Malaysia and Indonesia in the identified international cooperation network. Analysis of co-occurrence of keywords has highlighted the central role played by Islam and religion with respect to various research themes, such as globalization, cultural heritage, environmentalism, philanthropy, and design history. From a temporal overlay perspective, there appears to be diversification of the themes being explored, where previous literature had a link to globalization and cultural heritage, whereas recent publications have focused on regional, social, and material-cultural aspects. The keyword density approach also provides evidence of thematic concentrations and specialized research directions. Nonetheless, the use of literature that is outside the traditional historiography of Islam raises the need for defining disciplinary boundaries and standardization of bibliographic information.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The study of Islamic history forms an important subject for historical scholarship,

which concerns itself with the political, intellectual, religious, social, and cultural changes that have taken place in the context of Muslims living in various geographical

regions throughout history. Not limited to the advent of Islam in seventh-century Arabia, the study of Islamic history includes the development of Islamic institutions, the making and unmaking of Muslim communities, the spread of religious knowledge, and the relationship of Islamic civilizations with broader historical processes. Its significance as a scholarly discipline is not merely its ability to recount events but rather to explain the development of religious, political, intellectual, and cultural traditions in varying social and geographical environments. However, the scope of Islamic history has been widely contested. [1] problematizes simplistic approaches to Islamic history by pointing to the diversity of Muslim historical experience and the inadequacies of geographical and civilizational categorization. In the same way, [2] raises the issue of how well-known historiographical concepts reflect the lives of religious minorities and non-Muslims in the societies traditionally categorized as Islamic. These controversies illustrate the fact that Islamic history is not a static or monolithic discipline but one that is constantly changing as it develops through different perspectives on history.

There have been considerable advances in the methodologies and concepts in the process of production of historical knowledge in Islam through criticism of historical sources, origin of religion, and the interplay between textual tradition and history reconstruction. [3] has shown that early Islamic history writing is situated amidst particular political, religious and communal contexts, underscoring the need to investigate the processes of construction and transmission of historical narratives. More recent historiographies on Islam have expanded the scope of these issues to representation, discipline, and geographic diversity of Muslims' societies. This trend has promoted scholarship which links Islamic history with wider discussion on trans-regional interactions, culture encounters, political change, and knowledge circulation. Hence, modern Islamic historiography is informed by several disciplines, including

historiography, religious studies, archaeology, political history, intellectual history, and area studies. While such interdisciplinarity offers many possibilities for the creation of a more complex understanding of Islam's past, it has simultaneously produced a fragmented field of scholarship where scholarly output is dispersed through various journals, scholarly circles, and disciplines. Hence, an understanding of how this scholarship has evolved will require, besides an appreciation of the arguments contained within it, a focus on the organization of the scholarship as well.

The years between 2000 and 2025 represent a highly informative analytical timeframe to analyze the development of Islamic history research in the sphere of modern academic literature. The timeframe is marked by such tendencies as the growing digitalization of scholarly communication, increased access to electronic bibliographical sources, and enhanced chances for conducting international research. In the rapidly changing conditions, the research on Islamic history has raised questions related to authenticity of history, political institutions, intellectual traditions, religious authorities, cultural interactions, as well as the interaction between local history and global processes. Nevertheless, the presence of various scholarly publications does not guarantee a coherent research field development. Publication activity may vary across historical periods and research themes, while citation recognition may be concentrated among particular authors, journals, or intellectual traditions. Moreover, geographical and institutional differences in publication practices may influence which contributions become visible within international indexing systems. Examining these patterns is essential for distinguishing the expansion of indexed scholarly output from changes in intellectual influence and the structure of research communication.

The bibliometric analysis approach provides a scientific way to study such trends using quantitative methods applied to scientific publications and bibliographic connections between them. Unlike traditional

narrative reviews that usually structure the scholarly literature on certain historical disputes or theoretical approaches, the bibliometric analysis approach allows for analyzing bigger datasets of publications by using the productivity, citation, authorship, and connectivity indicators. As [4] highlight the importance of the bibliometric analysis approach for discovering the evolutionary features of the research areas and revealing their knowledge structures. Likewise, [5] show how science mapping approaches allow incorporating the descriptive bibliometric indicators along with the network analysis. In the field of Islamic historical studies, these approaches can offer a supplementary way to study the development of historiography since they would show the distribution of scholarly interest throughout time, influential citations in particular publications, and connections between different intellectual efforts through citations. This does not mean that such an analysis should be used as a substitute for traditional historical interpretations.

Earlier bibliometric studies have already looked into the evolution of Islamic studies and its intersections with other disciplines. For example, some studies of the wider field of Islamic studies from 2000 to 2024 have explored aspects of geographical presence, publishing trends, and themes within various fields such as Islamic finance, sustainability, and contemporary religious studies. Other studies have looked at the relationship between Islam and digital technologies with respect to research collaborations, influence, and thematic development in the context of digitally focused Islamic studies. These works are evidence of the growing importance of bibliometric methods in studying the current organization of Islamic studies. Nevertheless, their wide disciplinary coverage or specific focus on certain intersections hinders their potential for explaining the unique publishing and citation practices of historical scholarship. In other words, Islamic history must not be confused with the whole scope of Islamic studies, because history as a discipline has its own sources, concerns, methods of

referencing, and historiography. A closer analysis is required in order to understand how Islamic history research has become an identifiable corpus of indexed literature.

Although there have been studies using wider bibliometric analysis, the relation between longitudinal publication development and citation network development for studies on Islamic history is still underdeveloped. The significance of this gap is that the development of publications and the influence of these publications on others are two separate aspects of scholarly development. An increase in the number of publications can mean an expansion in scholarly attention in the field without indicating that there is more collaboration in the scholarly community and diversification of influential publications. On the other hand, relatively small numbers of publications can play key roles in the citation networks and be influential for future work. The citation-network analysis method is another way to add another dimension to the process of analysis due to the study of connections through scholarly citations. The citation analysis method helps to determine the impact of certain papers and their citation relations, whereas the co-citation analysis and bibliographic coupling techniques can help to detect intellectual proximity because of the similarities of citations.

