
The Global Research Trend on Islamic Character in Quality Education: A Bibliometric Analysis from 2000 to 2025

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of Islamic Character holds a central position in the global effort to achieve Quality Education (SDG 4) amidst the challenges of globalization and digital disruption. Previous studies are often fragmented, leaving a gap in comprehensive quantitative understanding and global thematic mapping. This research aims to provide a thorough portrait of global research on Islamic Character within Quality Education from 2000 to 2025 by mapping publication dynamics, collaboration networks, and thematic clusters. The methodology employed is bibliometric analysis, utilizing the Dimensions database, the PRISMA framework, and VOSviewer software, which yielded a final sample of 11,092 articles. The results indicate a high level of research urgency (total 24,721 citations, peaking in 2023) and a strong resonance as an inter-SDG research nexus. The thematic visualization identifies two dense poles of debate: the Humanistic-Social Crisis Pole (focused on COVID and resilience) and the Technical-Systemic Solution Pole (focused on model and technology). Temporal analysis reveals a rapid shift in focus from Critical Reflection (2020–2022) toward Systemic Intervention (since 2023). Furthermore, a highly integrated collaboration network was discovered. This study concludes that the research field is rapidly moving from crisis response to the development of structured solutions, demanding a balance between humanistic ethics rooted in religious values and the effective utilization of technology to foster holistic human development.

Keywords: Islamic Character, Quality Education, Bibliometrics Analysis, Global Research Trends, SDG4

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INTRODUCTION

Character development, both at the national and international levels, has emerged as a key priority in the field of education (Firdaus, 2025; Hamid & others, 2025; Mayasari & others, 2023). This trend has resulted from the rapid pace of globalization, social changes, and technological advancements that have fundamentally transformed societal lifestyles (Mohamed & others, 2020; Setiyadi, 2012; Sumiharsono, 2023). Core values such as integrity, discipline, responsibility, and tolerance are embedded in character education, which aims to equip the younger generation to confront the complex challenges and moral dilemmas presented by the digital age (Alfarisy, 2025; Miftahuddin, 2024; Uyun & others, 2025). Consequently, in Indonesia and other countries, character education has become a national movement involving collaboration among various

stakeholders, such as schools, families, and communities (Ghamrawi & others, 2025; Mayasari & others, 2023; M. Umar, 2024). The issue of character education has become increasingly urgent, especially with the growing influence of global culture (Bahiyah, 2025; M. Huda, 2024; Munawir, 2024; Wahyuni et al., 2022). In this context, character education serves as a moral foundation for fostering a competitive generation on the global stage (Suhardin, 2025; Wisono & Kkhazin, 2022). Failures in implementing character education not only reflect individual shortcomings but also signal weaknesses within the educational system, which has yet to successfully integrate universal values through policies, curricula, and teaching methods (Jakandar, 2025; Wahyuni et al., 2022).

On a global scale, research into Islamic character has seen an increase in the number of studies in recent years, with a particular focus on countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Middle East. (Alhamuddin, 2025; Miasta, 2025; Wahyuni et al., 2022). Bibliometric analysis of publications from traditional Islamic institutions, such as pesantren, has revealed a significant rise in the topic of Islamic character between 2014 and 2024 (Ghamrawi & others, 2025; Pamuji et al., 2024). The primary focus of this research is on fundamental Islamic values such as honesty (*ṣidq*), integrity (*amanah*), justice, and virtue (*iḥsān*), which are examined through the lenses of developmental psychology, educational sociology, and pedagogy. (Pamuji et al., 2024; Sitanggang, 2025; Syed & Coates, 2022). Countries with Muslim majorities tend to prioritize the preservation of traditional morals, while nations with Muslim minorities are more focused on the challenges and application of Islamic character within multicultural societies. (Ramadhani, 2024; Sumiharsono, 2023; Wahyuni et al., 2022). These differences highlight the importance of Islamic character in achieving the goal of Quality Education (SDG 4), which encompasses ethical and spiritual dimensions. (Ni'mah et al., 2023; Nurazizah, 2025; Ludo Waltman et al., 2010).

Although research on Islamic Character Education has increased, recent literature continues to show gaps in methodology and thematic exploration at the global level (Pamuji et al., 2024; Rohendi, 2010). One major gap is the lack of comprehensive bibliometric mapping (Nurani et al., 2022; Page & others, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2022). Many studies are still confined to a single country or institution, thus hindering a more complete understanding of global research dynamics (Ahmad & others, 2024; Miasta, 2025; U. Umar, 2024). As a result, the understanding of international researcher collaboration, key thematic clusters, and the evolution of emerging issues remains limited (Mayasari & others, 2023; Pamuji et al., 2024; Sumiharsono, 2023). Some meta-syntheses and scientometric studies focus primarily on Islamic Religious Education in general, without emphasizing Islamic character in the context of Quality Education (Amalita et al., 2024; Bahiyah, 2025; Mayasari & others, 2023). These limitations hinder efforts to incorporate Islamic values into global discussions on character education in a more measurable and structured manner (Gymnastiar et al., 2023; Rahman & Huda, 2025).

