TRENDS AND THEMES IN AL-QURAN TEACHING AND LEARNING: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS[(*)]

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ABSTRACT

Qur'anic pedagogy prepares future teachers and students to face modern educational challenges. This study conducts a bibliometric analysis to examine research patterns, trends, sources, authors, institutions, and themes in this field. Data were collected from Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) and analyzed using ScientoPy and VOSviewer. Findings show significant growth in Al-Quran teaching and learning research from 1990 to 2025. "Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi" and "Religions" were identified as the most prominent source titles, while frequently used author keywords included Religious Education, Islamic Education, and Quran. The most cited articles focused on Quran teaching, structured literature reviews, and cross-sectional analyses. Overall, This study highlights the need for the discipline to adapt to 21st-century issues, with sustainability and curriculum development emerging as potential areas for future research beneficial to academics, educators, and policymakers.

Keywords: *Al-Quran, bibliometric, Web of Science, Scopus, VOSviewer and ScientoPy*

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning of Al-Quran have an important role in educating future educators, professionals, and gifted students to effectively navigate the complicated landscape of today's education system. At the same time, the gifted students and professional educators are being disrupted by emerging technologies, globalization, and changing regulatory context (Firdaus Wan Khairuldin et al., 2017). Therefore, responding to the contexts of Al-Quran teaching and learning research requires first knowing the trends, influences and influential research publications. Bibliometric analysis can be used for this purpose and is powerful for analysing the research landscape to identify areas of limited research opportunity to create new knowledge (Abdullah et al., 2023).

Over the last few years, bibliometric analysis has been a useful tool for exploring research growth, impact, and structure of research within a field (Donthu et al., 2021). More specifically, bibliometric studies generate helpful information of a research field's dynamics, and how a research field evolves using measures such as number of publications, citation analysis and co-occurrence of keywords (Abdullah, 2022; Zupic & Čater, 2015). Thus, this study utilizes bibliometric techniques to investigate the development of Al-Quran teaching and learning research through identifying trends, patterns and gaps in the literature.

In addition to bibliometric studies, studies of Qur'an pedagogy offer practical guidance for teaching and learning practices. For example, research on mobile Qur'an learning (Firdaus Wan Khairuldin et al, 2017), the experience of Qur'anic education in the UK (Noh et al., 2014), Qur'an literacy strategies/Supriadi et al., 2022), and tajwid articulation (Othman et al, 2023), all illuminated the challenges and innovations in real life Qur'an teaching. Adding studies such as these will help complement the contextual literature for this bibliometric analysis.

Alongside bibliometric studies, research on Qur'anic pedagogy offers distinct insight into real educational contexts., For example, one study examining Qur'anic educational end goals derived from the context of Surah Al-'Alaq and Luqman demonstrates a more overt religious aim of Qur'anic educational end goals (Mukhtar et al., 2022). In a European context, Qur'an teachers in Norway use added pedagogical strategies to combine traditional recitation methods with modern, narrative strategies (Markeng & Berglund, 2024). Thus, a larger view identified Qur'an and Hadith providing dialog, story, and habituation as key pedagogical strategies in Islamic education (Kusainun, 2024).

Other research has looked into the values of traditional pedagogy compared to modern developments designed for modern students (Qayyum Khan et al., 2022; Aini, 2025)These studies also relate to endeavors to employ Prophetic pedagogy in the contemporary classroom (Budiyanto, 2025) and to regenerate Qur'anic education through curriculum integration (Setiawan & Suhartini, 2024). The practical aspect of this pedagogy is found in studies of Qur'anic literacy through action research (Supriadi et al., 2022) and on the teacher's role in developing recitation skills (Zanjabila et al., 2023).

Additionally, research at the doctoral level has emphasized the importance of teachers employing the Qur'an as a purposeful pedagogy (Alonzi, 2024). Qur'anic philosophy of education informs a level of awareness regarding the possibility that pedagogical theorizing could derive meaningfully from the text directly (Stimpson & Calvert, 2021), while other studies have shifted the emphasis onto behavioral aspects of education, such as gentleness in the educational undertaking (Pallathadka et al., 2023). Technology and linguistics have provided their own contribution, with ontological modeling in Qur'anic retrievals (Shamsuzzaman Sadi et al., 2016), the text-linguistics of Qur'anic discourse (Abdul-Raof, 2018), and the sound production of Qur'anic letters (Othman et al., 2023).

Research has brought together classical and modern perspectives, for instance (Cornell, 2005), who made a pedagogical understanding of Qur'anic pedagogy, and who reimagined Qur'an-centered pedagogy in modern Islamic education (Sahin, 2015). In contemporary practice, technology has been an increasingly focus in practical, as there is research that demonstrates how one might use technology in Qur'an and Islamic studies classrooms (Kumaidi et al., 2024). In other words, these two projects augment the contextual grounding of this bibliometric study enrich the intersection of the statistical mapping of broad research purposes and the lived experiences of Qur'an education.

Moreover, Qur'anic pedagogy literature offers rich insights into real-world situations and innovations regarding the issues faced in the implementation of Qur'an education. The articles in this area include themes of mobile Qur'anic learning, the UK experience of Qur'an education, literacy approaches, and accuracy in articulation and pronunciation. All these pieces of literature can be drawn into the current bibliometric analysis to support a contextual mapping to understand (Firdaus Wan Khairuldin et al., 2017; Noh et al., 2014; Supriadi et al., 2022; Othman et al., 2023).

Over the last few years, the practice and experience of Al-Quran teaching and learning have shifted significantly, shaped by contextually specific AI, the

changing demands of the profession, and the changing expectations of stakeholders (Othman et al., 2023). Additionally, technological advances, including the use of data analytics and AI, fundamentally alter what is expected of Al-Quran graduates (Erlina et al., 2022). These developments also underscore the importance of understanding the key research trends and influences in Al-Quran teaching and learning.

An item can be treated by focusing on empirical information related to unique research topics. In this study, a fully bibliometric analysis is conducted on educational research about the Al-Quran. In addition, this study will be a good starting point for future research on Al-Quran education by establishing the most important research areas or themes. The past history of research topics and methods can help researchers understand the gaps and opportunities for further research.

An object can be analysed with empirical information which relates to specific research topics. In this study, a total bibliometric analysis is performed on educational research on the Al-Quran. Moreover, this study will be a useful foundation for future research on Al-Quran education that will bring forth the most significant areas or themes of research in educational research on the Al-Quran. The historical past of the research topics and methods can make researchers aware of gaps and prospects for future research (Abdullah & Sofyan, 2023).