To overcome this limitation, one would require an analytical framework that would help analyze not only the dynamics of Islamic history scholarship but also its knowledge structure. Growth trends show information on changes in the dynamics of publications during the observation period, such as increasing, decreasing, or changing rates of publication. Citation-based metrics can be helpful for gaining insights into the distribution of scholarly prestige, while network analysis can help understand the pattern of relations that link scholarly publications. Such an approach is especially helpful in historical research when scholarly prestige might take many years to develop and seminal books continue to be relevant in subsequent scholarship. However, citation relations should be analyzed carefully since

they do not necessarily show agreement, correctness, or even quality. Additionally, when performing citation mapping for an area which is humanities-oriented, it is necessary to acknowledge the significant contribution of book chapters, edited volumes, and publications in multiple languages, which can be underrepresented in international citation databases. Therefore, the study of publications indexed in Scopus needs to be seen as an analysis of the indexed scientific landscape and not as a full coverage of intellectual output on Islamic history.

Against this background, the present study aims to systematically chart Islamic history research published between 2000 and 2025 by integrating bibliometric performance analysis with citation-network mapping. Using bibliographic records retrieved from the Scopus database, the study seeks to examine the temporal evolution of publication output, identify influential scholarly contributions, and investigate the intellectual relationships embedded within the citation structure of the field. Specifically, the research addresses three interrelated questions: (1) How have the publication trajectories of Islamic history research evolved between 2000 and 2025? (2) Which publications, authors, and publication sources have demonstrated the greatest bibliometric influence within the indexed literature? and (3) How are intellectual relationships and research concentrations structured within the citation networks of Islamic history scholarship? By addressing these questions, the study moves beyond a descriptive assessment of publication volume toward a more comprehensive understanding of the field's scholarly development, citation influence, and intellectual organization.

The study contributes to the existing literature in three principal respects. First, it provides a longitudinal perspective on Islamic history scholarship across a 26-year publication window, offering an empirical basis for examining changes in research activity rather than relying exclusively on narrative assessments of disciplinary development. Second, it integrates publication performance and citation-

network analysis to distinguish patterns of scholarly productivity from the relational structures underlying intellectual influence. This integration is particularly valuable for identifying the extent to which influential research forms interconnected knowledge clusters or remains distributed across relatively separate scholarly communities. Third, by focusing explicitly on Islamic history rather than the broader category of Islamic studies, the study offers a more clearly delimited assessment of historical scholarship and establishes a foundation for subsequent research on historiographical specialization, geographical representation, and the evolution of scholarly communication. Ultimately, the research seeks to contribute to the understanding of Islamic history not only as a subject of historical investigation but also as an evolving field of academic knowledge production.

## 2. METHODS

A quantitative bibliometric methodology was adopted for this study to systematically analyze the growth pattern, publishing features, and citation network of the research works on Islamic history from 2000 to 2025. It is because bibliometric studies help researchers evaluate the scholarly output, citation impact, and intellectual structure of a particular research area through systematic and replicable methods [4]. For collecting bibliographic data, Scopus was chosen as the main bibliographic database due to its multidisciplinary coverage and standardized bibliographic information, such as authors' affiliation, publication year, journal name, citations received, keywords, and references cited. To retrieve the literature on Islamic history and historiography, the relevant search terms were used in the literature search, such as "Islamic history," "history of Islam," "Islamic historiography," "Muslim history," and "Islamic civilization." The keywords and phrases were used on the title, abstract, and keyword sections using Boolean operators for enhancing the consistency and relevance of searches. The study was confined to literature with dates

ranging from January 1, 2000, to December 31, 2025. The articles were filtered based on relevance, and those not related to the historical aspects of Islam were eliminated from the database.

The bibliometric analysis was carried out using two complementary techniques: performance analysis and scientific mapping. Performance analysis was applied for assessing the number of publications per year, publication dynamics, citations, productive authors, influential journals, affiliations of the contributors and geographical participation. Trends of publications on a yearly basis were analyzed in order to trace research dynamics over the entire observation period, whereas indicators of citations were applied to determine the scientific influence of particular publications and publication sources. Distribution of the research efforts in terms of countries and institutions was taken into consideration.

Bibliometric mapping and citation network visualization was done using VOSviewer software that is designed for the creation, visualization, and exploration of citation networks of scientific publications [6]. Bibliographic entries were exported from

Scopus database in compatible format and including citation data, authorship information, keywords, and references and imported to VOSviewer program for creation of networks. Citation analysis was used for the detection of significant works and relationships that formed through citation relations and co-citation analysis for investigation of intellectual links between documents that cited each other often. Bibliographic coupling was also taken into account in order to find out publications related by citation base and thus forming intellectual communities in the field under study. In the produced network visualizations node size showed bibliometric unit weight, link thickness indicated relationship strength between connected bibliometric units, and color distinguished clusters detected by the algorithm of VOSviewer. Interpretation of network included consideration of total link strength, belonging to clusters and proximity of connected units.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Co-Author Analysis

