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Islamic Attitude, Ethics, and Morality in Qur'anic Tafsir on Sustainability and Technology in Indonesia and Malaysia

Andri Nirwana^{1}, Mahmudulhassan², Zainora binti Daud³*

¹Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia

²Islamic Arabic University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

³Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Nilai, Malaysia

¹andri.nirwana@ums.ac.id, ²hasanfaruky@gmail.com, ³zainora@usim.edu.my

Abstract

Objective: This study aims to analyze the development, trends, and intellectual structure of Qur'anic exegesis (Tafsir) research in Indonesia and Malaysia through bibliometric analysis. It identifies influential scholars, journals, collaboration networks, and emerging research themes. **Theoretical framework:** The research is based on bibliometric analysis and knowledge mapping, using citation, co-authorship, and keyword co-occurrence analyses to examine the evolution and interdisciplinary development of Tafsir scholarship. **Literature review:** Previous studies have mainly focused on thematic and classical Tafsir, with limited bibliometric evidence. This study extends the literature by examining research productivity, collaboration, and emerging contemporary topics. **Method:** A quantitative bibliometric approach was employed using 273 Scopus-indexed publications selected from 1,056 records. Data were analyzed with R and Biblioshiny through citation, co-authorship, and keyword network analyses. **Results:** The findings indicate that Indonesia and Malaysia are the dominant contributors to Qur'anic exegesis research in Southeast Asia. Bibliometric mapping reveals influential scholars, productive journals, and expanding collaboration networks within the field. The analysis also identifies emerging research themes, including sustainability, environmental ethics, and digital technology, demonstrating a growing integration between traditional Tafsir studies and contemporary global issues. These results suggest that Qur'anic exegesis research is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary and responsive to societal challenges. **Implications:** The findings provide strategic insights for future Qur'anic studies, encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and greater engagement with global challenges in Islamic scholarship. **Novelty:** This study presents a comprehensive bibliometric mapping of Tafsir research in Indonesia and Malaysia, offering a systematic overview of scholarly trends, collaboration patterns, and emerging interdisciplinary directions.

Keywords: qur'anic exegesis, tafsir, bibliometric analysis, southeast asia, indonesia and malaysia.

INTRODUCTION

Tafsir, the interpretation of the Qur'an, is central to Islamic studies, deepening the Muslim understanding of the sacred texts. It has evolved over the centuries, combining traditional and modern methods of analysis [1]. Southeast Asia, with its rich Islamic heritage, has made

*Corresponding Author: andri.nirwana@ums.ac.id



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significant contributions to Tafsir, with scholars from Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines forming a tradition of interpretation unique to the region [2]. As interest in regional interpretation of the Qur'an grows globally, Southeast Asia is emerging as an important center for this field of scholarship.

Studying Tafsir in Southeast Asia is important because of the region's diverse cultural and historical context [3]. This diversity offers different perspectives on how Islamic principles are applied in local communities [4]. Understanding regional interpretations also illuminates the relationship between Islamic thought and Southeast Asian identity [5]. Moreover, as the global conversation about religious pluralism, interfaith dialogue, and modernization continues, the impact of Tafsir on contemporary Islamic discourse is becoming increasingly relevant [6]. Research on Tafsir can contribute to national goals such as strengthening education and fostering cultural awareness in Southeast Asia.

Recent studies have examined the historical evolution, regional differences, and contemporary applications of Tafsir [7]. Scholars have explored the enduring influence of classical Tafsir works and the increasing engagement with Tafsir on digital platforms in Indonesia and Malaysia [8]. The research also focuses on the blending of traditional and contextual interpretations by Southeast Asian scholars [9]. However, comprehensive studies mapping Tafsir research across regions are still lacking.

While some country-specific studies provide valuable insights, a thorough examination of regional Tafsir scholarship is required [10], [11]. There is little research that traces the evolution of interpretation over time or explores the impact of modern challenges such as globalization and technology [12]. This gap underscores the need for a broader study of Tafsir in Southeast Asia [13], [14]. This study aims to address this gap by offering a bibliometric analysis of the literature on Tafsir in Southeast Asia, providing a comprehensive understanding of the region's contribution to the interpretation of the Qur'an [15]. Filling this gap will promote intercultural dialogue and ensure the contributions of Southeast Asian scholars are recognized in the global Islamic discourse.

The study will explore:

1. The main developments and trends in Tafsir scholarship in Southeast Asia over the past 20 years.
2. The contribution of Southeast Asian scholars to the global interpretation of the Qur'an.
3. Regional differences in the interpretation of the Qur'an across Southeast Asian countries.

The objectives of this study are:

1. Conducting a bibliometric analysis of Tafsir research published in Southeast Asia.
2. To identify major scholars, institutions, and publications in the region.
3. To explore emerging areas of interest for future Tafsir research.

