ACADEMIA: Jurnal Inovasi Riset Akademik
Vol. 6, No. 4, September-November 2026
e-ISSN : 2807-1808 | p-ISSN : 2807-2294
Online Journal System https : //jurnalp4i.com/index.php/academia

BULLYING IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH TRENDS AND EMERGING THEMES

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Diterima: *02/11/2026*; Direvisi: *09/11/2026*; Diterbitkan: *13/11/2026*

ABSTRAK

Perundungan (*bullying*) merupakan salah satu permasalahan penting dalam dunia pendidikan karena berdampak terhadap kesejahteraan psikologis, hubungan sosial, pengalaman akademik, dan perkembangan peserta didik secara keseluruhan. Dalam konteks Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI), kajian mengenai perundungan juga berkaitan erat dengan pendidikan moral, pembentukan karakter, tanggung jawab, empati, dan perilaku etis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perkembangan penelitian mengenai perundungan dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam serta mengidentifikasi struktur tematik dan tema-tema yang mulai berkembang dalam literatur ilmiah. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan bibliometrik dengan memanfaatkan data yang diperoleh dari basis data Scopus. Sebanyak 155 publikasi awal diseleksi berdasarkan kriteria bahasa dan periode publikasi sehingga diperoleh 102 dokumen sebagai dataset akhir. Analisis dilakukan menggunakan Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny dan VOSviewer melalui analisis tren publikasi, pola kepengarangan, sitasi, kemunculan bersama kata kunci, pemetaan tematik, visualisasi perkembangan waktu, dan kepadatan tema. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan publikasi berlangsung secara fluktuatif, dengan peningkatan yang cukup signifikan setelah tahun 2021 dan mencapai puncaknya pada tahun 2023 sebanyak 18 publikasi. Pemetaan tematik mengidentifikasi *bullying*, *school*, dan *human* sebagai tema sentral, sedangkan pendidikan karakter, pendidikan moral, dan kekerasan di sekolah menunjukkan relevansi yang kuat dalam struktur penelitian. Analisis temporal memperlihatkan meningkatnya perhatian terhadap pencegahan perundungan, pendidikan agama, pendidikan Islam, inklusi, dan sekolah berasrama. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian mengenai perundungan dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam berkembang dari pembahasan umum tentang kekerasan dan moralitas menuju kajian yang lebih kontekstual dan berorientasi pada pencegahan. Namun, temuan bibliometrik ini menggambarkan pola perkembangan penelitian dan tema-tema kajian, bukan membuktikan efektivitas Pendidikan Agama Islam sebagai intervensi pencegahan perundungan.

Kata kunci: perundungan, Pendidikan Agama Islam, analisis bibliometrik, pendidikan karakter, pencegahan perundungan.

ABSTRACT

Bullying is an important educational concern because of its consequences for students' psychological well-being, social relationships, academic experiences, and overall development. Within Islamic Religious Education (IRE), bullying research is also connected to moral education, character formation, responsibility, empathy, and ethical behavior. This study aims to analyze the development of research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education and identify the thematic structure and emerging themes within the scholarly literature. A bibliometric approach was employed using data retrieved from the Scopus database. An initial set of 155 publications was screened according to language and publication-period criteria, resulting in 102 documents for the final dataset. The analysis was conducted using

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Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny and VOSviewer through publication trends, authorship patterns, citation analysis, keyword co-occurrence, thematic mapping, temporal overlay, and density visualization. The findings show that research output developed unevenly, with a marked increase after 2021 and a peak of 18 publications in 2023. The thematic map identifies *bullying*, *school*, and *human* as central themes, while *character education*, *moral education*, and *school violence* demonstrate strong relevance within the research structure. The temporal analysis indicates increasing attention to *bullying prevention*, *religious education*, *Islamic education*, *inclusion*, and *boarding school*. Overall, research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education has developed from broader concerns with violence and morality toward more contextualized and prevention-oriented research. However, the bibliometric evidence describes research patterns and thematic development rather than demonstrating the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education as a bullying-prevention intervention.
Keywords: bullying, Islamic Religious Education, bibliometric analysis, character education, bullying prevention