##### 3.1.1 Author-level Visualization

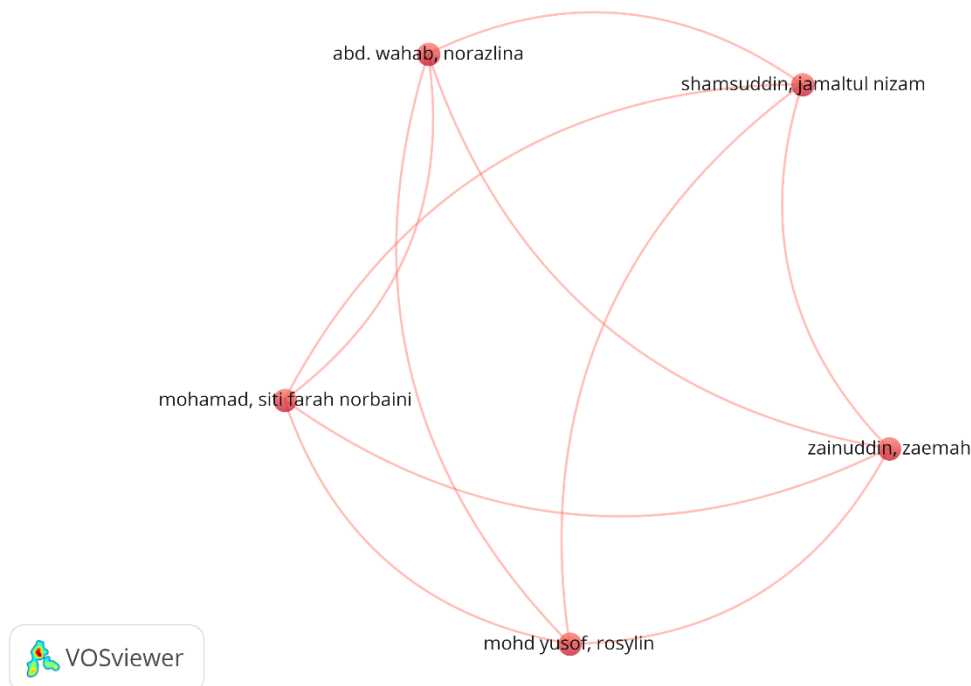


Figure 1. Author-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

The Figure below provides the network of scholarly collaboration in the field of Islamic history research from the year 2000-2025. In this network of collaborative relationship, there are five scholars who are interconnected, namely Abd. Wahab, Norazlina; Shamsuddin, Jamaltul Nizam; Mohamad, Siti Farah Norbaini; Zainuddin, Zaemah; and Mohd Yusof, Rosylin. These five authors all belong to a particular collaboration cluster, as seen from the same color (red) used for this cluster. The links between the authors are the co-authorship, hence, it shows that the scholarly collaboration in this cluster includes collaboration between multiple researchers rather than individual pairs of researchers. The relatively equal size of nodes implies the relative equal contribution of the authors in the figure.

The network shows a high level of interconnectedness, with several

collaboration links between the five researchers. This indicates the presence of a stable research partnership in which scholarly contribution is often repeated or shared. However, the network includes only one cluster of collaborations, indicating that the network shown above can be considered to be a collaboration network at the local level and not a globalized research community. This must be interpreted with caution since the network may be a result of the minimum standards used in the bibliometric study. In general, the results indicate the significance of research partnerships in generating Islamic history scholarship; however, further studies of other collaboration networks need to be done in order to analyze the geographical and international aspects of research in this area.

### 3.1.2 Institution-level Visualization

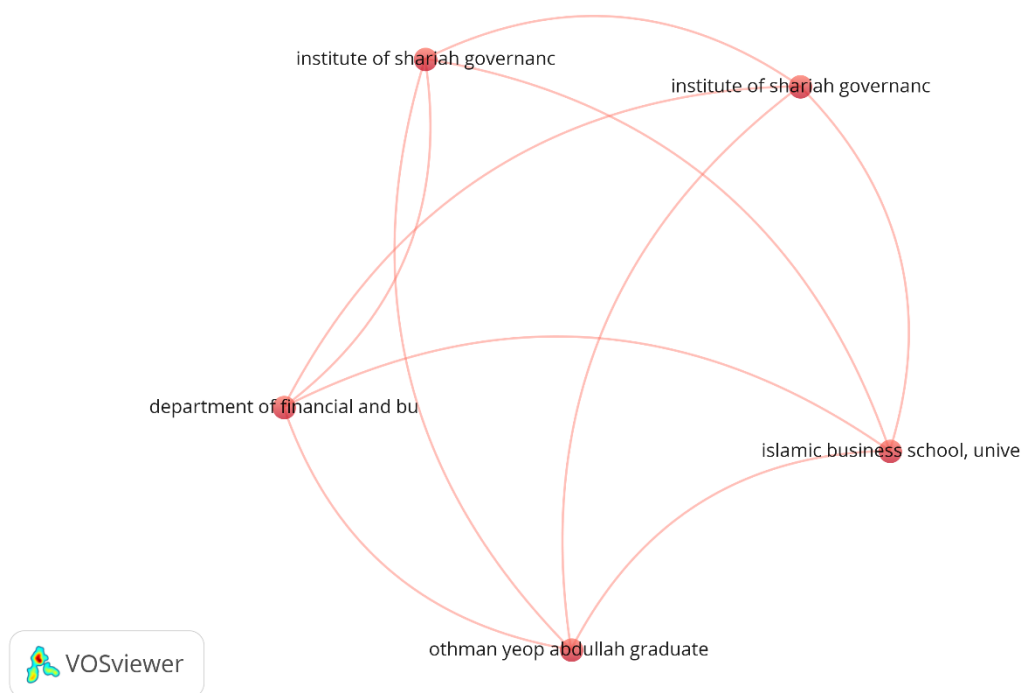


Figure 2. Institution-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 2 illustrates the patterns of research cooperation among organizational affiliations contributing to Islamic history scholarship during the period 2000–2025. The visualization identifies five interconnected institutional nodes, including two entries

labeled “Institute of Shariah Governanc,” alongside “Department of Financial and Bu,” “Islamic Business School, Unive,” and “Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate.” All nodes are represented within a single red cluster, indicating a closely interconnected

institutional collaboration structure. The links connecting these institutions suggest the existence of co-authored publications involving researchers affiliated with the respective organizational units. The relatively similar node sizes indicate comparable levels of representation within the displayed network, while the numerous connections reflect substantial interconnectedness among these institutional affiliations. However, the repeated institutional name and truncated affiliation labels suggest possible inconsistencies in institutional naming or bibliographic metadata, which should be standardized before drawing definitive conclusions about the number of distinct participating institutions.