By mapping the evolution of Tafsir in Southeast Asia, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of its role in the broader Islamic intellectual tradition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Qur'anic tafsir has long served as one of the primary intellectual traditions for understanding Islamic teachings and translating divine guidance into practical principles for human life. Beyond explaining theological concepts, tafsir functions as a dynamic framework that addresses changing social, cultural, economic, and technological realities. Contemporary Qur'anic interpretation increasingly recognizes that the Qur'an provides ethical guidance applicable not only to ritual practice but also to environmental stewardship, scientific innovation, digital transformation, and sustainable development. This evolving perspective

encourages Muslim scholars to reinterpret classical concepts in ways that respond to modern challenges while maintaining fidelity to Islamic principles [13], [14].

Islamic attitudes toward sustainability are rooted in the understanding that human beings are entrusted with the responsibility of acting as stewards of the earth. This stewardship emphasizes balance, justice, moderation, and accountability in managing natural resources. Contemporary tafsir highlights these values by interpreting Qur'anic teachings as moral foundations for environmental protection, social welfare, and responsible economic development. Sustainability is therefore understood not merely as an environmental concern but as an integrated ethical commitment encompassing human dignity, social justice, and intergenerational responsibility. Such interpretations demonstrate that Islamic teachings remain relevant in addressing global sustainability challenges [16].

Ethics and morality occupy a central position in Qur'anic interpretation. Rather than presenting ethics as abstract philosophical ideas, tafsir explains moral values through practical guidance for individual and collective behavior. Honesty, trustworthiness, compassion, fairness, responsibility, and respect for others are consistently emphasized as essential characteristics of Muslim life. These ethical principles influence decision-making in education, governance, business, and community development. Contemporary interpreters argue that moral values derived from the Qur'an should guide technological innovation to ensure that scientific progress contributes positively to humanity rather than creating social inequality or ethical harm [16].

Rapid technological advancement has generated new opportunities alongside significant ethical dilemmas. Artificial intelligence, digital communication, automation, and data-driven systems have transformed education, commerce, healthcare, and religious learning. Qur'anic tafsir provides an ethical framework for evaluating these developments by emphasizing human responsibility, justice, transparency, and accountability. Technology is generally viewed as a beneficial instrument when it promotes human welfare, protects fundamental values, and supports social development. However, technological applications that encourage misinformation, exploitation, environmental degradation, or moral decline are considered inconsistent with Islamic ethical principles. This perspective reinforces the importance of integrating religious values into technological governance [17].

Indonesia and Malaysia represent influential centers of contemporary Qur'anic scholarship in Southeast Asia. Scholars in both countries increasingly explore contextual interpretations that connect classical Islamic teachings with modern societal issues, including sustainability, environmental ethics, digital transformation, and technological innovation. Their approaches often combine traditional exegetical methods with interdisciplinary perspectives, allowing Qur'anic values to address complex contemporary problems. This growing body of scholarship demonstrates that Islamic attitudes, ethics, and morality remain essential foundations for promoting sustainable development while ensuring that technological progress aligns with spiritual values, social responsibility, and the broader objectives of human well-being [17].

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a bibliometric approach to analyze the trends and patterns in the research related to *Qur'anic Exegesis* and *Tafsir*, specifically focusing on publications from Indonesia and Malaysia. The data was sourced from the Scopus database, a widely recognized platform for academic research, ensuring the inclusion of relevant and high-quality literature. The search strategy was developed using the following Boolean keywords: (TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Qur'anic exegesis") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("tafsir al quran") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Tafsir")) [16]. This search retrieved a total of 1,056 documents from the Scopus database, covering various types of publications related to Qur'anic studies [17]. To ensure the relevance and quality of the documents for this study, several filters were

applied. The documents were further refined by country affiliation, limiting the results to publications from *Indonesia* and *Malaysia*, using the following filter: (LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY, "Indonesia") OR LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY, "Malaysia")). Additionally, only articles (ar) were considered by applying the filter: (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")).

The 273 papers that were left for analysis after these filters were applied serve as the foundation for this investigation. This selection procedure guarantees that the study concentrates on academic publications about Tafsir and Qur'anic exegesis in the contexts of Indonesia and Malaysia [18], [19]. R and Biblioshiny software, which facilitates interactive visualisations, citation analysis, keyword networks, and co-authorship mapping, were used to process the data for bibliometric analysis [20]. These resources offered a thorough grasp of the collaborative environment in Qur'anic exegesis research as well as publication trends, important authors, and fruitful journals [21].