In addition, this study reveals some of the contributions of influential authors whose works warrant significant discussion and have documented many of the discussions in the Al-Quran teaching and learning research. Through citation patterns and co-authorship networks, we highlighted the authors contributing to research that has meaningfully contributed to the discussion on Al-Quran. Overall, it should conclude that the description of the intellectual structure of Al-Quran and teaching and learning research, as well as the collaborating authors, all contributed to the advancement of Al-Quran research (Abdullah, 2022; Merigó et al., 2020).

Lastly, this bibliometric analysis identifies influential publications in Al-Quran teaching and learning research. By reviewing their highly cited articles and the effect they had on the articles and studies that followed, this study can follow the progression of highly influential work that was foundational in the subject matter as a whole (Linnenluecke et al., 2019). This examination also helps to contextualize the history and theoretical frameworks within the Al-Quran teaching and learning research area, to help provide a body of knowledge

within which researchers can generate knowledge and promote further discussion. Table 1 provides the research questions that are proposed by this study and the rationale behind each question. It should be emphasized that while teaching and learning Al-Quran is wider in scope (including language acquisition and pedagogy), this research is not focused on teaching and learning Al-Quran as a whole. The focus of this research on teaching and learning Al-Quran includes pedagogy directly related to Qur'an recitation, memorization, and understanding (i.e. tajwid, hifz, tadabbur, qira'at). The references to Al-Quran education within this manuscript are only intended as contextual background where Qur'anic studies overlaps with Al-Quran pedagogy, and not based on that being the focus of analysis.

Table 1

Research Questions and Motivations

No.	RQ	Research question	Motivations
1.	RQ1	What are the patterns and trends in the growth of Al-Quran teaching and	To gain a better understanding of the current state and historical
2.	RQ2	Which journals, databases, and research areas have significantly	To identify the leading publication outlets and academic disciplines
3.	RQ3	Who are the most influential authors, and what are the most cited	To recognize the scholars and key contributions that have shaped the intellectual
4.	RQ4	What are the most productive institutions in	To highlight institutions at the forefront of Al-Quran teaching and learning research and
5.	RQ5	What are the key research themes, and what future directions are emerging in Al-	To provide an overview of dominant topics in the field and identify underexplored areas for further academic investigation

Note.This article seeks to provide the academic community with a useful mapping of the research space of Al-Quran teaching and learning through a comprehensive bibliometric analysis. So, knowing these trends will allow scholars and practitioners to know what is emerging and where other

opportunistic research avenues may lie. Therefore, the study will allow policymakers to identify more clearly how use of Al-Quran teaching and learning may contribute to Al-Quran teaching and learning well-being. In this manner, the findings will act as a support to future research, and stimulate interdisciplinary opportunities for future innovation and research in Al-Quran teaching and learning.

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Bibliometrics analysis

Bibliometric analysis is a systematic and quantitative approach to find the bibliographic properties of academic articles. Bibliometric analysis is an effective means of examining the impact and growth of academic research using publication numbers, citation counts, and co-occurrence of keywords (Abdullah & Sofyan, 2023; Donthu et al., 2021). In bibliometric studies, research data is collected and analyzed based on publication counts, citation counts, and co-citation counts containing a specified field of academic studies. The data is then analyzed statistically and network-based to yield useful results (Zupic & Čater, 2015). Aiding those studies, bibliometric methods are becoming an increasingly popular technique across a range of disciplines, including business and management research. More specifically, bibliometric methods can illustrate the structural arrangements, intellectual evolution, and development of subjects within community-based research models (Merigó et al., 2020; Linnenluecke et al., 2020). While this study uses a bibliometric perspective, its approach is meant as an initial mapping exercise. Studies could then follow to add qualitative data like thematic reviews of foundational pieces of Qur'anic pedagogy to enhance their context and practice.

Table 2
Dataset Search

Database	Search String	No	Date
SCOPUS	TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Al-Quran" OR "Quran" OR "Koran") AND ("teaching" OR "instruction" OR "education" OR "pedagogy") AND ("learning" OR "study" OR "acquisition" OR "understanding") AND ("methodology" OR "approach"	155	May 26 2025

|		
	OR ("technique" OR "strategy") AND ("Islamic" OR "Muslim" OR "religious" OR "spiritual") AND ("curriculum" OR "program" OR "framework" OR "content")	
WoS	TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Al-Quran" OR "Quran" OR "Koran") AND ("teaching" OR "instruction" OR "education" OR "pedagogy") AND ("learning" OR "study" OR "acquisition" OR "understanding") AND ("methodology" OR "approach" OR ("technique" OR "strategy") AND ("Islamic" OR "Muslim" OR "religious" OR "spiritual") AND ("curriculum" OR "program" OR "framework" OR "content")	34
	Total	189

2.2 Dataset retrieval and analysis

Note. The datasets were acquired from two of the most frequently used databases in bibliometric research, Scopus and Web of Science (WoS), which both provide ample, multidisciplinary coverage to our studies (Hafiar et al., 2024; Abdullah, 2022; Pranckutė, 2021). The search query included terms related to Al-Quran teaching and learning, for example, searches for ("Al-Quran" OR "Quran" OR "Koran") AND ("teaching" OR "instruction" OR "education" OR "pedagogy") AND ("learning" OR "study" OR "acquisition" OR "understanding") AND ("methodology" OR "approach" OR ("technique" OR "strategy") AND ("Islamic" OR "Muslim" OR "religious" OR "spiritual") AND ("curriculum" OR "program" OR "framework" OR "content"). Although our search query included broader terms such as "Islamic," "religious," and "spiritual" education - which we found necessary to ensure we were navigating the larger research landscape wherein Qur'an pedagogy is often placed - we were able to subsequently parse out pedagogy that is specific to Qur'an teaching (e.g., tajwid,