There is a concentrated nature of collaboration among institutions, since the nodes exhibit high levels of connectivity within a small number of organizational affiliations. The nature of the network implies

that there could be collaborations among researchers in the identified clusters based on academic connections, research interests or proximity of the institutions involved. However, the visualization does not clarify whether such a connection is among institutions or departments/academic units within the same institution. Therefore, the concentration of the network does not automatically translate into inter-institutional collaboration and international collaboration. Against the backdrop of the study on “Charting Islamic History Research (2000–2025): Growth Trajectories and Citation Networks,” the implications drawn from the results indicate the significance of institutional networks in knowledge generation among scholars with the need to consider affiliation standardization.

### 3.1.3 Country-level Visualization

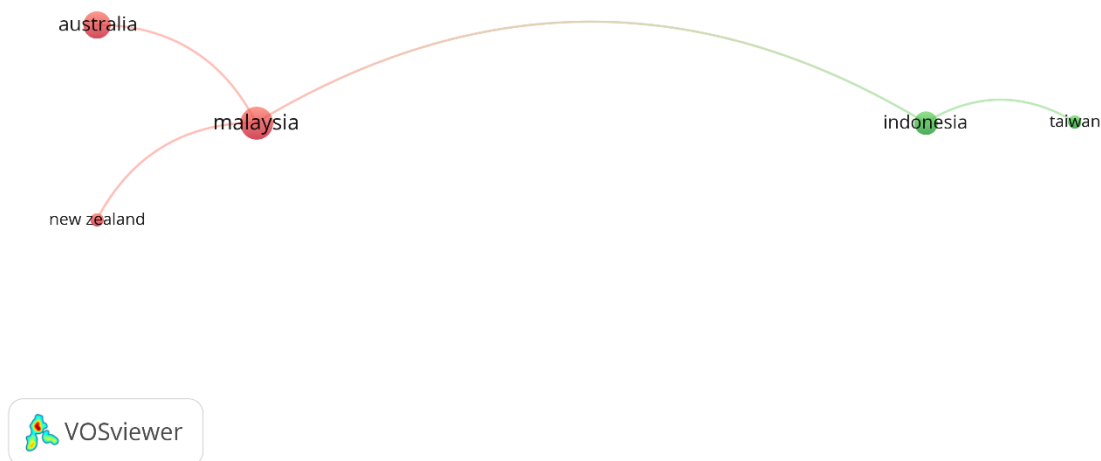


Figure 3. Country-level Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 3 shows the geographic locations and international collaborations on Islamic history research from 2000 to 2025. Figure 3 shows five countries which are connected with each other, Malaysia,

Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, and Taiwan, which can be distinguished into two clusters. The first cluster is represented in the red color, which consists of Malaysia, Australia, and New Zealand, while the second

cluster is in green color which consists of Indonesia and Taiwan. Malaysia appears to be a significant country in the network due to its bigger size of the node and its connections with Australia, New Zealand, and Indonesia. It shows that Malaysia is an essential country in the displayed collaboration network and plays a bridging role between the two clusters. Similarly, Indonesia acts as a bridging country between the two clusters having a collaboration relationship with Malaysia and Taiwan.

Based on the network above, there exists a geographically clustered form of international collaboration through which the Southeast Asian countries have collaboratively engaged in research with their partners from the Asia Pacific region. It seems that Malaysia serves as the bridging partner between Australia, New Zealand, and Indonesia, while Indonesia is used as the collaborative link between Malaysia and

Taiwan. This kind of structure denotes that the international research collaboration that takes place in the network in question is characterized by a few countries that act as connections instead of a globally distributed network. The lack of connections between a few countries also implies that the collaborative ties between the countries do not apply to all the collaborating nations. However, these results should be considered in light of the bibliometric criteria and data set used since the visualization only shows the countries included in the network. On the larger scheme of things in terms of the "Charting Islamic History Research (2000–2025): Growth Trajectories and Citation Networks," these results provide information about the facilitative nature of Malaysia and Indonesia in cross-border collaboration.

### 3.2 Citation Analysis

Table 1. The Most Impactful Literatures

| Citations | Authors and year | Title                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 112       | [7]              | A critical look at parenting research from the mainstream: Problems uncovered while adapting western research to non-western cultures           |
| 106       | [8]              | The call from Algeria: Third worldism, revolution, and the turn to Islam                                                                        |
| 101       | [9]              | Journeys to the other shore: Muslim and Western travelers in search of knowledge                                                                |
| 60        | [10]             | Mosaics in the medieval world: From late antiquity to the fifteenth century                                                                     |
| 43        | [11]             | The Cambridge companion to Muhammad                                                                                                             |
| 42        | [12]             | Water weaponization in the Syrian conflict: Strategies of domination and cooperation                                                            |
| 40        | [3]              | A Model of Spirituality for Ageing Muslims                                                                                                      |
| 27        | [13]             | A critical technocultural discourse analysis of Muslim fashion bloggers in France: charting 'restorative technoscapes'                          |
| 25        | [14]             | Charting future growth for Islamic finance talents in Malaysia: a bibliometric analysis on the Islamic finance domains and future research gaps |
| 14        | [15]             | Hizmet in Transitions: European Developments of a Turkish Muslim-Inspired Movement                                                              |

Source: Scopus, 2026

The most cited ten articles obtained from the bibliometric analysis of research on Islamic history between 2000 and 2025 are listed in Table 1, highlighting the multidimensional academic underpinnings

and multidisciplinary nature of the field. [7] top the list with 112 citations, analyzing the issue of methodology involved in applying Western studies on parenting in non-Western settings, followed by [8] with 106 citations,

studying the interaction between Third Worldism, revolution, and Islamism politics in Algeria. [9] comes third with 101 citations, contributing to the cross-cultural study of the exchange of knowledge among Muslim and Western travelers. [11] with 43 citations, investigating the historical and intellectual aspects of Prophet Muhammad's life and teachings.