By using this methodology, the study seeks to provide a thorough assessment of the state of research on Tafsir and Qur'anic exegesis in Indonesia and Malaysia, highlighting key works and new developments in this specialised field of Islamic studies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Publication Trends: Annual Number, Field of Study, Country Contribution, and Collaboration

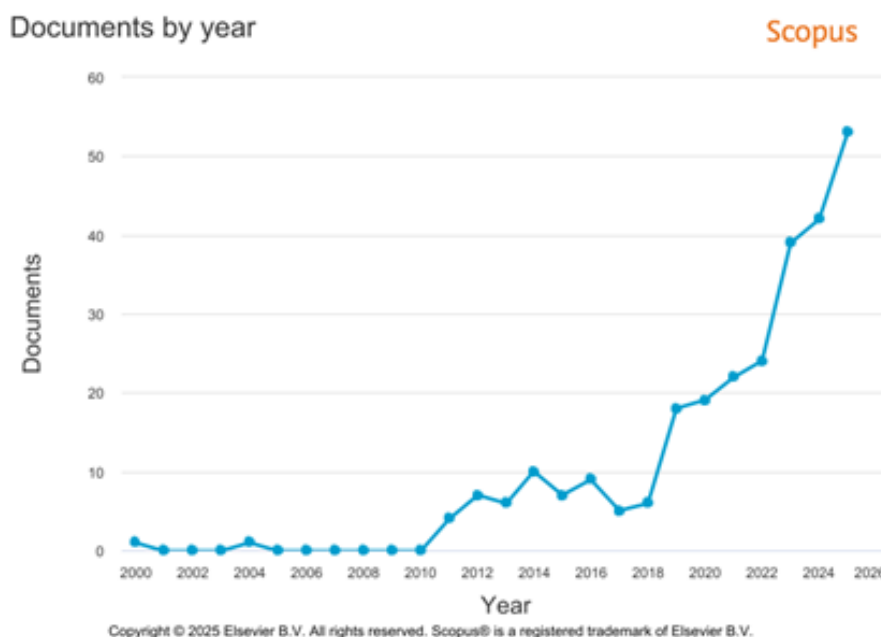


Figure 1. Documents by year

Figure 1 shows a significant increase in publications from 2000 to 2026, with a noticeable increase around 2020. This surge is likely due to factors such as increased funding, technological advancements, and the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated digital transformation and research [22]. Between 2000 and 2015, the field grew moderately, suggesting that it is still in its infancy [23]. However, after 2015, research became more robust, perhaps due to international initiatives and emerging research topics. The recent sharp increase shows the growing importance of this field [24]. Monitoring of these trends in the future will offer insights into the development of the field [25]. Bibliometric analysis should also focus on citation patterns, co-authorship networks, and the influence of major journals or conferences that contribute to the growth of this research.

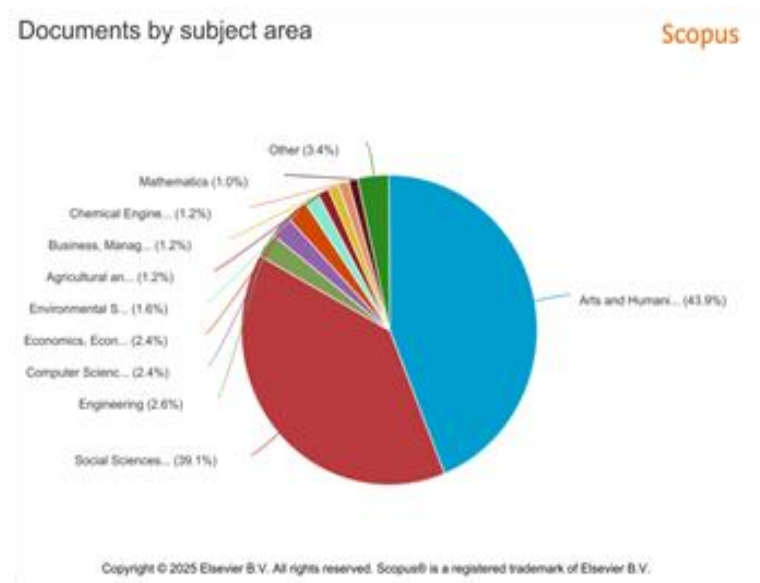


Figure 2. Documents by Subject Area

Figure 2, "Documents by Subject Area," highlights the dominance of Indonesia and Malaysia in Qur'anic interpretation and Tafsir research, with a growing focus on contemporary topics such as sustainability, environmental ethics, and the influence of technology on interpretation [26]. While Southeast Asia leads the field, other countries contribute less significantly [27]. The images depict the evolution of the field, showing a shift away from traditional interpretation to address global challenges and integrating modern issues such as Islamic law and digital media.