hifz, tadabbur, qira'at) from general Islamic education, while making adaptions to our bibliometric mapping to indicate where specific education in Qur'an teaching and learning has taken place. This allows us to develop the mapping to also include specific acronyms relating to Qur'an pedagogy, thereby decreasing the posibility that Qur'an pedagogy would come to take the shape of blended material or that it would be overly conflated with the particulars of broader Islamic studies while retaining completeness. The search for the data set in the title-abstract- and keyword fields concluded on May 26, 2025, and initially produced a total of 177 articles, out of which 155 were from Scopus and 22 were from WoS. The data set was obtained and prepared using two software packages, ScientoPy and VOSviewer, both of which are used in bibliometric research as a matter of course (Abdullah & Sofyan, 2023; Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020; Ruiz-Rosero et al., 2019). The search terms used necessarily included broad terms as "Islamic education" and "pedagogy" so as to be sure to maintain the broader research context; however, the mapping analysis also revealed subclusters that are specifically Qur'an focused such as tajwid, hifz (memorization), tadabbur (contemplation), and qira'at (method of recitation) etc. These distinctions make it clear that Qur'an pedagogy is not subsumed under general Islamic education, but rather indicates that it be treated as a strand of its own in the bibliometric landscape. While it appears the search terms received some hits with Al-Quran language pedagogy, the analysis was conducted such that these were distinguished from Qur'an explicitly or specifically pedagogy, so the study originally considered only Qur'anic teaching and learning as the main topic of study.

2.3 Combining and cleaning duplicates

Duplicate records present a regular struggle in bibliometric research, often caused by inconsistencies in indexing practices, differences in how authors present their names, or variations in the errors introduced by publication metadata. Therefore, recognizing and removing duplicates is necessary to guarantee the accuracy, reliability, and, overall validity of the bibliometric assessment (Donthu et al., 2021 Linnenluecke et al., 2020). ScientoPy was used for the process of uniting the data that was retrieved from Scopus and WoS, and effectively removing duplicate references. It should be noted that duplicate removal involved the above-mentioned comparison of several meaningful bibliographical attributes within the record (e.g., article title, author names, publication year, and DOI) (Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020). With duplicate records removed, the study represents a more accurate and meaningful representation of the research landscape of Al-Quran teaching and learning.

Figure 1
Flow diagram of database and register research

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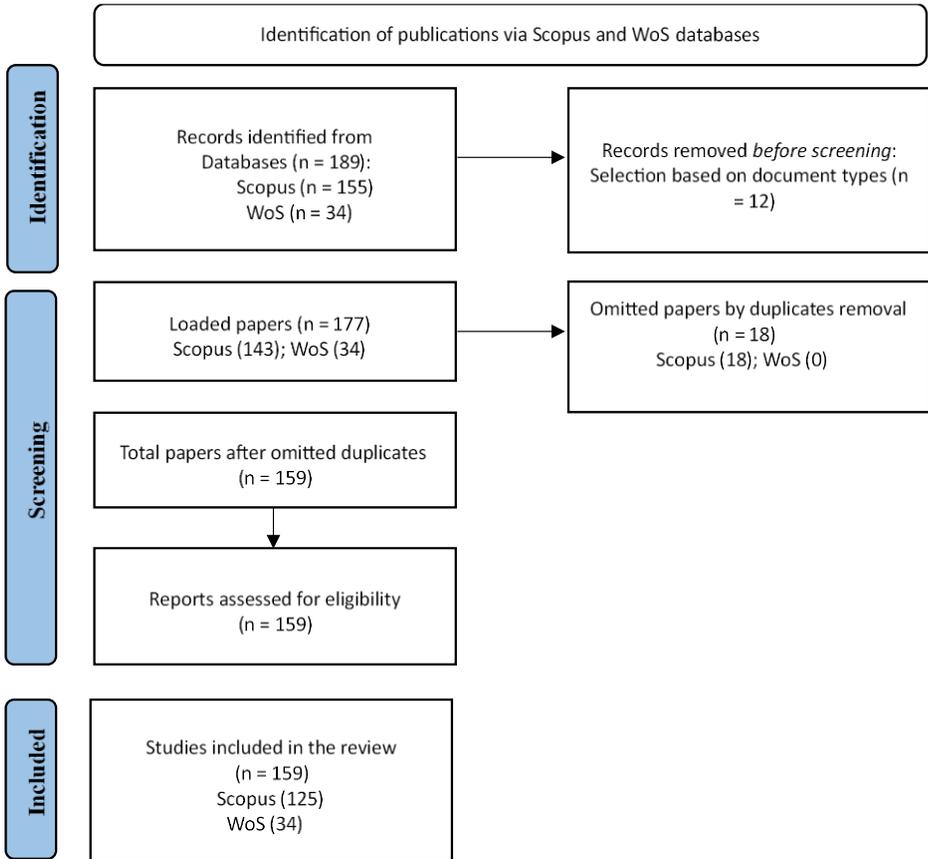
2.4 General overview of the preprocessed bibliographic datasets

Note. The outcome of the initial search query in Scopus and WoS identified 189 publications, including 155 (82.57%) from Scopus and 34 (12.42%) from WoS. Additionally, because of document-type criteria for the study, 12 publications (6.30%) were excluded to ensure the most relevant scholarly works were taken into consideration. The types of documents that the study preferred to assess for further evaluation were articles, reviews, proceedings, and conference papers. After irrelevant documents were eliminated, this left a total of 177 publications. There were 143 (80.80%) from Scopus and 34 (19.20%) from WoS. The process of removing duplicates identified 18 duplicate papers or 10.20% of total papers accounted for in both databases. Therefore, 18 papers were deleted from Scopus

accounting for (12.60%), through duplication. However, there were no papers deleted from WoS.

The final dataset was reduced to 159 papers after the duplicates had been removed. Of the 159 papers, 34 (21.40%) were in WoS and 125 (78.60%) were found in Scopus. The research process flow showing the steps from the start of the database searches to the final dataset with critical steps summarized for data cleaning and duplicates is shown in Figure 1.