Interdisciplinary contributions from the present era can be identified through [12], which cites 42 times on water weaponization in Syria war; [3], which cites 40 times regarding spirituality among aged Muslims; and [13], which cites 27 times on Muslim identity and digital fashion cultures. In addition, [14], which cites 25 times, adds to the knowledge about bibliometric mapping of Islamic finance research, while [15], which cites 14 times, looks into the development of

Muslim-inspired movement in Europe. Thus, it can be seen that all above-mentioned publications show that the collected literature covers different aspects, including historical, political, cultural, religious, and socioeconomic perspectives, related to the multidisciplinary scope of literature on Islamic history. However, some highly cited publications deal with broader Islamic studies or even cross-culture issues, not specifically focusing on Islamic history. Therefore, it is important to consider whether the retrieved literature covers the themes of interest or not. It is necessary to evaluate the citation counts carefully since they can vary depending on the publication age and database.

### 3.3 Keyword Co-Occurrence Analysis

#### 3.3.1 Network Visualization

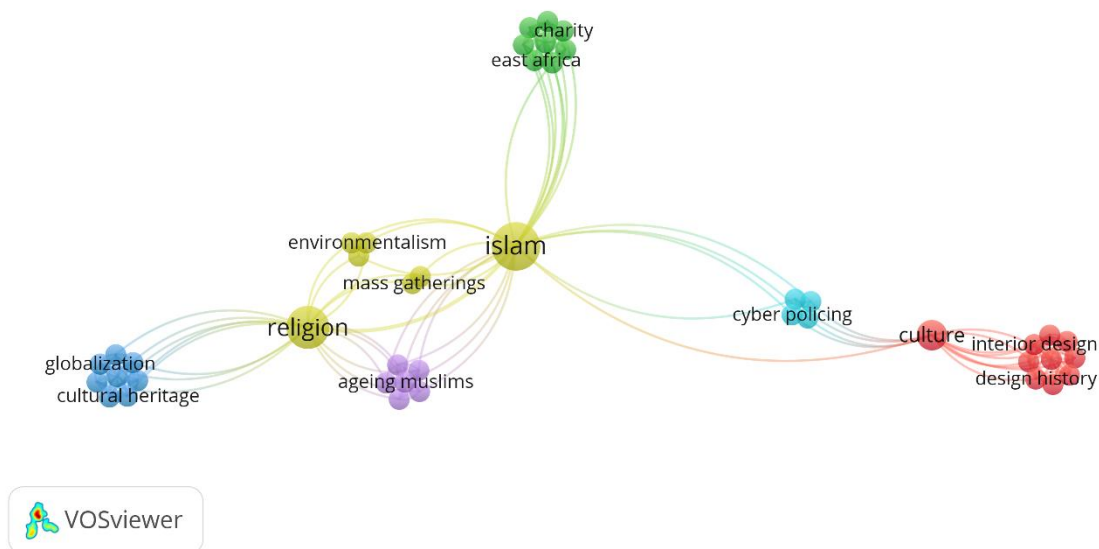


Figure 4. Network Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

The figure below is an example of the thematic structure and interconnections of research interests in the field of Islamic history from the year 2000 to 2025. It can be seen that there are a few clearly visible clusters in terms of research orientations. In particular, the terms “Islam” and “religion” appear as key

ones since they occupy the center of the visualized network. The fact that the above keywords are highlighted by larger nodes as well as numerous connections shows that they appear quite often and have significance in linking different research themes. Overall, it can be seen that research on the topic of

Islamic history includes various intellectual perspectives and goes far beyond the usual historical narrative through the inclusion of such aspects as cultural heritage, social practices, religion, technology, modern society, and other elements.

The cluster formed by yellow color, which centers on the keywords "Islam" and "religion," forms the core thematic structure of the dataset, with other relevant terms such as "environmentalism" and "mass gatherings" included in the cluster. The proximity of these keywords shows academic interest in the relationship between Islamic religious practices and environment issues. Research done in this cluster can investigate the significance of religious congregations throughout history, Islamic perspectives on the environment, and the influence of religious teachings on collective actions. The centrality of the keyword "Islam" also shows its role as a linking theme among other research areas. On the other hand, the purple cluster, with the keyword "ageing Muslims," is associated with a more specific research direction focused on religion and spirituality, as well as the experience of Muslims as older people.

The green cluster is found in the upper part of the diagram, and its defining keywords include "charity" and "East Africa," which indicate the geographic focus of research in this thematic cluster, dealing with the charitable practices of Islam, which can have historical or social importance in the context of African societies. The closeness and association of these keywords show that the research in this cluster is dedicated to the relationship between religious practices, charity and geography. Such research will allow researchers to understand how the development and functioning of the Islamic system of institutions and practices took place in various geographic environments. The blue cluster, which is found on the left of the network diagram, has keywords like "globalization" and "cultural heritage," which refer to yet another thematic cluster oriented towards cultural transformation, preservation of history and relationship between Islamic traditions and globalization

processes. The association of these keywords with the keyword "religion" indicates the intersection of cultural identity, heritage preservation and religious traditions in relation to globalization.

The red cluster, which can be found on the right side of the network, can be linked to "culture," "interior design," and "design history," reflecting a certain research specialization focused on the study of cultural and historical aspects of art and design. The studies falling into this category could be related to the influence of Islamic artistic traditions, architecture, decorations, and the history of design in Muslim societies. Being placed at the periphery of the network, which is connected with the general structure only via a few thematic links, the red cluster shows a certain uniqueness of research direction among the studied body of literature. Placed close to this cluster, there is also a cyan cluster that focuses on "cyber policing." Thus, it reflects one of the recent themes associated with technology and security. The connection between this cluster and the religion and culture-oriented one shows how these two spheres can intersect; however, one should not take these connections as evidence of historical relationship until the relevant publications are checked. Overall, both red and cyan clusters show the wide range of themes studied in this dataset that goes beyond the scope of traditional Islamic history.