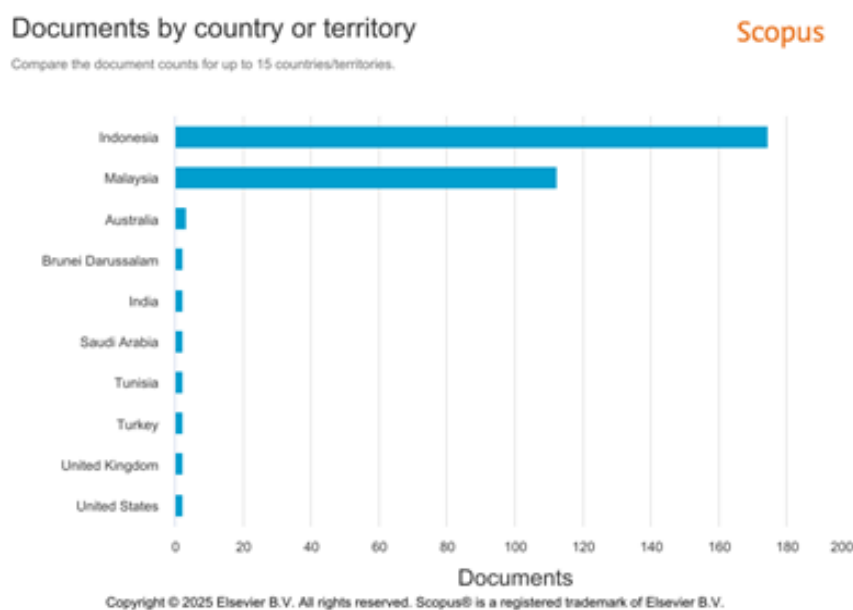


Figure 3. Documents by Country

The figure shows Indonesia and Malaysia as the main contributors in this area, with Indonesia issuing the most, followed by Malaysia. Other countries such as Australia, Brunei, and India contributed fewer documents, while the U.S. and the U.K. contributed less [28]. It highlights a regional focus in Southeast Asia, likely driven by local funding, partnerships, and research projects [29]. The dominance of Indonesia and Malaysia may reflect regional priorities in digital adoption, disaster mitigation, and education [30]. Lower contributions

from Western countries indicate a shift in research focus [31]. Future studies should explore whether Southeast Asia's dominance continues and how regional funding and policies affect these trends.

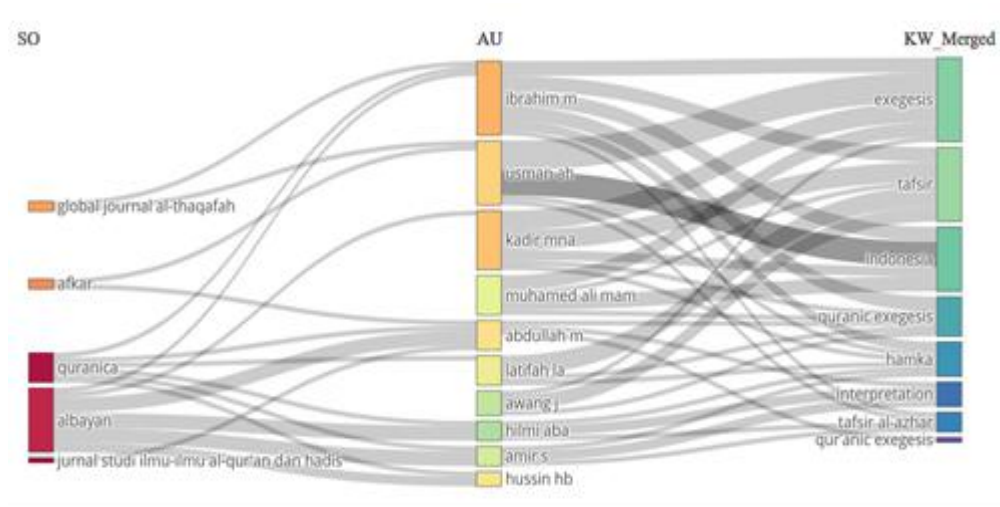


Figure 4. Collaboration Network of Sources, Authors, and Keywords in Quranic Studies Research

The figure shows a collaboration network analysis linking sources, authors, and keywords. Key journals like *Global Journal al-Thaqafah*, *Afkar*, and *Quranica* reveal patterns of research dissemination, with authors such as Ibrahim M., Usman A.H., Kadir M.N.A., and Muhamed Ali Mam being closely associated [32]. Keywords highlight a focus on Indonesia, Tafsir, and Quranic exegesis, reflecting the main research themes. Stronger links are seen between Usman A.H. and Tafsir, and Kadir M.N.A. and Indonesia [33]. This network emphasizes Indonesia's key role in Quranic studies and exegesis [34]. Future studies could explore how these collaborations evolve and impact the field of Islamic studies.