INTRODUCTION

Bullying remains a significant concern in educational settings because it affects students' social relationships, psychological well-being, academic experiences, and broader development. Contemporary research treats bullying as a multidimensional phenomenon involving repeated aggressive behavior, power imbalance, victimization, perpetration, and bystander roles. Recent meta-analytic evidence demonstrates that bullying continues to occur at substantial levels among children and adolescents internationally and is associated with adverse psychological outcomes, including emotional distress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, and other mental-health difficulties (Ariani et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024). Bullying is also closely related to educational outcomes, as systematic evidence indicates that victimization can negatively influence cognitive-motivational processes and academic achievement (Samara et al., 2021). These consequences make bullying not only a behavioral issue but also an educational concern requiring attention from schools, teachers, families, and wider communities. Research has consequently expanded from conventional face-to-face bullying to cyberbullying, which represents a related but analytically distinguishable form of aggression facilitated by digital technologies.

The development of bullying research has produced a substantial body of literature addressing its predictors, consequences, and prevention. Meta-analytic studies have identified individual, interpersonal, and school-related factors associated with bullying and victimization, including social and conduct problems, school-related characteristics, and age (Kljakovic & Hunt, 2016). Moral processes are particularly relevant because bullying involves decisions concerning harm, responsibility, empathy, and the treatment of others. Research on moral disengagement has shown its relationship with bullying behavior and victimization, while longitudinal and meta-analytic evidence further demonstrates the relevance of moral disengagement to different bullying roles (Gini et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2017). Similarly, empathy has received considerable attention because it is related to bullying involvement and bystander defending, making socio-emotional development an important dimension of bullying research (Deng et al., 2021; van Noorden et al., 2015). These findings are consistent with research emphasizing social-emotional learning and school climate, where students' perceptions of social-emotional learning practices and school environments have been associated with bullying and victimization experiences (Nickerson et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2017).

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The educational environment is therefore an important context for understanding bullying. Evidence from systematic reviews and meta-analyses indicates that school-based interventions can reduce bullying perpetration and victimization, although the effectiveness of interventions varies according to program characteristics and implementation conditions (Gaffney et al., 2021; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011) . Research also highlights the importance of teachers in identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying, with teacher self-efficacy, attitudes, knowledge, and intervention practices representing relevant components of school-based prevention (Dawes et al., 2024; Fischer et al., 2021; van Aalst et al., 2024) . Character education provides another relevant perspective because it emphasizes the development of moral and social qualities that are potentially connected to empathy, responsibility, respect, and prosocial behavior. A large meta-analysis of character education programs found measurable positive effects across character education interventions, reinforcing the relevance of character development within broader educational research (Berkowitz et al., 2023) . Within religious education, character formation is also an important area of scholarly discussion. Research on religious education teachers has specifically examined the relationship between religious education and character education, demonstrating the relevance of moral and character formation to the educational role of religious learning (Metcalfe & Moulin-Stozek, 2021).

These developments are particularly relevant to Islamic Religious Education (IRE), in which educational processes are concerned not only with the acquisition of religious knowledge but also with the formation of moral dispositions, interpersonal conduct, responsibility, and ethical behavior. The relevance of this perspective is reflected in the present bibliometric dataset, where moral education, character education, religious education, Islamic education, school violence, cyberbullying, students, and bullying prevention emerge as interconnected themes. The temporal analysis further indicates that research has increasingly moved toward more context-specific themes, including bullying prevention and religious education, while the thematic map positions bullying, school, and human-related concepts as central components of the research structure. Such patterns suggest that the relationship between bullying and Islamic Religious Education represents an intersection between behavioral research and the educational objectives of moral and character development. However, the existence of these keywords does not necessarily demonstrate the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education as a bullying-prevention intervention; rather, it indicates how these concepts have been represented and connected within the scholarly literature.

Despite the substantial development of bullying research, the literature remains distributed across different conceptual areas, including school violence, cyberbullying, moral disengagement, character education, social-emotional learning, prevention, and religious or values-based education. A previous bibliometric study of bullying and cyberbullying research demonstrated the value of mapping the intellectual and thematic development of this field over time (Cretu & Morandau, 2022). Nevertheless, a focused bibliometric examination of bullying specifically in relation to Islamic Religious Education can provide a more contextualized understanding of how this intersection has developed, which themes have become central, which topics remain specialized or peripheral, and which themes are emerging in recent research. Therefore, this study aims to analyze research trends and emerging themes related to bullying in Islamic Religious Education through a bibliometric analysis of Scopus-indexed literature. Using publication trends, authorship patterns, keyword co-occurrence, thematic mapping, temporal overlay, and density visualization, the study seeks to identify the intellectual and thematic structure of the field and to clarify how bullying research has evolved in relation

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to Islamic Religious Education. This approach is expected to provide a systematic overview of the development of the literature and identify directions for further scholarly investigation.