This study contributes new insights by specifically and systematically mapping global research trends related to Islamic character. (Firdaus, 2025; Pamuji et al., 2024; L Waltman et al., 2010). Unlike previous studies, which have tended to be descriptive and limited to a single country (M. B. Huda, 2024; Mayasari & others, 2023; Ramadhani, 2024; Reyes & Arturo, 2015) This research employs bibliometric analysis using international databases spanning from 2000 to 2025. The study offers in-depth quantitative visualizations related to international collaboration networks, key thematic dynamics, and the identification of emerging research gaps and opportunities. It is expected that the findings of this research will serve as a credible intellectual guide and provide an empirical foundation for academics and policymakers in designing Quality Education curricula based on Islamic character values that align with global developments.

METHOD

This research makes a new contribution by mapping specific and measurable global research trends related to Islamic character. (Ghamrawi & others, 2025; Mayasari & others, 2023; Pamuji et al., 2024). This combined approach is crucial for mapping publication trends while also delving into the meaning behind the intellectual narratives contained in the data. (Hasan, 2009; Miasta, 2025). A thorough examination of thematic clusters and abstracts was conducted to understand the dynamics and practices of Islamic character in the global literature. (Ramadhani, 2024; Suhardin, 2025; Wahyuni et al., 2022). The interpretation of the analytical results follows qualitative standards, providing a comprehensive understanding of Islamic character within the framework of Quality Education. (Du et al., 2017; L Waltman et al., 2010).

The research methodology systematically employs the PRISMA framework (Liberati et al., 2009; Page & others, 2021), ensuring transparency and reliability in the literature selection process, a critical stage in bibliometric studies (Liberati et al., 2009; Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2021). The PRISMA process guides the identification of relevant publications through to the final selection according to inclusion and exclusion criteria (Ahmad & others, 2024; Nurazizah, 2025). The PRISMA flow diagram documents the volume of articles identified, screened, rejected, and ultimately included in the synthesis (Liberati et al., 2009; Page & others, 2021). The focus of this study is on articles discussing Islamic character, Islamic character education, or character based on Islamic values. Inclusion criteria include English or Indonesian language documents containing complete bibliographic data relevant to the theme of Islamic character education. The second subject analyzed is the metadata of authors, affiliations, and institutions publishing the scholarly work, categorized according to the PRISMA systematic review standards (Liberati et al., 2009; Page & others, 2021).

The publication data underlying this bibliometric analysis were electronically extracted from the Dimensions database on October 10, 2025. To ensure the extraction and

literature selection process was systematic and transparent, we applied the PRISMA Flow Diagram (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses). This flow diagram, presented in Figure 1, is an international standard instrument that guides researchers through each stage of data screening: from identification and filtering to the final inclusion of articles. The use of the validated PRISMA framework, previously applied by other researchers, effectively ensures the internal validity of the study, minimizes potential selection bias, and strengthens the overall reliability of the dataset.

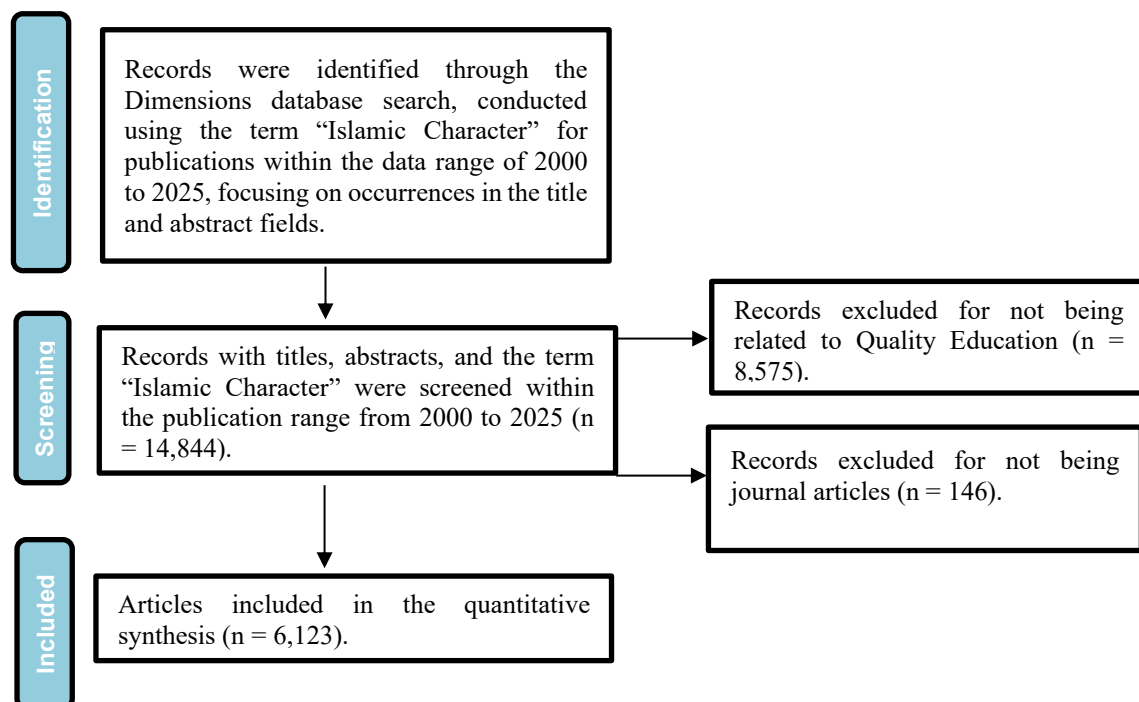


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

Based on the PRISMA flow diagram in this study, the data identification process began with a systematic search for publications on the topic of Islamic Character in the Dimensions database, covering the period from 2000 to 2025, specifically focusing on titles and abstracts. This initial search yielded 14,844 records suitable for further analysis. Subsequently, a screening process was conducted using exclusion criteria, which removed 8,575 records that were not relevant to the theme of Quality Education, as well as 146 records that were disqualified for not being scholarly articles. As a result, only articles that met both the substantive and formal requirements remained at this stage. After completing the entire selection process, a total of 6,123 articles fulfilled all criteria and were included in the quantitative synthesis. These stages demonstrate that the study applied rigorous and transparent selection standards, ensuring that only