3.0 RESULTS

Figure 2
Publication Growth Trends
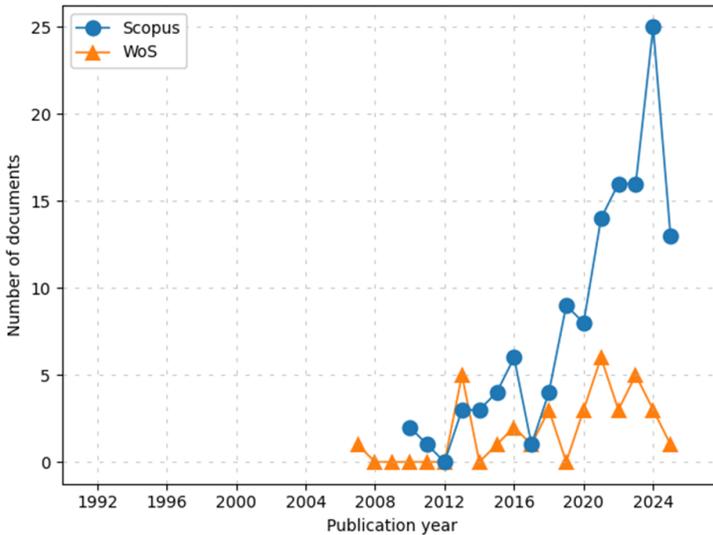
Source: Scopus and WoS database

3.1 Publication Growth Trends

Note. Figure 2 shows the results of publishing progression associated with seven separate categories of time: 1990 - 1995, 1996 - 2000, 2001 - 2005, 2006 - 2010, 2011 - 2015, 2016 - 2020, and 2021 - 2025. Figure 2 suggests that for 1990 - 2006, there were no publications indexed in the WoS and Scopus databases. Notably, there started to be publications in the WoS, beginning with 2007. There was an inconsistent rise in the number of published works from 2007 - 2012. In the years 2013 - 2025, publishing surged, with the total number of works nearly tripling compared to the previous years, with peaks in 2024 for both databases.

Figure 3

The top ten scientific journals
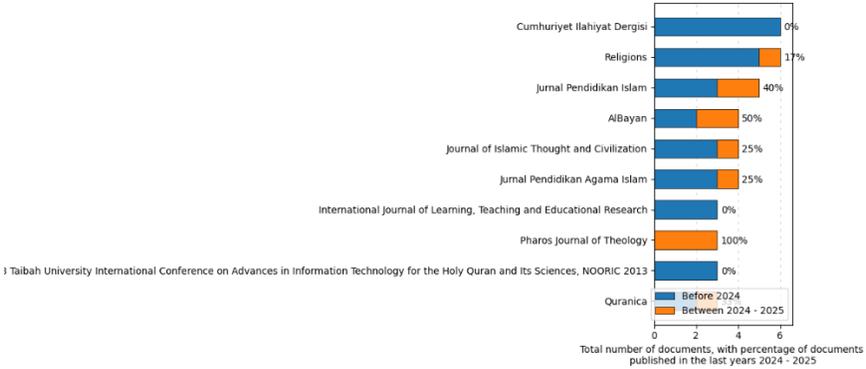
Source: Scopus and WoS database

3.2 Prominent Scientific Publication and Fields of Research

Note. Figure 3 shows that the main scientific publications released studies on Al-Quran teaching and learning. Specifically, Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi had the top rank with 6 publications, and Jurnal Pendidikan Islam and Religious had the second rank with five publications. Both of these magazines focused on Al-Quran research and education and are the best journals in this area. In terms of the ranking of documents from 2024 - 2025, the Pharos Journal of Theology had the most number of articles from 2 years before. AlBayan had the second most number of articles published in the last two years, with 50% of its articles published in the last two years. Recent Al-Quran research has shown an interesting concentration with regards to Al-Quran teaching and learning. The graph shows a clear trend in Al-Quran teaching and learning, language studies, and Al-Quran research. In other words, this significant portion of recent publications reflects this trend and reflects a clear emphasis on these three areas.

Table 2

List of top ten highly cited publications

No	Authors	Year	Title	Cited by	Document Type
1	Mohamed Elhadj Y.O. (Mohamed Elhadj, 2010)	2010	E-halagat: An e-learning system for teaching the holy quran	26	Article

2	Taskin O. (Taşkın, 2014)	2014	An exploratory examination of Islamic values in science education: Islamization of science teaching and learning via constructivism	15	Article
3	Noh M.A.C., Tamuri A.H., Razak K.A., Suhid A. (Noh et al., 2014)	2014	The study of quranic teaching and learning: United Kingdom experience	13	Article
4	Suryana N., Utomo F.S., Azmi M.S. (Suryana et al., 2018)	2018	Quran ontology: Review on recent development and open research issues	11	Review
5	Kurniawan F., Khalil M.S., Khan M.K., Alginahi Y.M. (Kurniawan et al., 2015)	2015	Exploiting Digital Watermarking to Preserve Integrity of the Digital Holy Quran Images	10	Conference paper
6	Supriadi U., Supriyadi T., Abdussalam A. (Supriadi et al., 2022)	2022	Al-Quran Literacy: A Strategy and Learning Steps in Improving Al-Quran Reading Skills through Action Research	7	Article
7	Rane H. (Rane, 2023)	2023	Higher Objectives (maqasid) of Covenants in	7	Article

|					
			Islam: A Content Analysis of ʻahd and mᵎ ıthᵎ aq in the Quran		
8	Furqani H., Echchabi A. (Furqani & Echchabi, 2022)	2022	Who is Homo Islamicus? A Qurʾānic Perspective on the Economic Agent in Islamic Economics	6	Article
9	Herijanto H. (Herijanto, 2022)	2022	Al amanah in al quran vs trust: a comparative study	5	Article
10	Hatami H., Hatami M., Hatami N. (Hatami et al., 2013)	2013	The Religious and Social Principles of Patients' Rights in Holy Books (Avesta, Torah, Bible, and Quran) and in Traditional Medicine	5	Article

Source: Scopus and WoS databases

3.3 Highly Cited Publications

Note. Table 2 presents the ten most cited references on Al-Quran teaching and learning. The citation count is a means to measure the degree of impact or influence of a specific piece of published work (Wang et al., 2019). According to Wang et al. (2019) any publication's impact or citation is highly correlated, in addition to the fact that the citation frequency is correlated with the number of citations. The publication, "E-halagat: An e-learning system for teaching the holy quran," was the most cited of those listed with a total of 26 citations (Mohamed Elhadj, 2010). The publication was entitled "An exploratory study of Islamic values in science education: Islamization of science teaching and learning in a constructivist way" and it has a total of 15 citations (Taşkın, 2014). At the same time, an article titled "The study of Quranic teaching and learning: United

Kingdom experience" was published, which has received a total of 13 citations (Noh et al., 2014).