METHOD

This study employed a bibliometric approach to examine the development, research trends, and emerging themes related to bullying in Islamic Religious Education (IRE). Bibliometric analysis was selected because it provides a systematic approach to examining publication characteristics, research productivity, citation patterns, collaboration networks, and thematic structures within a particular research field. Through this approach, the study aimed to identify the development of scholarly attention to bullying in Islamic educational contexts, determine the relationships among major research topics, and explore the evolution of research themes over time. The research procedure consisted of three main stages: literature identification, document screening and selection, and bibliometric analysis. These stages were designed to ensure that the retrieved literature was systematically selected and analyzed in accordance with the research objectives. The overall research procedure is presented in Figure 1.

The first stage involved identifying relevant literature through a search of the Scopus database. Scopus was selected as the primary data source because it provides structured bibliographic information, including publication titles, abstracts, author keywords, publication years, authorship, institutional affiliations, and citation records. The search strategy was developed by combining keywords related to bullying, Islamic identity, and educational contexts using Boolean operators. The search was conducted within the TITLE-ABS-KEY field, which covers publication titles, abstracts, and author keywords. To obtain a broader representation of relevant publications, the search incorporated variations of bullying-related terminology, including bullying, cyberbullying, school bullying, peer victimization, peer aggression, peer violence, and school violence. These terms were combined with keywords representing Islamic contexts, such as Islam and Muslim, as well as educational terms, including education, school, student, teacher, learning, teaching, and pedagogy. The Boolean search query used in this study was formulated as follows:

TITLE-ABS-KEY (bully* OR cyberbully* OR "school bullying" OR "peer victimization" OR "peer aggression" OR "peer violence" OR "school violence") AND (Islam* OR Muslim*) AND (education OR school* OR student* OR teacher* OR learning OR teaching OR pedagogy).

The use of Boolean operators and truncation symbols was intended to capture different expressions and variations of the main research concepts. The initial search retrieved 155 publication records from the Scopus database. These records constituted the preliminary dataset for the subsequent screening and selection process.

The second stage involved screening and selecting publications based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The selection process was conducted to ensure that the documents included in the analysis were consistent with the research scope and bibliometric objectives. Three principal inclusion criteria were applied. First, publications had to be indexed in the Scopus database to maintain consistency in the bibliographic source and data structure. Second, only publications written in English were included to ensure language consistency during keyword identification, bibliographic examination, and thematic interpretation. Third, publications had to have been published no later than 2025, establishing the coverage period of the study from 1996 to 2025. Accordingly, records published after 2025, publications written

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in languages other than English, and documents not indexed in Scopus were excluded from the selection.

Regarding publication types, this study did not restrict the dataset exclusively to journal articles. Instead, all eligible document types available in the retrieved Scopus records were retained to provide a broader representation of scholarly contributions to the research topic. These document types included research articles, review papers, books, book chapters, and conference papers. Therefore, the selection process considered database coverage, publication language, and publication period as the principal screening criteria, rather than limiting the analysis to a particular publication format. Following the application of these criteria, 102 documents were retained as the final bibliometric dataset from the initial 155 records. The selected publications covered the period from 1996 to 2025 and formed the basis for the subsequent descriptive, citation, and network analyses.

The third stage involved processing and analyzing the selected publications using Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny and VOSviewer. Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny was employed to examine the main characteristics of the bibliographic dataset and generate descriptive bibliometric indicators. The analysis included the annual distribution and growth of publications, document types, authorship productivity, institutional affiliations, contributing countries, and citation performance. Citation analysis was conducted to identify the most globally cited and locally cited documents and to examine the scholarly visibility of publications within the selected dataset. The analysis also considered corresponding authors' countries and patterns of single-country and multiple-country publications to describe the geographical distribution and international collaboration of the research field.