relevant and high-quality literature formed the basis of the analysis, thereby providing a valid and accountable overview of global research trends on Islamic Character.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The bibliometric analysis conducted in this study reveals that research trends on *Islamic Character* have experienced significant growth over the past two decades, particularly between 2000 and 2025. Through an identification and selection process based on the PRISMA approach, a total of 14,844 scientific documents were initially identified. After a rigorous screening process, 6,123 articles were found to meet all criteria of relevance, quality, and research format.

These findings indicate that issues related to character education grounded in Islamic values have gained increasing attention within the international academic community. A diverse range of studies has explored the theme of *Islamic Character* from multiple perspectives, methodological approaches, and national contexts. The data also suggest that a stringent selection process plays a crucial role in maintaining the quality of the literature synthesis, ensuring that the results accurately reflect the dynamics and developmental trajectory of global research on Islamic character in a scientific and measurable manner.

The preliminary results further demonstrate a substantial increase in global scholarly publications concerning *Islamic Character* over the last two decades. Through a systematic identification process in the Dimensions database and strict application of PRISMA-based selection criteria, a total of 14,844 relevant initial documents were identified within the 2000–2025 period. Subsequently, after applying screening criteria related to document quality and type, only 6,123 articles met all the requirements to be included in the quantitative synthesis. These findings suggest that research on Islamic character has not only grown in volume but has also become more methodologically rigorous and substantively focused, reflecting a maturation of the field in both depth and academic quality.

1. Number of Publications

The search conducted for the period 2000–2025 resulted in a total of 6,123 scientific journal articles. Furthermore, the annual distribution of publications on Islamic Character within the field of Quality Education is presented in Figure 2.

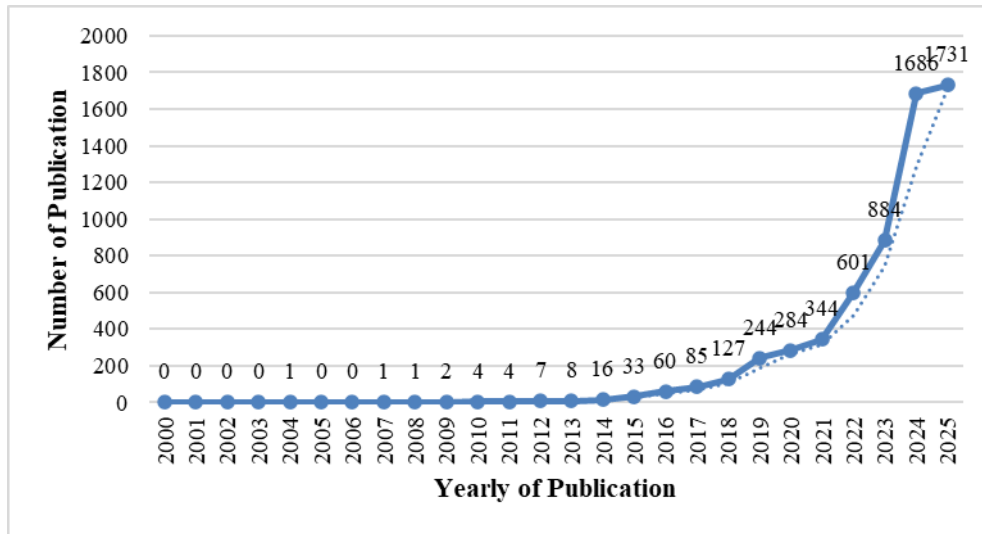


Figure 2. The annual number of publications addressing the topic of *Islamic Character* within the field of *Quality Education*.

The analysis of the global publication growth on *Islamic Character* from 2000 to 2025 reveals a gradual evolution of research, followed by an exponential acceleration in recent years. During the first decade (2000–2009), research in this field remained highly sporadic and minimal, with the number of indexed publications per year never exceeding four, and even dropping to zero in several early years (2000–2003 and 2006). A gradual turning point began in 2010 with four publications, increasing to 16 in 2014, and showing a notable leap to 33 in 2015 and 60 in 2016. However, the explosive growth that established this topic as a global research focus became evident from 2018 onwards. Publications surged from 127 in 2018 to 244 in 2019. The most dramatic increase occurred after 2020: from 344 publications in 2021, the volume nearly doubled to 601 in 2022, and continued to climb to 884 in 2023. At its peak, global research output experienced a dramatic surge, reaching 1,686 publications in 2024, with projections indicating stabilization at approximately 1,731 publications in 2025. This massive growth underscores that research on *Islamic Character* within the context of *Quality Education* has reached a critical mass and is now widely recognized as a relevant and urgent area within the post-2020 global academic discourse.