A network based on the keyword co-occurrence allows one to see a multidisciplinary research field that consists of different thematically distinctive clusters. The central position of the words "Islam" and "religion" suggests that religious notions serve as the key link among various research topics, and periphery clusters represent the interests in cultural heritage, regional philanthropic tradition, demographic experience, historical design, and technological governance. The network shows that the search results include both historical studies and contemporary Islamic studies. At the same time, the visualized network does not reflect the chronology of the keywords' appearance in the documents, and, therefore, the emerging

trends in this field and the changing themes cannot be identified with the help of this network. Temporal overlay and thematic evolution visualization will be required in order to trace the development of the interests between 2000 and 2025. Moreover, the appearance of themes such as cyber policing

and ageing Muslims demonstrates the need to assess the search term specificity and document relevance to ensure that the final data set includes all the relevant works on Islamic history.

### 3.3.2 Overlay Visualization

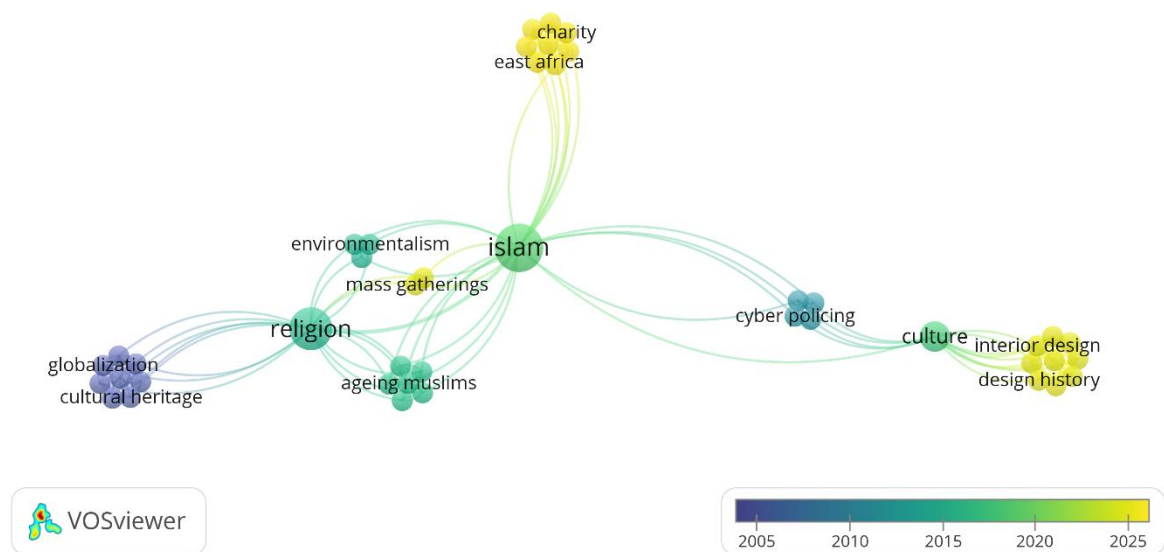


Figure 5. Overlay Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 5 shows the timeline of changes in research themes in the literature on the history of Islam for 2000-2025 and differences in the average publication year in connection with certain keywords. This timeline uses the color gradient from blue and purple (earlier research) to green and yellow (more recent). For example, keywords “globalization” and “cultural heritage,” marked with blue and purple colors, are connected with the earlier publications in the analyzed period (2005-2010). Thus, this placement indicates the early focus of research within the analyzed database on the interconnection between Islamic traditions, culture, heritage protection, and globalization processes. The keyword “religion” is placed in the turquoise color and reflects the middle stage of scholarly activities in the analyzed field, which is approximately the middle of

2010s. Its connections with globalization, cultural heritage, and other thematic fields demonstrate the ongoing importance of this concept as a basis for connecting the earlier research themes and more recent interests. These changes indicate that the first thematic foundations of the field were developed within cultural and religious studies of Islamic societies, but the timeline does not specify the emergence dates of certain research topics.

The mid period of thematic development is identified by such keywords as “Islam,” “ageing Muslims,” “environmentalism,” “cyber policing,” and “culture,” which are mostly shown in green and turquoise tones, representing roughly publications that were conducted between 2015 and 2020. The central location of “Islam” shows its continuous involvement in

connecting various research perspectives, whereas the surrounding keywords show the increase of thematic diversity. The presence of “ageing Muslims” implies an interest in the experiences of the specified group, spirituality, and religion, “environmentalism” – an increasing interest in the link between the Islamic ideology and the environment. Furthermore, “cyber policing” is related to technological aspects of governing and security, and “culture” to cultural studies connected to design studies. All these factors imply that the literature included increasingly broad perspectives on social, technological, and interdisciplinary issues. Nevertheless, since the colors of the overlay correspond to the average years of publication for each keyword, the specified representation cannot be taken as evidence that the specified topics emerged in those periods.

The most recent thematic orientations are represented by yellow-colored keywords, particularly “charity,” “East Africa,” “mass gatherings,” “interior design,” and “design history,” indicating comparatively recent scholarly attention, generally approaching the 2020–2025 period. The association between charity and East Africa suggests recent interest in geographically situated Islamic charitable practices and their social or

historical contexts, while mass gatherings may reflect research concerning collective religious activities and their implications for contemporary Muslim societies. Similarly, the prominence of interior design and design history points to newer contributions examining cultural expression, artistic traditions, and the historical development of spatial and aesthetic practices. Collectively, the overlay visualization suggests a thematic transition from earlier discussions of globalization and cultural heritage toward more diversified research interests involving social institutions, regional contexts, religious practices, and material culture. Nevertheless, these patterns indicate relative differences in the average publication timing of keywords rather than statistically established growth trajectories. Within the framework of Charting Islamic History Research (2000–2025): Growth Trajectories and Citation Networks, the findings highlight the evolving thematic composition of the retrieved scholarship while emphasizing the importance of further temporal and document-level analyses to distinguish developments specifically related to Islamic history from broader trends in interdisciplinary Islamic studies.