Furthermore, network and thematic analyses were conducted to investigate the intellectual and conceptual relationships among the selected publications. Co-authorship analysis was used to examine patterns of collaboration among researchers, while bibliographic coupling was employed to explore intellectual relationships among publications based on shared references. Citation analysis was also used to identify citation patterns and scholarly influence represented in the dataset. Keyword co-occurrence analysis was performed to identify frequently connected research concepts and examine the conceptual structure of the literature. The results were further examined through thematic mapping and thematic evolution to identify the relevance, development, and changes in research themes over time.

VOSviewer was used to construct and visualize bibliometric networks, particularly keyword co-occurrence relationships. Three principal visualization techniques were employed: network visualization, overlay visualization, and density visualization. Network visualization was used to identify clusters of interconnected keywords and their relationships within the research field. Overlay visualization was employed to examine the temporal distribution of keywords and identify topics that have received increasing attention in more recent publications. Meanwhile, density visualization was used to identify the concentration of frequently occurring keywords and distinguish central research topics from relatively peripheral themes. The thematic map was also interpreted based on centrality and density to classify research themes into motor themes, niche themes, basic themes, and emerging or declining themes.

The final stage of the analysis involved interpreting the bibliometric indicators and visualizations in relation to the research objectives. The descriptive findings were used to explain publication development, authorship patterns, institutional contributions, geographical distribution, and citation performance. Meanwhile, network and thematic findings were interpreted to identify dominant research topics, conceptual relationships, and emerging

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research directions concerning bullying in Islamic Religious Education. The interpretation focused on describing the development and structure of scholarly literature rather than evaluating the effectiveness of particular educational interventions. Through this analytical procedure, the study provides a comprehensive overview of research trends, thematic development, and the knowledge structure of bullying in Islamic Religious Education based on the 102 selected Scopus-indexed publications.

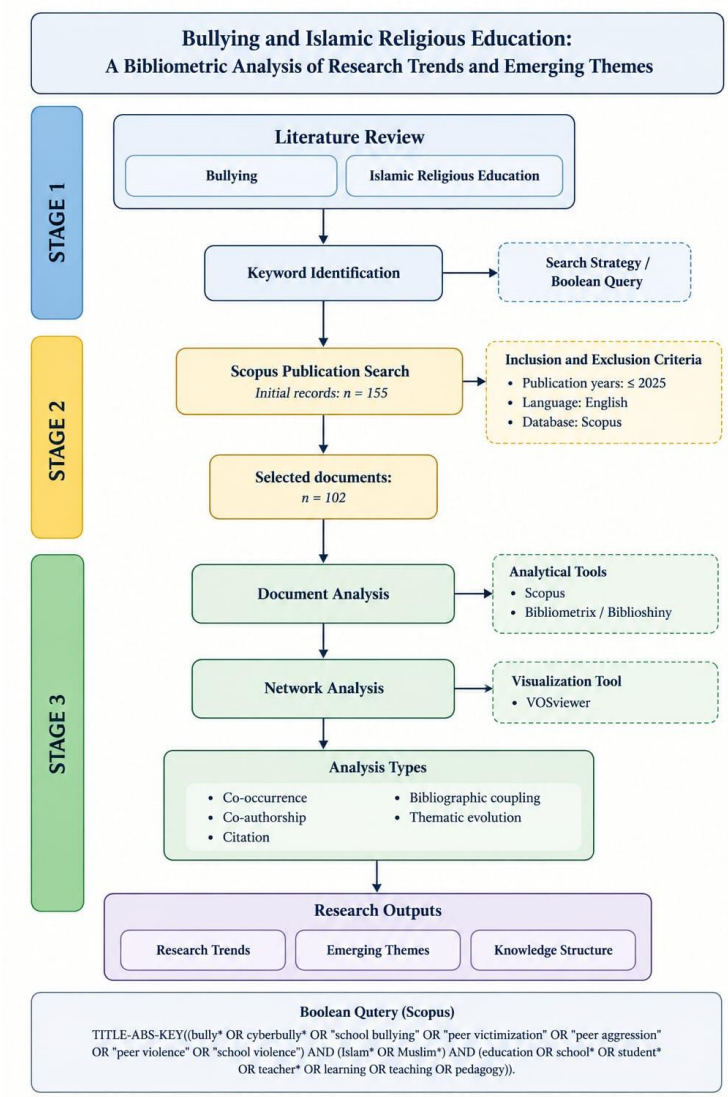


Figure 1. Research Flow of the Bibliometric Analysis
Source: Authors' own elaboration (2026).