2. Number of Citations

The total number of citations related to the topic of *Islamic Character* within the field of *Quality Education* from 2000 to 2025 amounts to 44,080. The annual citation distribution is presented in Figure 3.

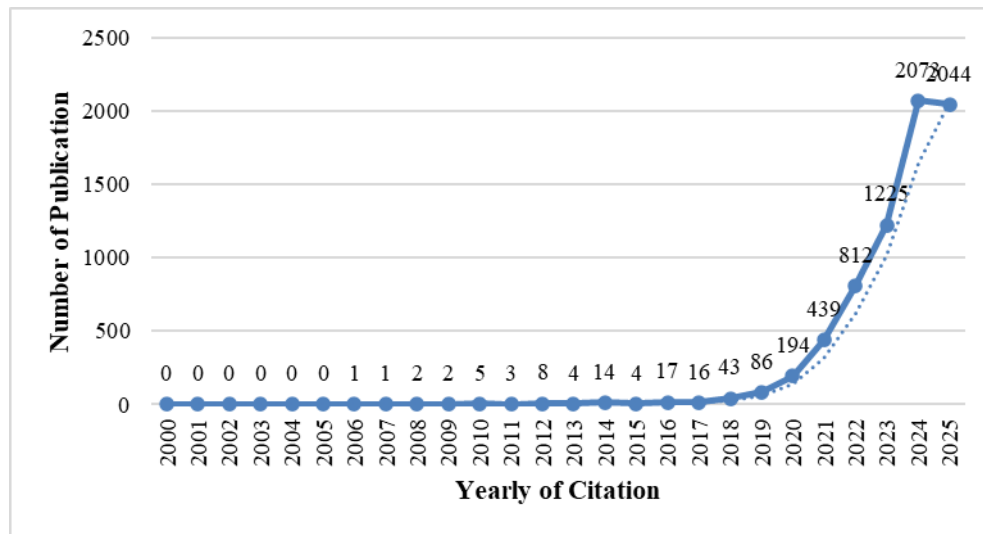


Figure 3. Number of citations on the topic of Islamic Character in the field of Quality Education per year

Based on the data in Figure 3, which visualizes global publication trends on *Islamic Character* in *Quality Education* from 2000 to 2025, a significant growth pattern can be observed. During the early period, from 2000 to 2016, research activity was highly limited, with fewer than 17 publications per year. This reflects that, at the time, the issue of Islamic character had not yet emerged as a primary agenda within the global educational discourse. A turning point began to take shape with a gradual acceleration, starting from 43 publications in 2018, followed by a sharp surge to 194 in 2019. The growth subsequently took on an exponential trajectory from 2020 onwards. The number of publications rose dramatically—reaching 439 in 2020, 812 in 2021, and surpassing the one-thousand mark in 2022 with 1,225 articles. The peak occurred in 2024 with 2,071 publications, followed by a projected stabilization in 2025 with 2,044 publications. This massive growth pattern demonstrates that research on *Islamic Character* has now reached a critical mass and gained remarkable momentum within the international academic community. It signifies strong global recognition of the urgency to integrate Islamic ethical and spiritual values as crucial elements in advancing *Quality Education*, especially amid the growing complexity of contemporary educational challenges.

3. Research Fields

Based on research field classifications, publications on the topic of Islamic Character within Quality Education can be categorized accordingly. The distribution of publications across the five largest research fields is presented in Figure 4.

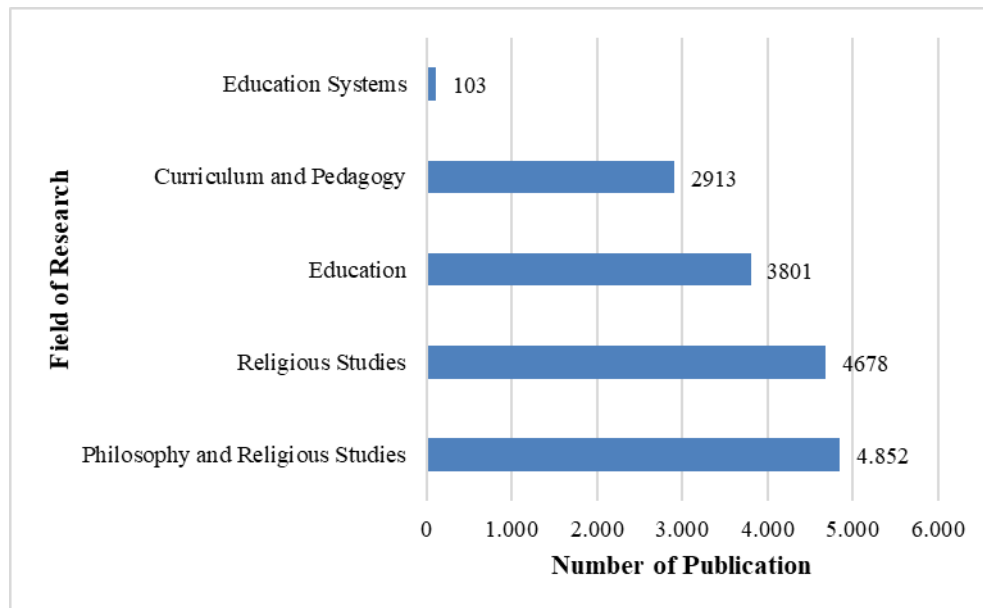


Figure 4: Number of Publications on the Topic of Islamic Character in Quality Education by Research Field

An analysis of scholarly contributions on *Islamic Character*, grouped by research field, reveals a strong dominance of the Humanities and Educational Sciences. The category of Philosophy and Religious Studies ranks highest, with nearly 5,000 publications, followed closely by Religious Studies, which also shows a significant volume (exceeding 4,500 publications). This dual dominance underscores that discussions on Islamic character are deeply rooted in philosophical ethics and religious values, reflecting that the topic is approached as a value-based construct requiring profound theological reflection.