Figure 4
The top ten productive institutions
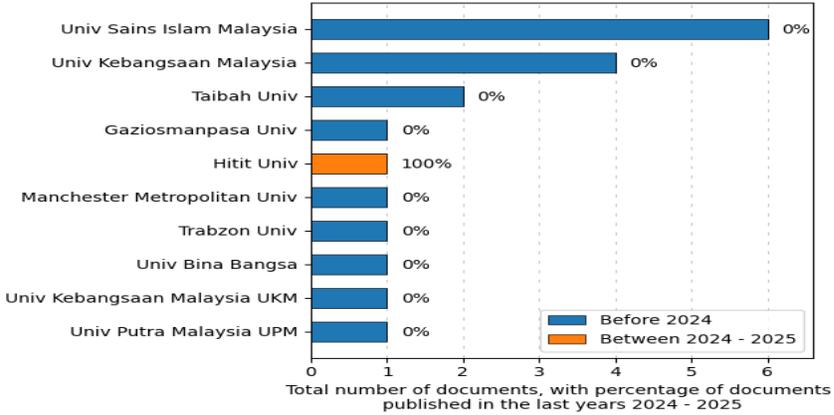
3.4 Productive Institutions

Note. Institutional research papers are considered academic publications written by institutions and intended to promote their exceptional research productivity by showcasing high quality and quantity of research activity. Figure 4 shows the ten institutions producing the most Al-Quran teaching and learning research. Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia produced the greatest number of publication, six. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia was second with four publications, followed by Higer Taibah University, Gaziosmanpasa University and Manchester Metropolitan University with one publication. These institutions correspondingly share the same publication: Trabzon University from Turkiye, Universiti Bina Bangsa, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia UKM, Universiti Malaya, and Universiti Putra Malaysia UPM.
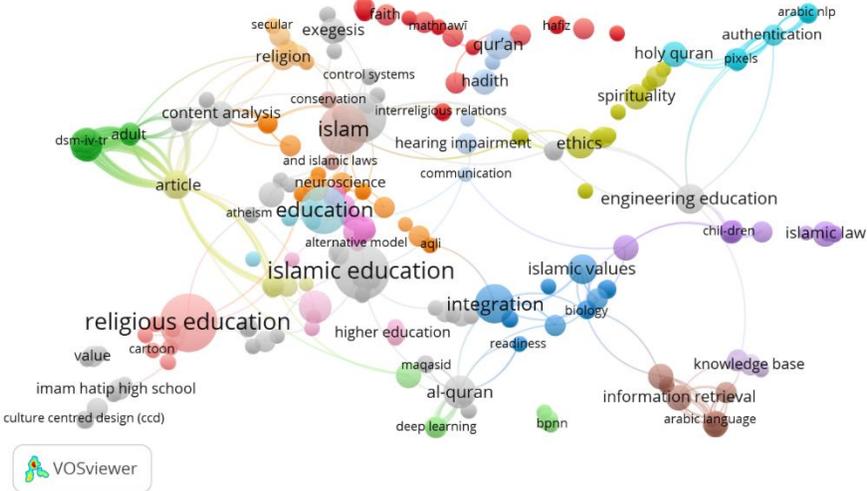
Figure 5
The top ten authors' keywords
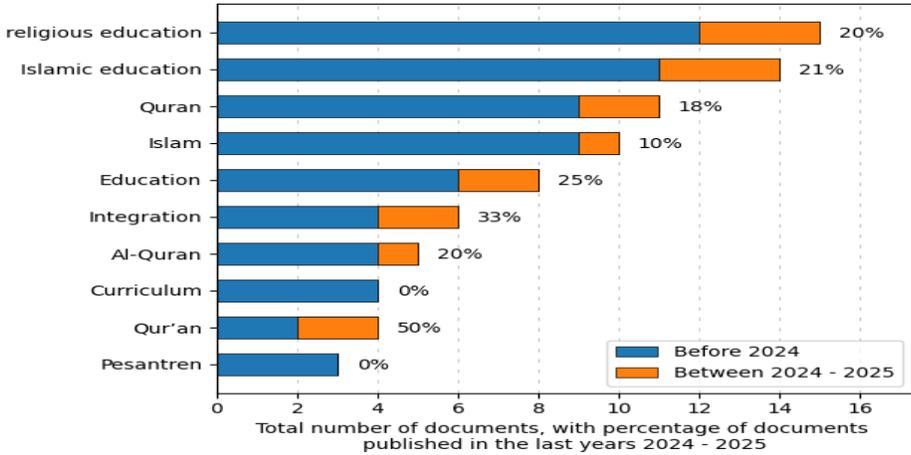
Source: Scopus and WoS databases

3.5 Major Themes and Research Gaps

Note. The study's primary themes derived from the authors' keywords of ten authors from previous studies. The author keywords, their counts, and the percentage of papers created in the last two years (2024 and 2025) for each term are displayed in Figure 5. Accordingly, the five most common author keywords were prevalent were "Religious Education" with 15 instances, "Islamic Education" with 14 instances, "Quran" (11), Islam (10), and "Education" with eight. Each of these keywords was specific to the research on Al-Quran teaching and learning. While the authors used other keywords such as "Integration", "Al-Quran", "Curriculum", "Quran", and "Pesantren", it is also worth noting how a fairly high percentage of recent papers, namely papers written in the last two years, have focused solely on "Religious Education", which underscores this tranche's influential impact on the Al-Quran teaching and learning research phenomenon. Our findings also show that in the last two years, 21 percent of published papers have cited "Islamic Education" as a primary author keyword, which resulted in an impact of the research being updated in this area of influence.

Figure 6

A Keyword co-occurrence map

Source: Scopus and WoS databases and VOSviewer

3.6 Collaboration Pattern

Note. In Figure 6, we provide a visual map of author keywords that occur a minimum of five times. The map has 8 keywords. The size of the node relates to the frequency of occurrence of the keyword. We will order the keyword nodes by frequency, from highest to lowest. Again, we note that "Religious Education" is the most frequently identified keyword and thus has the most association with other terms in the dataset. We might also call the relation of words or terms in a large bibliographic reference set a co-occurrence. This co-occurrence map of this study gives important information about Al-Quran -related words found in the bibliographic dataset that emerged the most or were most important. Also, these keywords might also be valuable for future researchers and studies.

4.0 DISCUSSION

An examination of the bibliometric data on Al-Quran teaching and learning research reveals a substantial increase in publications over the previous 30 years, particularly in the last 20 years. Data from Scopus and WoS indicate a consistent increase in research production, which began in 1990 (Figure 2). Moreover, multiple sources contribute to growth, such as the increasing significance of Al-

Quran teaching and learning in response to changing professional requirements, technological advancements, and regulatory changes.