### 3.3.3 Density Visualization

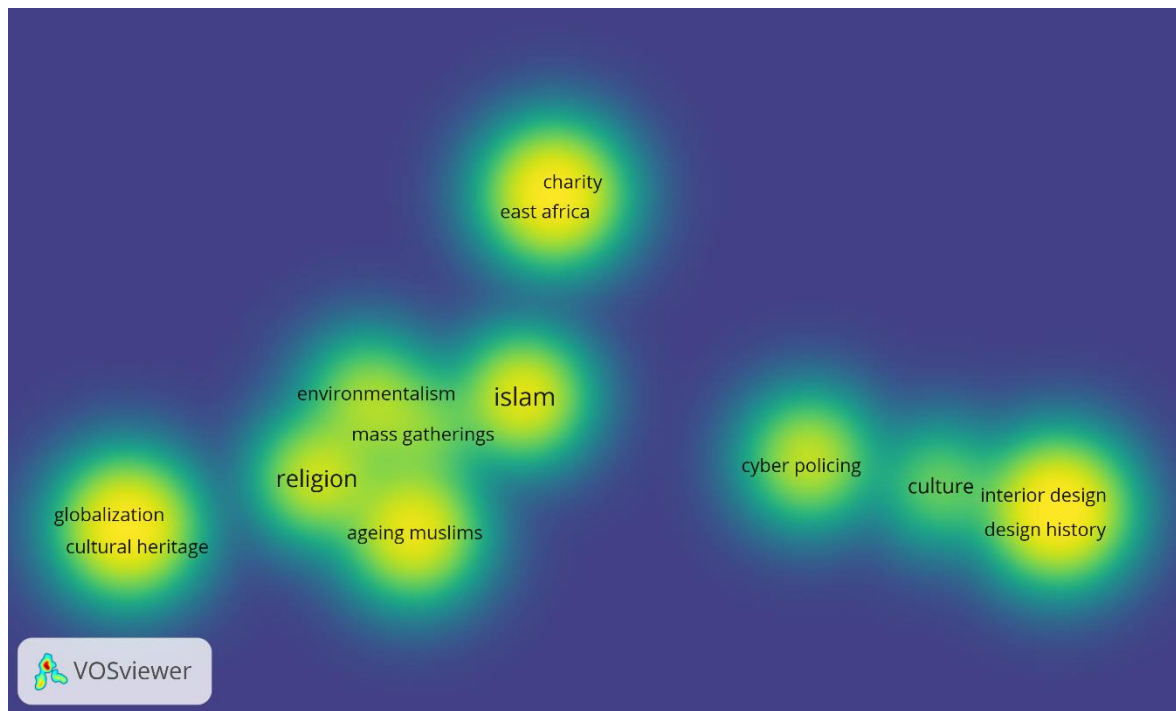


Figure 6. Density Visualization

Source: Data Analysis

Figure 6 provides an overview of the concentration and distribution of research themes within Islamic history scholarship between 2000 and 2025. The visualization employs a color gradient ranging from dark blue, indicating lower keyword density, to green and bright yellow, representing areas of greater concentration based on the occurrence and proximity of related keywords. The most prominent density areas are associated with “Islam,” “religion,” “charity,” “East Africa,” “globalization,” and “cultural heritage,” indicating that these concepts constitute important thematic concentrations within the analyzed literature. The high-density region surrounding “Islam” reflects its central role in the dataset, particularly through its proximity to “religion,” “environmentalism,” and “mass gatherings.” This concentration suggests substantial thematic interconnectedness between religious traditions, environmental perspectives, and collective religious practices. Similarly, the density surrounding “religion” and “ageing Muslims” indicates scholarly interest in the relationship between Islamic religious identity, spirituality, and demographic experiences. The relatively concentrated areas around “globalization”

and “cultural heritage” further highlight the importance of cultural transformation, heritage preservation, and interactions between Islamic traditions and broader global processes. These patterns demonstrate that the conceptual foundations of the retrieved scholarship encompass religious, cultural, and social dimensions rather than exclusively focusing on historical narratives.

In addition to these primary clusters, there are a number of relatively distinct thematic clusters that can be identified in the visualization due to the interdisciplinary nature of the research field. Thus, the dense cluster of bright yellow color that surrounds the keywords “charity” and “East Africa” shows that there is a local cluster of research on charitable traditions and their regional context, whereas the cluster of “cyber policing” is dedicated to technological aspects of governance. Moreover, the group of keywords that includes “culture,” “interior design,” and “design history” can be found on the right side of the visualization as another yellow density region. Their spatial segregation from each other shows that the topics are located in relatively different places within the whole keyword structure;

however, their interrelationships need to be analyzed through the co-occurrence network and respective publications. Notably, the brightness of the yellow regions cannot be regarded as an indicator of the increase in research activity since density visualization does not imply any chronological aspect.

### Discussion

The results of this study give some valuable information about the intellectual structure, thematic diversity, and collaboration pattern of Islamic history research from 2000 to 2025. According to the bibliometric analysis, it should be noted that the research captured by this study is not limited to traditional historical studies but includes religious studies, cultural heritage, political changes, social organizations, and modern technological achievements. The citation analysis in particular provides the interdisciplinarity of the retrieved literature since most highly cited papers are concerned with issues such as cross-cultural knowledge exchange, Islamic political movements, historical art traditions, and religious identity. The highly influential works of Malley (2023), Euben (2008), James (2017), and Brockopp (2010) prove the importance of political, cultural, and intellectual approaches for Islamic history scholarship. Nonetheless, the high influence of the work by Stewart and Bond (2002) who mainly focus on cross-cultural parenting rather than Islamic history makes an interesting point regarding the nature of the dataset.

This indicates that bibliometric searching using broad terms related to Islam might result in publications outside the field being included in the search results, which might affect citation ranking as well as the themes identified. Therefore, the intellectual landscape mapped out in this study must be considered to include not only research done in the historical mode but also interdisciplinarity research done within the Islamic societies and culture. This is especially so because the citation count is not always a measure of importance within Islamic historiography.