Furthermore, the fields of Education and Curriculum and Pedagogy make substantial contributions, with approximately 4,000 and 3,000 publications, respectively. This highlights that the internalization of Islamic character is viewed as a core responsibility in curriculum development and effective pedagogical practice. Meanwhile, Education Systems records the lowest volume of publications among the top five categories.

Overall, these data illustrate that research on *Islamic Character* occupies a critical intersection between Humanities, Ethics, and Education, ensuring that character-based interventions are grounded in strong philosophical foundations before being implemented at a systemic level.

4. Journal

Based on journal data, publications on the topic of Islamic Character within Quality Education can be categorized accordingly. Furthermore, the number of publications by journal (top five) is presented in Figure 5.

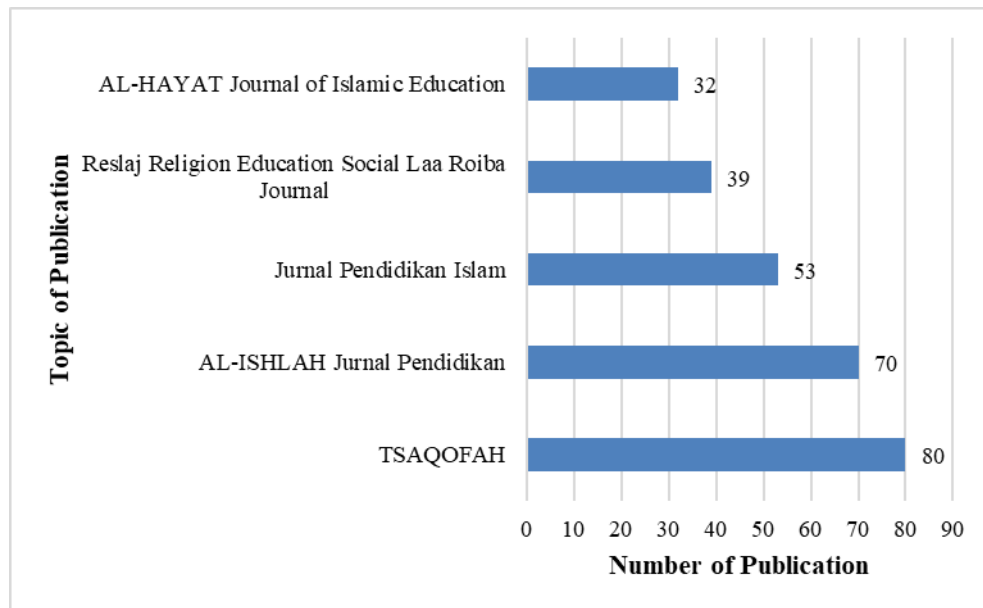


Figure 5. Number of publications on the topic of Islamic Character in Quality Education in a journal.

The analysis of publication distribution by the most productive journals indicates a high concentration of knowledge within specialist venues in Islamic Education Studies. TSAQOFAH Journal ranks first with a total of 80 articles, reaffirming its role as a *key opinion leader* and the main platform for in-depth analytical discussions on Islamic Character. This dominance is closely followed by AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan, which has published 70 articles, showing that both journals serve as intellectual nuclei shaping research trends in this field. Jurnal Pendidikan Islam also makes a significant contribution with 53 articles, establishing these three as the primary sources of scholarly reference. Meanwhile, Reslaj: Religion Education Social Laa Roiba Journal and AL-HAYAT: Journal of Islamic Education maintain stable volumes with 39 and 32 publications, respectively. This strong concentration of data suggests that research on *Islamic Character* is largely driven by academic communities focused on Islamic and pedagogical studies, highlighting potential opportunities to expand the dissemination of findings to multidisciplinary journals and broader *Quality Education* platforms at the global level.

5. Researcher

Based on researchers, publications can be categorized accordingly. Furthermore, the number of publications by the researcher (top 5) is presented in Figure 6.