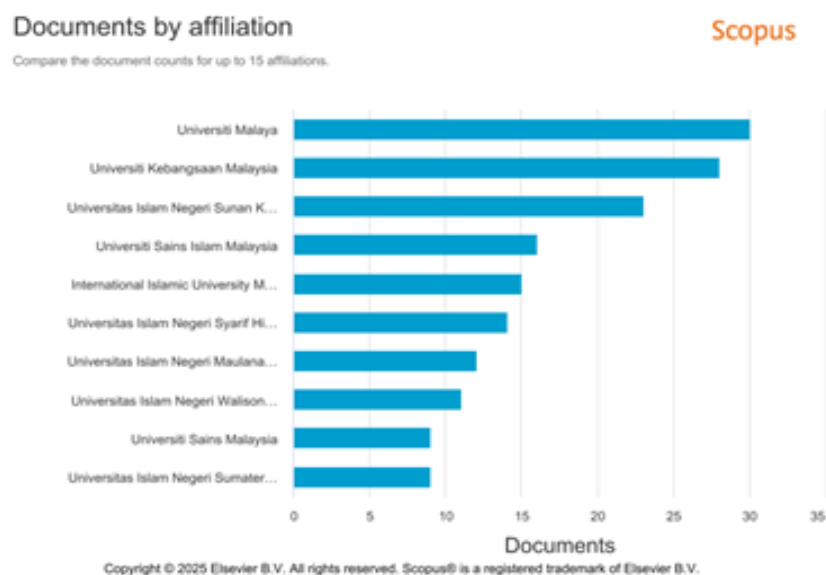


Figure 5. Documents by Affiliation

The figure shows that Universiti Malaya leads in publications, followed by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga. Other institutions, like Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia and the International Islamic University Malaysia, contribute less [35]. This highlights a strong academic concentration in Malaysian and Indonesian universities, especially Islamic ones, driven by their focus on Islamic studies, digital

education, and technology [36]. The high publication counts reflect robust academic resources, research projects, and partnerships in the region [37]. This growth indicates Southeast Asian universities' increasing participation in international research, influenced by regional issues, funding, and research networks [38]. Future studies could explore the impact of these collaborations on the global academic scene.

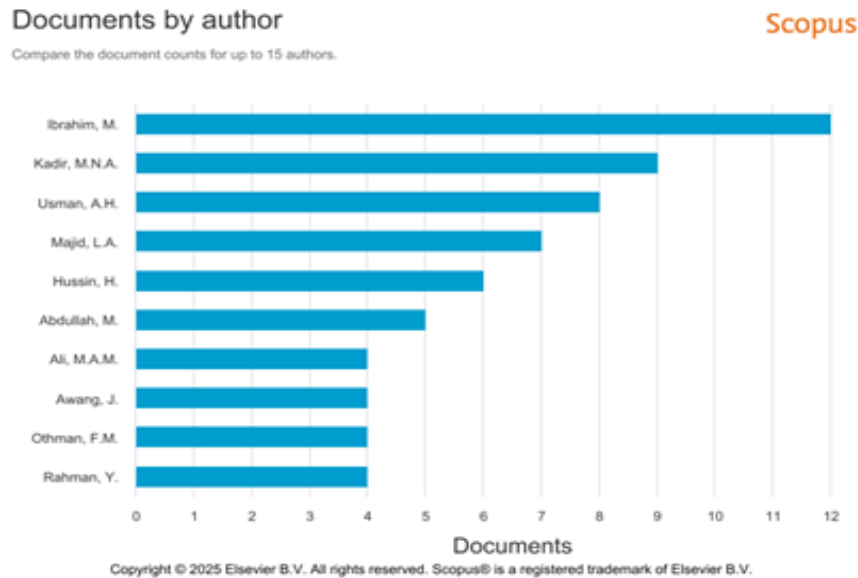


Figure 6. Documents by Author

The figure shows that Ibrahim M. leads in publications, followed by Kadir M.N.A. and Usman A.H., indicating their central role in the field. Other authors, such as Majid L.A., Hussin H., and Abdullah M., have also contributed significantly, albeit at a lower level [39]. Authors like Ali M.A.M., Awang J., Othman F.M., and Rahman Y., despite publishing fewer papers, still make notable contributions [40]. This distribution suggests that Ibrahim M., Kadir M.N.A., and Usman A.H. are key researchers who could lead major studies or collaborations [41]. The data reflects a collaborative research environment, with many contributors supporting different aspects of the research. Future analysis could explore how these authors' partnerships shape the field.