The analysis of academic collaboration shows a moderately concentrated network in which researchers, institutions, and countries collaborate closely with each other. In terms of authors, there is evident collaboration in which the researchers, namely Abd. Wahab, Mohd Yusof, Zainuddin, Shamsuddin, and Mohamad, are interconnected. In addition, the institutions' network shows concentrated cooperation between various organizations related to Islamic studies, business and Shariah governance. However, it is important to mention that duplicating and abbreviating the name of institution makes it possible for affiliation problems to emerge and, consequently, influence on distinguishing collaborating organizations. Finally, at the international level, the positions of Malaysia and Indonesia are notable in the provided country collaboration network since these two countries connect research collaboration with Australia, New Zealand and Taiwan. Still, it should be noted that the somewhat narrow geographical scope of the visualization does not necessarily mean the lack of collaboration elsewhere since the inclusion into the network is dependent on certain bibliometric criteria and data coverage. Moreover, the fact that the bulk of collaborations takes place between a handful of linked countries indicates chances for developing geographically diversified research collaborations in the future. Collaboration with universities and centers focused on the study of Islamic history in the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and elsewhere can bring further insights in terms of comparison and methodology.

In addition, the co-occurrence analysis of the keywords shows that there are a number of interrelated yet distinct topics in which the retrieved literature is organized conceptually. The frequent use of the keywords "Islam" and "religion" confirms that the religious concepts are the main intellectual connections between the research topics. Such keywords are used in relation to such themes as environmentalism, mass events and ageing Muslims, thus proving the existence of the link between the Islamic studies and the social practices and

experience of the population. At the same time, other thematic clusters include charity and East Africa, and confirm the existence of the geographic focus on certain issues in the research; globalization and cultural heritage demonstrate the relationship between the cultural changes and the religious traditions, whereas culture, interior design and design history prove the existence of art and material culture among the research topics. On the contrary, the cyber policing topic belongs to the periphery of the historical research. This shows that research conducted within the context of Islamic history does not belong to a specific disciplinary discourse but rather combines several discourses and methodologies. At the same time, it must not be assumed that the diversity of themes necessarily implies the integration of the discipline. As a result of the geographic dispersion of some keyword groups, it can be said that particular subjects of research will continue to be quite specialized and will lack any conceptual linkages with other fields of knowledge.

The temporal overlay and keyword density analysis also help provide alternative views regarding the thematic composition and distribution of the research on Islamic history. According to the temporal overlay chart, the early research was related to globalization and cultural heritage while keywords such as religion, Islam, environmentalism, ageing Muslims, and cyber policing were linked to intermediate publication dates. Charity, East Africa, mass gatherings, interior design, and design history had the most recent average publication years which imply an expanding range of interests in regional social practices, cultural expressions, and material heritage. The obtained data clearly demonstrate that the literature base under consideration has become more diversified in terms of themes that include both traditional issues of religious and cultural nature and interdisciplinary ones. The keyword density chart provides another perspective supporting the above-mentioned conclusions through identification of dense clusters of words including Islam, religion, cultural

heritage, charity, and design. Nevertheless, the high density of the keywords is determined by their presence and closeness in the network.

Likewise, the overlay diagram shows the average publication year for each keyword and cannot prove on its own when a particular research theme came into being or its number of publications was considerably increased. Thus, thematic trends have to be understood not as conclusive indications of paradigm shift, but rather as descriptive facts about change in research interests. More precise evaluations of thematic development would involve longitudinal analysis of keywords frequency, thematic mapping by periods, as well as analysis of the publications themselves. This would enable us to discern established research traditions from emerging new fields and to understand to what degree current themes contribute to Islamic history research.

These results make a contribution to bibliometric research through offering a multidimensional analysis of intellectual basis, networking, and classification of the studies related to the Islamic history in 2000-2025. Firstly, from a theoretical point of view, these findings reveal the significance of the interdisciplinary approach to the historical evolution of Islam societies and institutions provided that historical research is linked to cultural studies, political history, religious studies, and heritage studies. Secondly, from a methodological point of view, this research reveals the necessity to define discipline borders and standardize bibliographic data prior to any network structure analysis and identification of influential scholars. Some limitations should be acknowledged, which include the possibility of the database bias, problems related to the inconsistencies in authors' and institutional affiliation, citation accumulation effect on the publication ranking, and publications that are not relevant to Islamic history despite the affiliation. In addition, the network structure reflects bibliometric relations rather than historical accuracy or methodological importance of the particular study.

It is essential that future research emphasizes more accurate searching processes, theme screening, citation normalizing, and longitudinal analysis in order to ensure the validity of bibliometric analysis results. Further research may include the study of historical development of Islamic thought traditions, knowledge transfer through regions, institutions within Islam, as well as cultural exchanges in various geographical settings. Finally, this study establishes the first foundation for a broader understanding of the scholarly community related to the field of Islamic history.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study presents an in-depth bibliometric analysis of the research on Islamic history during 2000-2025, demonstrating the intellectual structure of the field, collaboration networks and thematic development. The study demonstrates that the landscape of the research is characterized by numerous interdisciplinary approaches involving the examination of historical phenomena in the context of religious studies, cultural heritage, political changes, social institutions, and current social issues. The citation analysis indicates key scholarly works which have been laying the intellectual foundation of the obtained literature. The co-

authorship and institutional collaboration networks show the existence of focused research collaborations among connected scholars and academic institutions. At the international level, Malaysia and Indonesia represent two important connecting countries within the analyzed collaboration network which help scholars establish connections in the Asia-Pacific region. Keyword co-occurrence analysis shows that such keywords as Islam and religion serve as the connection between several special fields of research including cultural heritage, globalization, environmentalism, charity, and design history. Temporal overlay analysis indicates a certain diversification of the research interests in favor of the new regional, social, and material-culture aspects of the examined topics. The density visualization corroborates these findings by detecting key thematic clusters and somewhat distinct areas of academic research. However, the consideration of studies that go beyond the traditional confines of Islamic history underlines the necessity to improve bibliometric searches and evaluate the thematic significance of the found papers. There are some limitations related to the database scope, citation accumulation, metadata inaccuracies, and visualization thresholds.

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