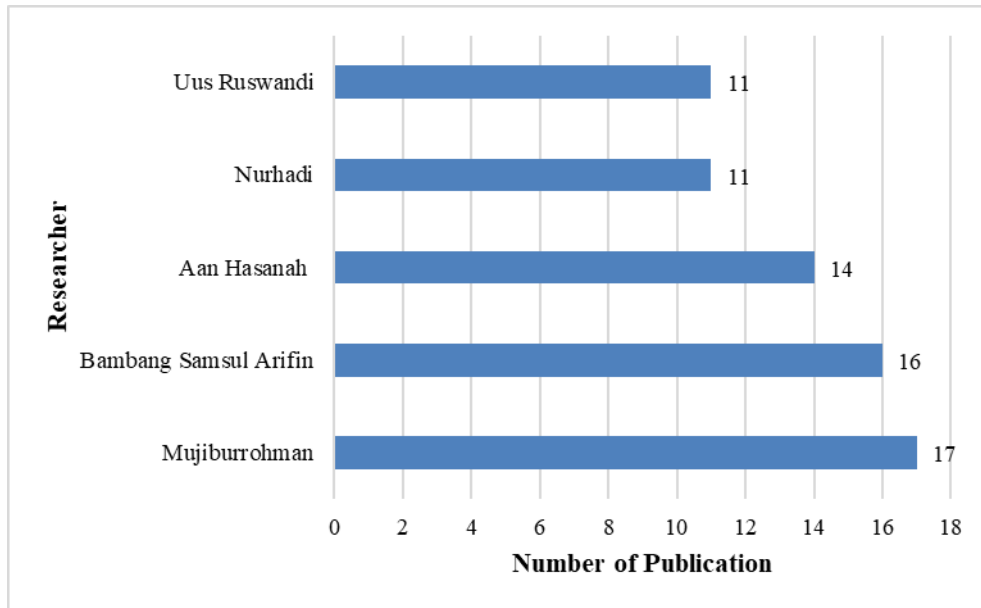


Figure 6: Number of Publications on the Topic of Islamic Character in Quality Education by Researchers

The analysis of researcher productivity reveals the presence of a core group of authors who dominate and shape the discourse on Islamic Character research during the study period. Researcher Mujiburrohman occupies the top position as the most productive contributor with a total of 17 publications, indicating his central role as a key opinion leader or main node within the collaboration network in this field. This position is closely followed by Bambang Samsul Arifin with 16 publications, confirming the existence of two writers who consistently focus on issues related to Islamic character. Next, Aan Hasanah ranks third with 14 publications. Interestingly, the two researchers in the following positions, Uus Ruswandi and Nurhadi, recorded identical publication volumes, each with 11 publications. The concentration of publications among these five authors demonstrates that research on *Islamic Character*, which demands a deep understanding of Islamic values and pedagogy, is dominated by a core team of researchers with specific expertise. Collectively, this group serves as an important *intellectual bridge*, connecting various sub-themes and ensuring both the depth and continuity of research within this value-rich domain of *Quality Education*.

6. Network visualization of co-occurrence

VOSviewer provides a network visualization map. The subsequent network visualization for the co-occurrence of the term "Islamic Character" is presented in Figure 7.

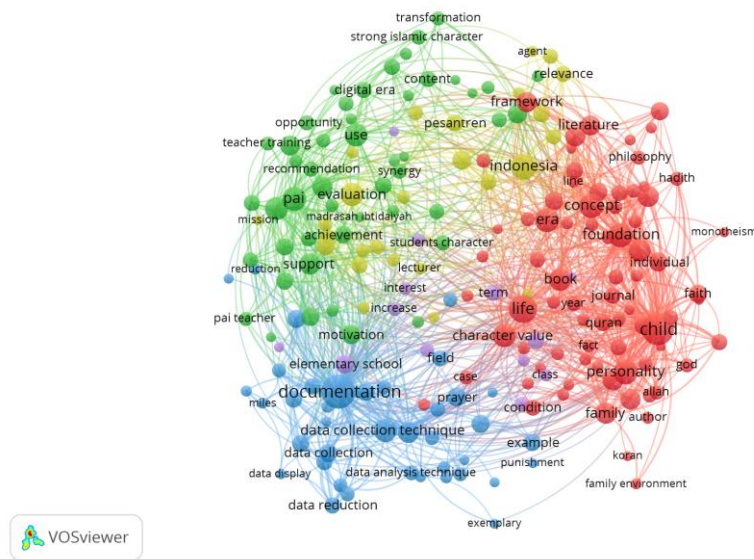


Figure 7: Network visualization on the topic of Islamic Character in Quality Education

Based on the network visualization generated through the VOSviewer application, it is evident that research on Islamic Character forms several closely related topic clusters. This graphic illustrates the distribution of keywords grouped into three different colors, indicating the presence of central themes dominating the research discourse. The red cluster is predominantly characterized by terms such as "child," "concept," "personality," and "family environment," signaling a significant focus on the aspects of child character development, conceptual foundations, and the family environment in Islamic character education. The green cluster includes terms like "evaluation," "motivation," "achievement," and "pesantren," reflecting themes of educational management, evaluation, and institutional contexts specific to Islamic education, such as pesantren (Islamic boarding schools). Meanwhile, the blue cluster consists of words such as "documentation," "data collection technique," "data reduction," and "data analysis technique," highlighting the attention given to research methodologies and analytical approaches in this study.

Overall, this network map indicates a strong interconnection between character studies, research methodologies, and the institutional context of Islamic education. It suggests that global research on Islamic Character not only emphasizes the conceptual and practical aspects of character development but also places significant importance on methodological issues and educational governance to produce sound and comprehensive studies.

7. Overlay visualization of co-occurrence

VOSviewer provides an overlay visualization map. The subsequent overlay visualization for the co-occurrence of the term "Islamic Character" is presented in Figure 8.