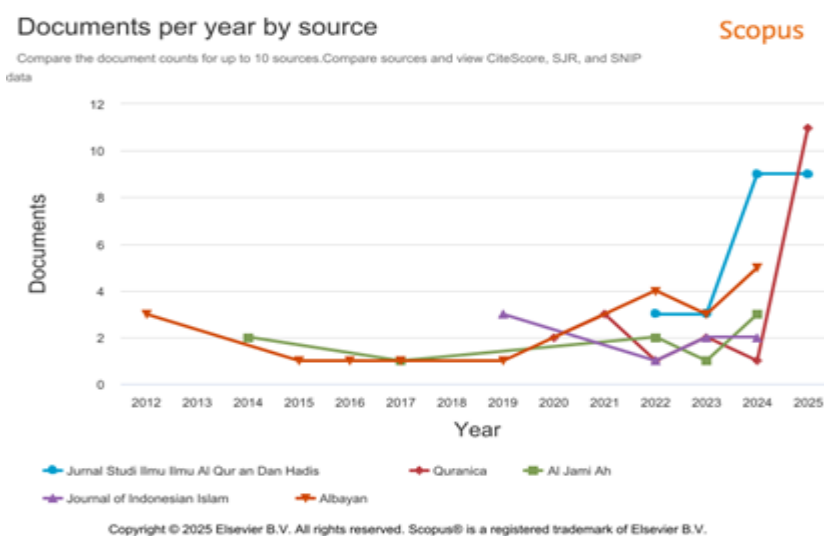


Figure 7. Documents by Source

The figure shows annual publication trends from 2012 to 2025, highlighting a significant increase in documents from *Jurnal Studi Ilmu Ilmu Al Qur'an Dan Hadis* starting in 2023, indicating a surge in activity. The rise of *Quranica* and *Al Bayan* is slower, with only minor increases in recent years. *Journal of Indonesian Islam* and *Al Jami'ah* show relatively stable but low publication counts, with slight growth in recent years [42]. The sharp increase in publications from *Jurnal Studi Ilmu Ilmu Al Qur'an Dan Hadis* suggests growing interest, possibly due to new funding, research focus, or emerging topics [43]. The steady rise of other sources indicates their established presence or less active engagement in the field. This trend could reflect shifts in scholarly priorities or the influence of key publications.

Most Influential Authors, Journals and Articles

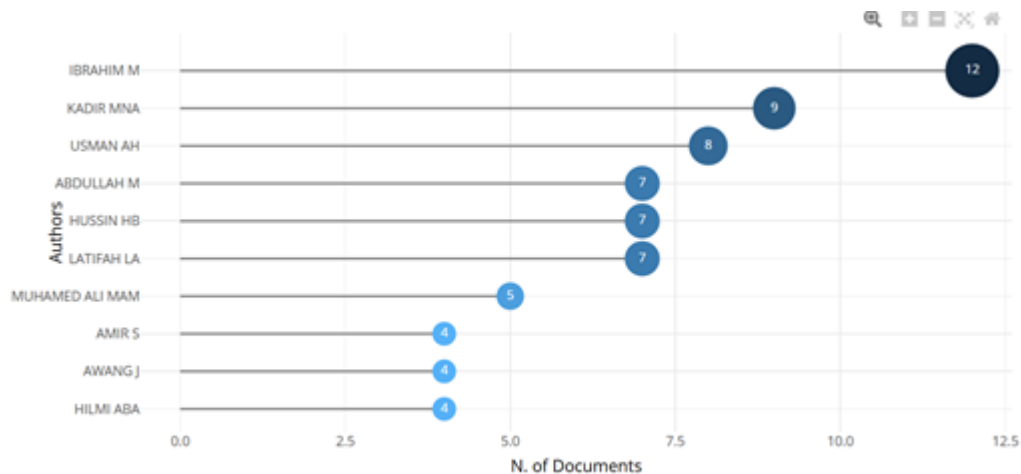


Figure 8. Most relevant author

The figure shows the distribution of publications in Quranic studies, with Ibrahim M. leading with 12 documents, followed by Kadir MNA (9) and Usman AH (8), indicating their key roles in the field. Other authors like Abdullah M., Hussin HB, and Latifah LA each have 7 documents, also contributing significantly. Amir S., Awang J., and Hilmi ABA have 4 documents each, while Muhamed Ali Mam has 5 [44]. This distribution highlights Ibrahim M.'s central role, with other authors making diverse contributions [45]. The even distribution of document counts suggests a collaborative research environment, with a few prominent authors specializing in specific areas of Quranic studies. Future research could explore how these authors' work influences the field.