Overall bibliometric evidence base on research into the teaching and learning of Al-Quran has grown significantly over the past 30 years, and especially through the past 20. The bibliometric results also show that research production has increased steadily based on the Scopus and WoS publication records with a clear beginning in 1990, as shown in Figure 2 above. In addition, multiple factors are leading to growth including the rising importance of Al-Quran teaching and learning due to dynamic changes in professional expectations, technological advancements, and regulatory regimes (Kholison et al., 2023).

Changes in the focus and methods of research have occurred over time. Hence, researchers have taken a wider breadth of Al-Quran teaching and learning to explore different aspects of technology, generating soft skills and also include sustainability and ethics when developing an Al-Quran curriculum (Salam et al., 2022). These changes indicate the responsiveness of the discipline to the changing needs of the Al-Quran profession and its willingness to understand the importance of preparing teachers and future students with skills to mitigate future 21st century challenges.

Upon looking at the top ten scientific journals contributing to research on Al-Quran teaching and learning research (as presented in Figure 3), it was established that prominent academic departments of knowledge have specializations. Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi is the primary and the prominent second is Religions Research. These publications markedly focused on Al-Quran teaching and learning and well recognized within the discipline, and additionally, they contribute directly on reporting findings in the field and advancing knowledge. The inclusion of other notable publications such as "Jurnal Pendidikan Islam," "AlBayan" and "Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization" signifies the heightened relevance and importance of research productivity within Al-Quran education. The distribution of product across these specialty journals identifies the field is developing and establishes research in Al-Quran teaching and learning accessibilities as a distinct and clear field of scholarly inquiry.

Figure 4 explores the first ten institutions that have contributed to the Al-Quran teaching and learning research. The analysis highlights the contributions from institutions in the Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Turkiye. For the Malaysia, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia is the largest producer of Al-Quran teaching and learning research publications, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia also have a large amount of Al-Quran teaching and learning research, there were also Taibah University and Gaziosmanpasa in Turkiye. Notably, these institutions

support ongoing Al-Quran teaching and learning research with substantial research output, link with leading institutions to promote Al-Quran teaching and learning research. There are several reasons including their focused field of knowledge in Al-Quran teaching and learning, their extensive research base, and the strong links with private and industry stakeholders. It is also remarkable that the presence of institutions from various nations also indicates that the research on Al-Quran teaching and learning also has a global dimension to it, and significant collaborations between institutions improve the overall understanding of the field.

Explaining the dominance of Malaysia, Turkey and Saudi Arabia involves structural and institutional realities. Malaysia has made substantial investments in Islamic higher education with established institutions, like the Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, which produce a healthy amount of literature in the area of Qur'an pedagogy (Firdaus Wan Khairuldin et al., 2017). Turkey, with its long tradition of Islamic scholarship in its İlahiyat faculties supported by the state, shows high levels of research output with respect to Qur'anic studies (Taşkın, 2014). Saudi Arabia, as the custodian of the Qur'an, has some of the best universities in the world and Qur'anic research centres with considerable state funding and state priorities (Othman et al., 2023). These trends are not random and are created by policy and institutional infrastructures, show that there is interdependency between research output and state backing in Islamic education.

A reasoned judgment regarding these results suggests that the dominant role of certain nations, in particular Malaysia, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, seems to derive from their institutional interests, governmental investment in Islamic studies, and development of dedicated Qur'anic study centers. This suggests that local academic and religious policies shape global patterns of research into Qur'an teaching, as opposed to being evenly distributed. Relative to broader trends in Islamic studies, Qur'an pedagogy research seems to be more practice-driven, focusing on tajwid, hifz, and literacy, while teaching and learning studies oriented around broader Islamic education tend to be more about theory, sociology, and history. The contrasting feature between Qur'an pedagogy research and general Islamic education research reinforces the applied aspect of Qur'an pedagogy research and illustrates the need for results of bibliometric analysis of the literature to be located in cultural and policy contexts.

Figure 5 displays a large cluster of words related to "Religious Education," "Islamic Education," "Quran," "Islam," and "Education." This cluster indicates the importance of the teaching and learning of Al-Quran and building research skills in the university. Also, important themes of studies related

to Al-Quran teaching and learning are, integrating skills, assessment, culture, and student participation skills. This methodological selection acknowledges that Qur'an pedagogy is often placed under the umbrella of Islamic education. However, through identifying sub-clusters including tajwid, hifz, and qira'at, I have specified what is Qur'an-specific pedagogy and differentiated it from other types of religious, or Al-Quran, education research. This distinction improves the originality of the study in terms of being Qur'an-focused rather than broadly Islamic. The bibliometric results have implications for practical approaches in Qur'an pedagogies. For example, the attention to tajwid and hifz indicates options for methodological development, including using digital tajwid training applications and memory support systems for hifz. The recurrence of tadabbur as a theme brings opportunities to develop ways for classrooms to be reflective and analytical, hopefully, supported by social collaboration online platforms. With regard to trends of institutions, the direct implication of curriculum design is to harmoniously blend conventional pedagogy for Qur'an with modern developments linked to AI based learning technologies and gamification to safeguard relevance for learners in the 21st Century.

Although this study applies established bibliometric methodologies, its originality is in applying these frameworks specifically to Qur'an pedagogy which can often be obscured with Islamic education topics at large. This study will establish Qur'an teaching and learning as a unique area of study using publications mapping the globe regarding tajwid, hifz, tadabbur, and qira'at studies. By also connecting the bibliometric evidence to contemporary areas of scholarship such as digital Qur'an learning, gamification, AI and maqasid pedagogy, an innovative angle outside a typical bibliometric approach is established.

The largest network of related keywords includes Al-Quran teaching skills and learning skills, and universities. This cluster stresses the main study area of Al-Quran teaching and learning in several dimensions. In addition, the report that identified the networks pointed out untapped potential research areas including sustainability, the development of soft skills and the curriculum. Although sustainability and curriculum show up as emerging keywords, their frequencies in the data set are still relatively low. Therefore, these themes are to be regarded as initial signals instead of established trends. Future research could investigate these locations in order to see if they represent permanent directions in Qur'an pedagogy or temporary interest in areas of research. Therefore, the implications of these issues for Al-Quran teaching and learning require further investigation to be certain that Al-Quran courses remain relevant and effective in an ever-changing teaching and learning environment.