OSviewer displays a network visualization for co-authorship. The subsequent co-authorship network visualization for 1,295 authors is presented in Figure 10.

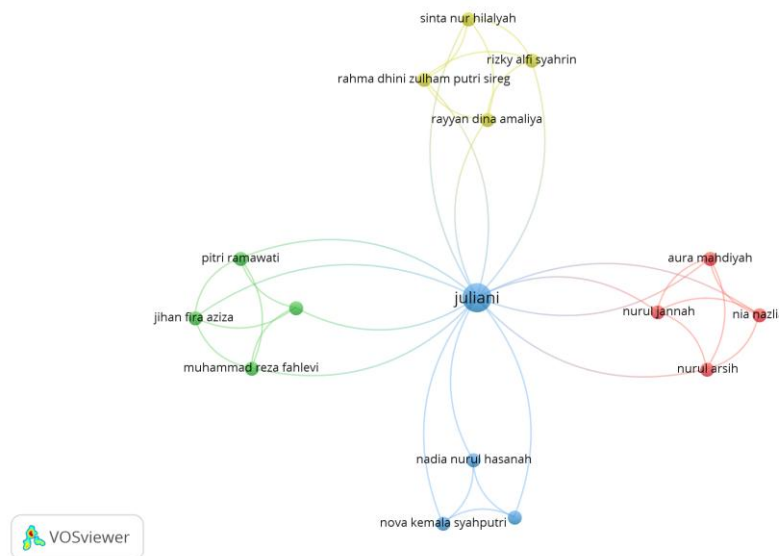


Figure 10: Co-authorship network visualization on the topic of Islamic Character in Quality Education

The author network visualization from VOSviewer, as shown in the figure above, reveals a collaboration pattern centered around a core author, Juliani. Juliani serves as the main node, connecting four distinct author clusters, each represented by a unique color. The green cluster shows collaboration between Juliani, Pitri Ramawati, Jihan Fio Aziza, and Muhammad Reza Fahlevi, indicating a synergy and intensive interaction in their joint publications. The yellow cluster consists of authors such as Sinta Nur Hilalyah, Rizky Alfisyahrin, Rahma Dhini Zulham Putri Sireg, and Rayyan Dina Amaliya, who form a solid network with each other, all directly connected through Juliani at the center. The blue cluster involves Nadia Nurul Hasanah and Nova Kemala Syahputri, who are also directly connected with Juliani, though the interactions within this cluster are less dense compared to the others. On the other hand, the red cluster includes Aura Mahdiyah, Nurul Innah, Nia Azila, and Nurul Arisih; these authors show a fairly strong internal connection and are also linked to Juliani as the central node.

This overall visualization pattern suggests that Juliani plays a central role in establishing collaborative networks among authors, while also highlighting the importance of cross-group collaboration in developing a more comprehensive and multidisciplinary body of research on Islamic Character.

10. Overlay visualization of co-authorship

VOSviewer also provides an overlay visualization map. The subsequent overlay visualization for co-authorship in the context of Islamic Character is presented in Figure 11.

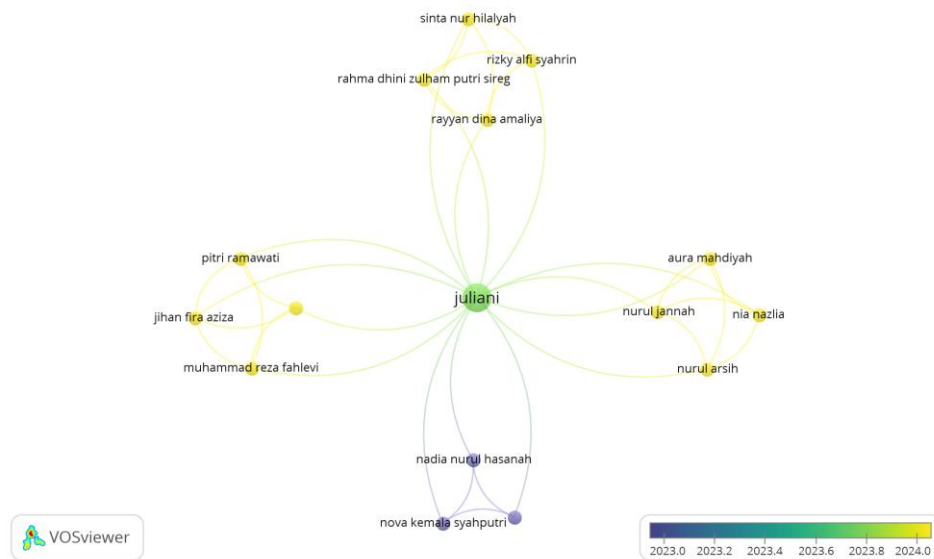


Figure 11: Overlay visualization for co-authorship on the topic of Islamic Character in Quality Education

Based on the overlay visualization for co-authorship generated by VOSviewer in Figure 11, it is evident that the author collaboration network in Islamic Character studies forms a highly centralized structure with Juliani as the central node. Several color clusters represent different collaborative groups, with each cluster reflecting the intensity of time and involvement based on the years of publication. The yellow path is dominated by collaboration between Juliani and authors such as Sinta Nur Hilalyah, Rizky Alfisyahrin, Rahma Dhini Zulham Putri Sireg, and Rayyan Dina Amaliya, depicting increasingly active interactions in the period from 2023 to 2024. The green cluster connects Juliani with Pitri Ramawati, Jihan Fio Aziza, and Muhammad Reza Fahlevi, where their publication activity appears more evenly distributed over a similar period. Meanwhile, the blue cluster is more limited, with collaboration between Juliani, Nadia Nurul Hasanah, and Nova Kemala Syahputri, which has become more prominent in recent years. On the other hand, the red cluster shows intense interaction between Juliani, Aura Mahdiyah, Nurul Innah, Nia Azila, and Nurul Arisih, also concentrated in the period from 2023 to 2024.