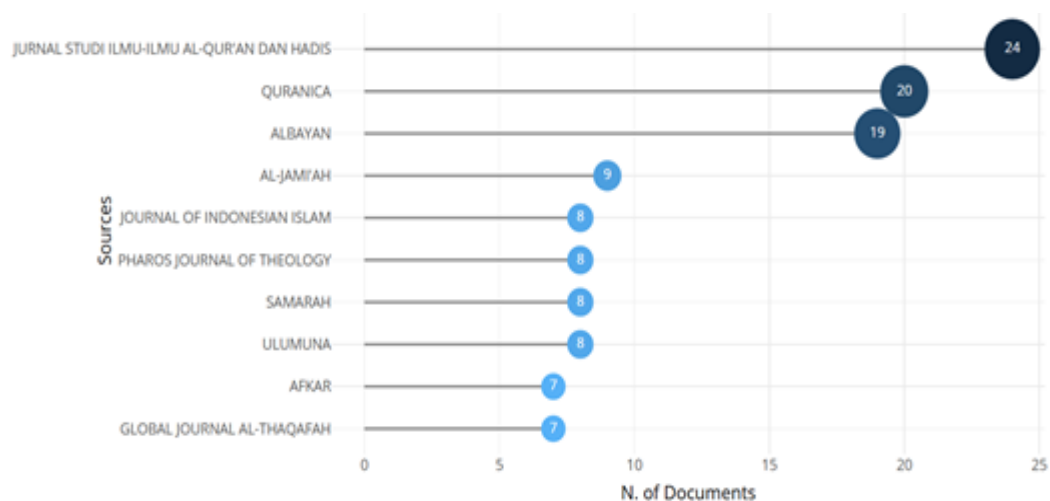


Figure 9. Most relevant source

The figure shows the distribution of documents across various sources in Quranic studies, with *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* leading with 24 documents, followed by *Quranica* (20) and *Al-Bayan* (19). These journals dominate the field, indicating their central role in research output. Other journals, such as *Al-Jami'ah* (9) and *Journal of Indonesian Islam* (8), also contribute significantly, though at a lower level. Journals like *Samara*, *Ulumuna*, *Afkar*, and *Global Journal al-Thaqafah*, each with seven documents, have less influence [46]. This suggests that while a few major sources drive much of the research, other journals still contribute to the scholarly discourse. Future studies could explore why these journals are more prominent and the specific topics they address.

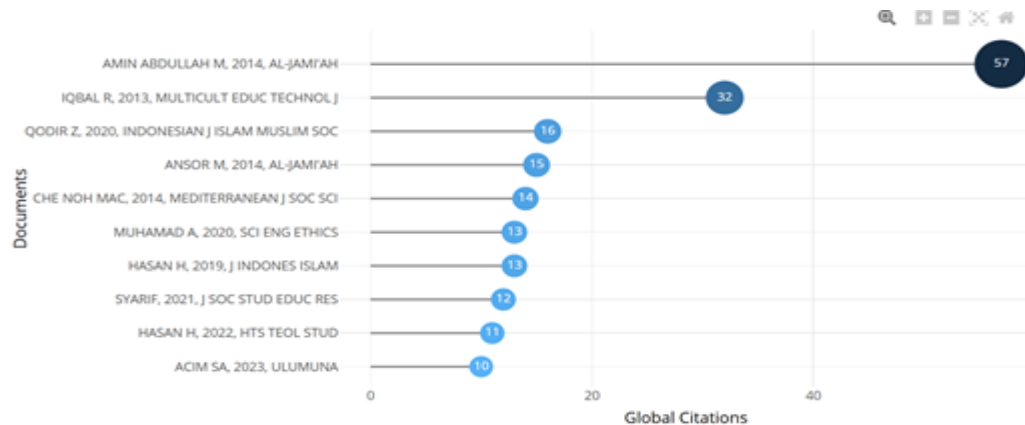


Figure 10. Most Global Cited Document

The figure shows the most globally cited documents in Quranic studies, with Amin Abdullah M.'s 2014 document in *Al-Jami'ah* leading with 57 citations, indicating its significant influence. The second most cited document, by Iqbal R. (2013), has 32 citations, followed by notable works from Qodir Z. (2020) and Ansor M. (2014), with 16 and 15 citations, respectively. Documents published in prestigious journals like *Al-Jami'ah* tend to attract more citations, highlighting the impact of publication venues [47]. While works by authors such as Muhamad A. (2020) and Hasan H. (2019, 2022) receive fewer citations, they still contribute significantly to the field. This distribution underscores the importance of certain publications in shaping scholarly discourse, with future research exploring the factors behind high citation counts.

Mapping of Main Topics and Relationships Between Topics

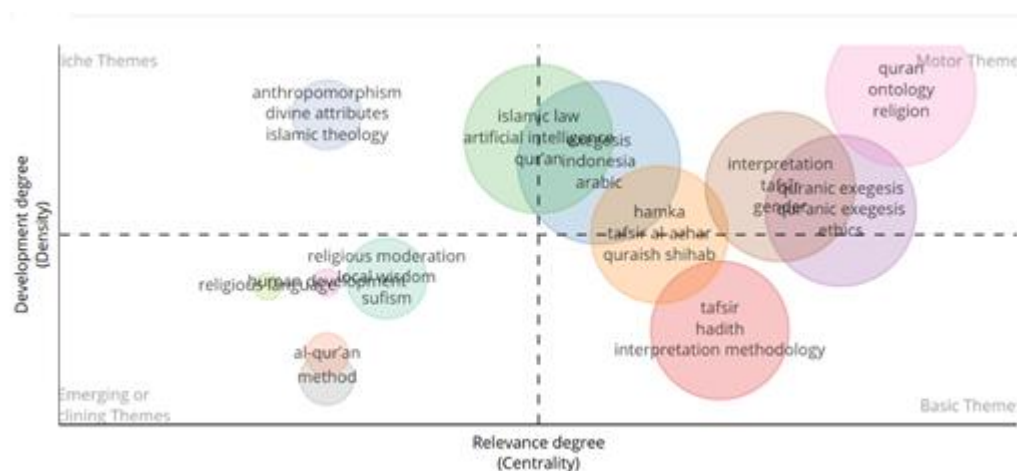


Figure 11. Mapping of Key Themes in Quranic Studies: Relevance and Development

The picture maps the main themes in the study of the Qur'an based on its relevance and development. The "Motor Themes" quadrant includes central topics such as Qur'an Interpretation, Al-Azhar Tafsir, Hadith, and Interpretation Methodology, reflecting their significance in contemporary science [48]. The "Basic Themes" quadrant includes basic subjects such as religion and the ontology of the Qur'an, which remain important but develop more slowly. "Emerging or Declining Themes", such as Human Development, Sufism, and Religious Moderation, gain or lose attention in the research. Finally, "Niche Themes" such as Anthropomorphism, Divine Attributes, and Islamic Theology represent niche topics that are less central. This mapping highlights the diversity in the study of the Qur'an, balancing established and emerging areas of research.