It is essential to clarify the distinction between Qur'an pedagogy research and general Islamic studies. The field of Islamic studies is often descriptive in nature, concerning sociology, history, or philosophy of religion (Merigó et al., 2020), while Qur'an pedagogy is more situational and practice based in focus on tajwid, hifz, tadabbur, and qira'at (Supriadi et al., 2022). So the bibliometric and thematic analysis focus on themes of literacy, recitation, and curriculum design rather than inevitable, aloof, abstract theological rehashing on themes like theology, ontology, and axiology. This is an additional confirmation for the claim that Qur'an pedagogy is its own area of scholarship in Islamic education and requires pedagogical models that attend to the unique applied, performative and spiritual nature of Qur'an pedagogy (Noh et al., 2014). In other words, bibliometric mapping demonstrates how Qur'an pedagogy is a distinct way of knowing, and should be separated from examining of general Islamic studies.

Table 2 presents a summary of the ten most quoted papers, and the contribution and influence these papers have made on Al-Quran teaching and learning research. Other researchers also cited similar "E-halagat: An e-learning system for teaching the holy quran," (Mohamed Elhadj, 2010), this work has made a bigger mark and influence on the body of research in Al-Quran teaching and learning research. Other papers that have been impactful and widely cited include literature reviews and meta-analysis and cross-sectional studies, organizational change, and Al-Quran teaching and learning framework. These articles have been impactful as they have been widely cited. People have included knowledge which is part of a cumulative body of knowledge or original contribution in defining the field, which has let the research flow into the studies following these papers.

The publications have been influential and impactful on future research and practice and demonstrate the relevancy of the field. They also show the importance of contributing to what is already known in order to advance Al-Quran teaching and learning research. Additionally, this bibliometric analysis has important ramifications for the future research and development of scholars, practitioners, and policy-makers in Al-Quran teaching and learning. Also, the themes from the studies and the gaps will serve as a template for future research to evidence how important it is to confront new issues when incorporating creative ways of thinking and emerging technologies into Al-Quran teaching and learning. Likewise, the role of specialist publication and elite institutions underscores the importance of supporting collaboration and the sharing of knowledge within the field of Al-Quran teaching and learning.

Furthermore, future research is dependent on the most cited literature, which can help provide us with optimal lenses on the core issues and controversies associated with Al-Quran teaching and learning. Consequently, researchers can utilize these pivotal works as a basis to extend the current body of literature and meet the dynamic demands pertaining to Al-Quran teaching and learning. Likewise, educators and researchers can use the evidence presented above to assist in future work that identifies and develops best practices for curriculum and teachin, thus, , establishing Al-Quran teaching and learning for the needs of the 21st century.

In addition to revealing trends, we can also situate these bibliometric findings in theoretical constructs related to Qur'anic pedagogy. For example, a consistent emphasis on "Religious Education" and "Islamic Education" fits with maqasid-based pedagogy, which aims to align Qur'anic learning with high aims of Shari'ah. Emerging themes of curriculum and sustainability indicate an increasing interest to include contemporary techniques such as digital Qur'an learning, AI-learning tools, and gamification - these increasingly emerge from recent literature in Qur'anic pedagogy , (Firdaus Wan Khairuldin et al., 2017, Supriadi et al., 2022). In these ways, these frameworks convey how bibliometric indicators have become not only descriptive but instead point practical and innovative directions for Qur'an education in the 21st Century.

It is equally helpful to note that research into Qur'an teaching is often included in Islamic education research and Al-Quran pedagogy. While this conveys how related these fields are, this study shows that there are separate features of Qur'an focussed pedagogy. The bibliometric also indicated that there was specific attention given to tajwid, hifz, tadabbur, and qira'at, distinguishing Qur'an pedagogy from Islamic education. Distinguishing Qur'an pedagogy adds to the catalogue of topics for Qur'an studies as an emerging area of research, while still being a part of the broader discussion in education.

Based on the study's results, a conceptual roadmap can be sketched for future Qur'an pedagogy. Bibliometric data on impactful papers and thematic trends (e.g., religious education, tajwid, hifz, tadabbur), suggests that an integrated approach to Qur'an pedagogy may have much to offer. To illustrate, the curriculum design could integrate purposeful gamification to optimize student engagement, and make use of AI-assisted tajwid training, if considered appropriate. And for hifz programs, perhaps incorporating digital memory tools and spaced repetition models could be considered. If the goal is pedagogy focused on tadabbur, teaching and learning experiences could be broadened to a more interactive approach to content analysis and shared networks. At the same time
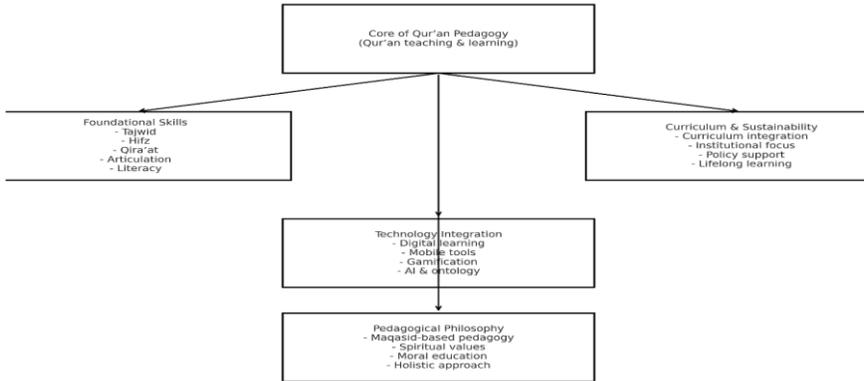
the cross institutional networks presented in this study offer opportunities for what collaborative teaching may look from both local and global perspectives. This roadmap illustrates that bibliometric mapping is both descriptive and generative, and comes with implications for method in a contemporary Qur'an education landscape.

The evolving research landscapes also connect with current trends in pedagogy. Preliminary studies on digital Qur'an learning indicate the opportunity for AI-based tajwid to support student ability (Othman et al., 2023). Gamification, in particular, has been recognized as an evolving option for optimizing memorization (hifz) based on motivation and spaced repetition (Firdaus Wan Khairuldin et al., 2017). Recognizing the benefits of tadabbur-based pedagogy is the use of collaborative digital platforms to encourage student self-reflection and analytical engagement with the Qur'an (Suryana et al., 2018); again, this connects with a maqasid-based pedagogy since it could be realized as purposeful value-based learning (Rane, 2023). Thus, bibliometric findings not only are mapped to researched trends but may also provide practical references to rethink Qur'anic pedagogy and contemplate ways to center Qur'anic pedagogy post-2020 in the 21st century.