The color distribution in this overlay reflects the temporal dynamics of collaboration and illustrates the shifting themes in Islamic Character research towards a more collaborative and interdisciplinary approach in Quality Education. This map clearly shows that research in the field of Islamic Character is not only building networks of cooperation among authors but also reflecting emerging topical trends over time, with increasing publication and collaboration intensity from 2023 to 2024. The network structure highlights that current research on Islamic

Character is influenced by strong multidisciplinary cooperation patterns, reinforcing the relevance and innovation of themes within the discourse of character education in the modern era.

11. Density visualization of co-occurrence

VOSviewer can also present a density visualization map. The subsequent density visualization for co-authorship in the context of Islamic Character is shown in Figure 12.

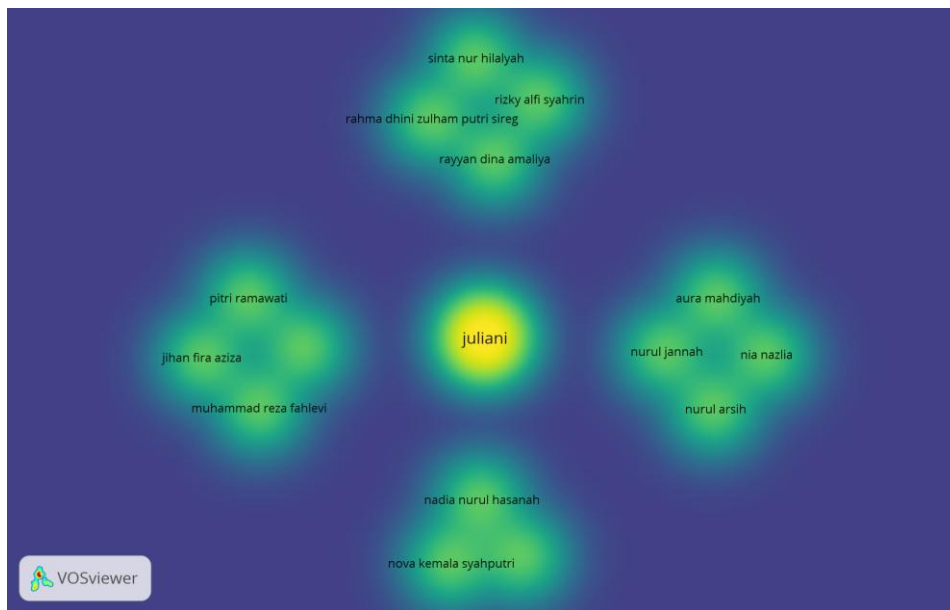


Figure 12: Density visualization for co-authorship on the topic of Islamic Character in Quality Education

Based on the density visualization from VOSviewer in the figure above, the author collaboration network on the topic of Islamic Character clearly exhibits a pattern of centrality. The brightest colors are concentrated around the figure of Juliani, the central node, indicating a dominant role and influence in joint publications and research. Surrounding Juliani are four other author groups: Sinta Nur Hilalyah, Rizky Alfisyahrin, Rahma Dhini Zulham Putri Sireg, Rayyan Dina Amaliya; Pitri Ramawati, Jihan Fio Aziza, Muhammad Reza Fahlevi; Aura Mahdiyah, Nurul Jannah, Nia Azila, Nurul Arisih; and Nadia Nurul Hasanah, Nova Kemala Syahputri—all forming their respective clusters directly connected to the center of the network. Each cluster shows a lower intensity of collaboration compared to the central area, but still indicates complementary research partnerships.

This map illustrates the central role of a key author in driving the collaboration network, while also showing the synergy between research groups in developing Islamic Character research within Islamic educational contexts in a collaborative and dynamic manner.

CONCLUSION

Overall, a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of 11,092 articles from 2000 to 2025 reveals that the global discourse on Islamic Character within the context of Quality Education has undergone a dramatic intellectual evolution. The urgency of this issue is strongly evident, supported by a high citation volume (24,721) and its role as a nexus connecting several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Health and Well-being, as well as Peace and Justice. The research structure is dominated by a thematic dualism, operating between the Humanistic-Social Crisis Pole, which diagnoses ethical vulnerabilities post-crisis, and the Technical-Systemic Solutions Pole, which focuses on the development of models and interventions based on technology.

Temporally, a clear shift in focus is observed, from the Critical Reflection phase (2020–2022) to the Systemic Intervention phase (since 2023), indicating that the field has moved beyond a crisis reaction phase. With the discovery of a highly integrated collaboration network, this study concludes that Islamic Character research is now centered on developing structured solutions, requiring a balance between the reinforcement of spiritual ethics and the effective use of technology to foster individuals with strong character and global competitiveness.

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