Figure 12. Linkages Between Key Topics in Quranic Studies

This image illustrates the relationship between the key subjects in the study of the Qur'an, with interpretation at its center, emphasizing its importance. Indonesia stands out as the main focal point, reflecting its significance in the interpretation of the Qur'an in scientific discourse. Topics such as Tafsir Al-Azhar, Interpretation of the Qur'an, and Hamka are closely related to interpretation, highlighting their central role [49]. Less prominent themes such as Sustainability, Ontology, and Qur'an Media are on the periphery, representing emerging interdisciplinary topics related to established fields such as Qur'an Interpretation [50]. These connections show how Qur'an studies are evolving, with new themes such as media and sustainability gaining attention, while basic topics such as interpretation continue to take center stage.

Potential Research Topics for the Future in Quranic Studies

The thematic mapping indicates that some Quranic study topics, particularly those in the Basic Themes quadrant (high importance but relatively low development), have potential as future research areas. Strategic positions are held by subjects like Tafsir, Quranic Exegesis, and Interpretation Methodology, which serve as the cornerstone of current literature while allowing for further investigation in terms of concept development, models, and their application in novel circumstances [51]. When connected to related subjects like sustainability, Islamic ethics, human development, and digital media, which can enhance interdisciplinary knowledge, this potential increases even further.

For example, integrating Quranic Exegesis with global issues like climate change and sustainability can offer new perspectives that align with contemporary challenges [52]. Additionally, topics such as Islamic Law and Artificial Intelligence present opportunities for the development of theory and practical applications in relation to Quranic interpretation that are more contextual and dynamic.

Given their strong relevance in the contemporary context, strengthening research in these areas can lead to theoretical and practical innovations, significantly impacting the development of knowledge and practice in Quranic studies in the future. In addition to offering fresh perspectives on Tafsir and Quranic explanations, this kind of research could help the Muslim community around the world overcome its technological, ethical, and social problems.

CONCLUSION

This research has explored current trends and emerging opportunities in the field of Qur'anic studies, identifying key areas ripe for further exploration. Thematic mapping of subjects such as digital media, Islamic law, Tafsir, and interpretation of the Qur'an reveals established research foundations and new connections with contemporary global challenges such as artificial intelligence, sustainability, and Islamic ethics. Despite their strong traditional roots, these fields have a lot of room for growth and offer new perspectives on how to understand and apply the lessons of the Qur'an in light of current issues. Reviewing the main objectives of this study, it is evident that the study of the Qur'an, with a solid foundation in interpretation and interpretation, continues to be an important field of study. But there is plenty of room for creativity, especially when it comes to blending these classic themes with contemporary multidisciplinary issues. According to the implications of the research, scholars can address pressing social issues and provide valuable insights for religious and secular groups by expanding the scope of interpretation and interpretation of the Qur'an. Future research should take a closer look at the relationship between Qur'anic study and other fields, including social development, technology, and environmental ethics. In addition, scholars should investigate how the lessons of the Qur'an can be successfully used to address modern problems, especially those related to ethics and sustainability. Furthermore, to understand how technology can change the way people interact with the Qur'an, the role of digital media in disseminating Qur'an interpretations must be investigated. In summary, this study emphasizes how important it is to continue investigating and developing the study of the Qur'an by blending traditional wisdom with contemporary paradigms. Scholars must treat the interpretation of the Qur'an as a dynamic instrument for addressing global problems as well as theological endeavors as the field develops. To promote scientific and practical developments in the field, scholars are urged to become more involved with these new subjects and seek to close the gap between tradition and current issues.

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Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the study. They collaboratively developed the research concept, conducted the literature review, analyzed and interpreted the data, prepared and revised the manuscript, responded to reviewers' comments, and approved the final version before submission for publication.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the research, authorship, and publication of this article. The authors confirm that the study was conducted

independently, without financial, institutional, or personal influences that could affect the objectivity or integrity of the findings.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

The authors used a generative artificial intelligence tool solely to assist with language refinement, grammar correction, clarity, and academic English improvement during manuscript preparation. AI was not used to generate research findings, theoretical arguments, interpretations, or conclusions. All intellectual contributions, scientific judgments, content verification, and final manuscript decisions remain the authors' full responsibility.

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