The suggested conceptual model for Qur'an pedagogy places Qur'an teaching and learning at the centre, supported by four interacting domains. The Foundational Skills domain focuses on tajwid, hifz, qira'at, articulation, and literacy skills as foundational capacities for the accurate reading and understanding of the Qur'an. Curriculum and Sustainability affirms the role of integration into institutions, policy and promotion of lifelong learning to ensure Qur'an pedagogy is relevant and adaptable to different educational contexts. The Technology Integration domain acknowledges the continuing rise of digital learning, mobile devices, gamification and artificial intelligence, that enhance access and engagement in Qur'an learning. Finally, Pedagogical Philosophy situates Qur'an pedagogy, within maqasid based pedagogy, values related to spirituality, moral development, and holistic development. As a result, teaching the Qur'an is about more than developing technical skills and instead prioritizes ethical and spiritual character. Together, these four domains form a comprehensive and flexible system that links tradition and innovation, providing educators, researchers and policy makers a clear model of how Qur'an pedagogy practice could evolve in the face of current challenges, while continuing to maintain the authority of the tradition.

Figure 7

Proposed conceptual framework of Al-Qur'an Teaching and Learning

Note. The suggested conceptual model for Qur'an pedagogy places Qur'an teaching and learning at the centre, supported by four interacting domains. The Foundational Skills domain focuses on tajwid, hifz, qira'at, articulation, and literacy skills as foundational capacities for the accurate reading and understanding of the Qur'an. Curriculum and Sustainability affirms the role of integration into institutions, policy and promotion of lifelong learning to ensure Qur'an pedagogy is relevant and adaptable to different educational contexts. The Technology Integration domain acknowledges the continuing rise of digital learning, mobile devices, gamification and artificial intelligence, that enhance access and engagement in Qur'an learning. Finally, Pedagogical Philosophy situates Qur'an pedagogy, within maqasid based pedagogy, values related to spirituality, moral development, and holistic development. As a result, teaching the Qur'an is about more than developing technical skills and instead prioritizes ethical and spiritual character. Together, these four domains form a comprehensive and flexible system that links tradition and innovation, providing educators, researchers and policy makers a clear model of how Qur'an pedagogy practice could evolve in the face of current challenges, while continuing to maintain the authority of the tradition.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The bibliometric study suggests that the past few years have witnessed increased research attention to Al-Quran teaching and learning as signaled by the patterns of growth in publications. The study identified important scientific journals, research area fields, the most cited publications, and scientific institutions that have contributed significantly to building knowledge and practice in Al-Quran teaching and learning. However, simple publication rates can be a misleading measure of the quality or impact of research output for a field. Therefore, it is

important to critically read and assess the content and impact of research articles in all academic fields.

The bibliometric analysis of Al-Quran teaching and learning has improved the current understanding of and processes in this field. This study applied bibliometric methods to identify the major topics, authors, and publications about teaching and learning Al-Quran. It also evaluated and assessed the impact and influence of research in this subject area. The findings of this study indicate a growing academic interest in this area of research. Advancement in this field is expected to continue with time.

The study has also noted important research papers and research fields related to the teaching and learning of Al-Quran with, therefore, easy access to this material being crucial for researchers and practitioners to remain current with research development and identify needs for additional research. Furthermore, the study provides a list of many highly cited publications that significantly contribute to the advancement of knowledge and practice in Al-Quran teaching and learning.

In addition, the study assesses the research output of Al-Qur'an teaching and learning related institutes and is helpful for the identification of institutes that have made significant contributions to research in this area. This is important for politicians, funders, and academia to see what institutes are maximising their output and optimising their resources and funding arrangements.

This bibliometric study has given an indication of research trends, influential journals, thematic areas, highly cited articles, and institutions that have contributed to the field. Accordingly, these outcomes can indicate possible directions for future research, policy development, and practice, to enhance the progress of Al-Quran teaching and learning.

A key limitation of the study is its reliance on a limited number of databases (specifically Scopus and WoS), and it is possible that not all of the articles published on Al-Quran teaching and learning are included in these databases. Therefore, future research could explore the convergence of Al-Quran teaching and learning by conducting a similar analysis from a larger number of databases, as well as employing more bibliometric methods such as SciMAT, BibExcel and CiteSpace to gain a more comprehensive view of the research domain.

The use of bibliometric methods is a limitation of the study, as, although bibliometric methods are capable of mapping patterns and trends, they may not

adequately represent the qualitative nuances of Qur'anic pedagogy, embedded in precedent and practice. Future directions in research could take a mixed methods approach by pairing bibliometrics with content or thematic analysis of works of significance, and would allow access to deeper investigations into pedagogical values, spiritual dimensions, and lived practices of Qur'an teaching practices and learning experiences.

The contribution of the research is not confined to the bibliometric mapping of the phenomenon but also in centering Qur'an-focused pedagogy, or engagement with the Quran as a unique research phenomenon. The latter signifies a difference from the typical, conventional bibliometric analysis, and offers new insights for scholars and practitioners.

In practical terms, this study also provides recommendations to specific stakeholders. For new researchers, the bibliometric mapping identifies useful journals like "Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi" and "Religions," as well as active academic networks that become useful entry points for collaborative work. For policymakers, findings highlight prominent institutes, like Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, that may potentially serve as partners for funding and research. For curriculum developers, the trends in keywords / thematic clusters (e.g., religious education, Islamic education, tajwid, hifz) indicate opportunities for better aligning academic research with classroom implementation, for example in moving towards more digital Qur'an learning, AI, gamification, etc. These recommendations exhibited in targeted areas for each stakeholder also enhance the practical value of this study towards a variety of audiences. Although sustainability and curriculum were mentioned as possible research areas, the evidence is suggestive at this stage, and the findings should be viewed as tentative findings with implications for future research, not an answer. This study offers guidance to educators and curriculum developers by integrating bibliometric evidence with practice. The conclusion for tajwid and hifz findings is that authors favoured digital and gamified methodologies; for tadabbur findings, authors advocated reflective approaches to pedagogy; and for institutional productivity, authors highlighted potential models of curriculum development. These connections provide certainty in the study's contribution, which is when bibliometric evidence can produce real change for enacting pedagogical improvement in the pedagogy of the Qur'an.

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