Figure 1 illustrates the methodological framework and sequential procedures applied in this study. The research began with a literature review and keyword identification, followed by the development of a Boolean search strategy to retrieve relevant publications from Scopus. The initial search produced 155 records, which were subsequently screened using the established inclusion and exclusion criteria, resulting in 102 selected documents. These documents were then analyzed using Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny and VOSviewer through descriptive bibliometric analysis, citation analysis, collaboration analysis, and keyword-based network visualization. The final analytical outputs were used to identify publication trends,

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e-ISSN : 2807-1808 | p-ISSN : 2807-2294
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emerging themes, and the knowledge structure of research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Table 1. Main Information

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	1996:2025
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	87
Documents	102
Annual Growth Rate %	9.79
Document Average Age	7.49
Average citations per doc	11.98
References	5514
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	281
Author's Keywords (DE)	301
AUTHORS	
Authors	284
Authors of single-authored docs	34
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	36
Co-Authors per Doc	2.9
International co-authorships %	21.57
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	68
book	6
book chapter	19
conference paper	5
review	4

The bibliometric dataset comprises 102 documents published between 1996 and 2025, retrieved from 87 sources, including journals, books, and other publication outlets. The literature shows an annual growth rate of 9.79%, indicating a gradual expansion of scholarly attention to bullying within the context of Islamic Religious Education. On average, the documents are 7.49 years old and receive 11.98 citations per document, with a total of 5,514 references. In terms of document content, the dataset contains 281 Keywords Plus and 301 author-provided keywords, suggesting a relatively broad range of concepts and thematic expressions associated with bullying and Islamic Religious Education.

The authorship profile indicates participation from 284 authors, including 34 authors contributing to single-authored documents. Overall, 36 documents are single-authored, while the average number of co-authors per document is 2.90. International co-authorship accounts for 21.57% of the publications, indicating that a substantial proportion of the literature involves collaboration across national contexts. Regarding document types, articles constitute the largest category (68 documents), followed by book chapters (19), books (6), conference papers (5), and review papers (4). These distributions indicate that the literature on bullying in Islamic

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Religious Education is primarily disseminated through research articles, while other publication formats contribute to the broader development and dissemination of the field.

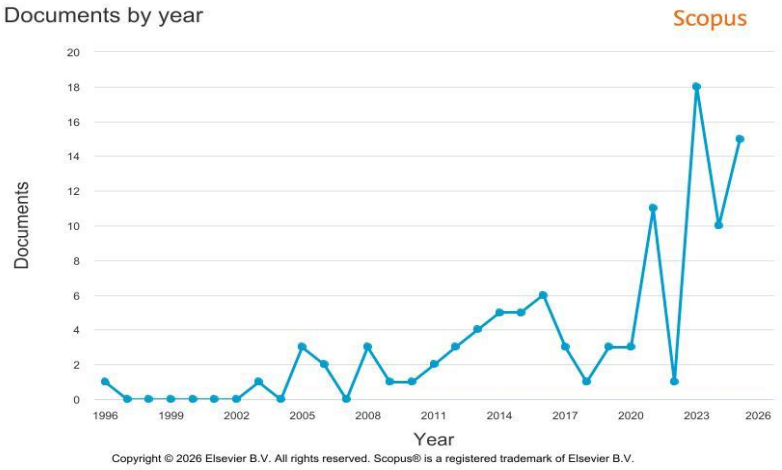


Figure 2. Documents by year

The annual distribution of publications shows that research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education has developed unevenly over the period 1996–2025, with relatively limited publication activity during the earlier years. The first document appeared in 1996, followed by several years with no recorded publications. Research activity began to increase gradually from 2005 onward, although fluctuations remained evident. From 2011 to 2016, the number of publications generally increased, reaching 6 documents in 2016. This was followed by a temporary decline between 2017 and 2018, before publication output returned to three documents in both 2019 and 2020.

A more substantial increase is visible from 2021 onward. Publications rose sharply to 11 documents in 2021, followed by a temporary decline to one document in 2022. The highest annual output was recorded in 2023, with 18 documents, representing the most productive year in the dataset. Publication activity subsequently decreased to 10 documents in 2024, before increasing again to 15 documents in 2025. Overall, the pattern indicates that scholarly attention to bullying in Islamic Religious Education has become considerably more prominent in the most recent years, particularly since 2021, despite noticeable year-to-year fluctuations.

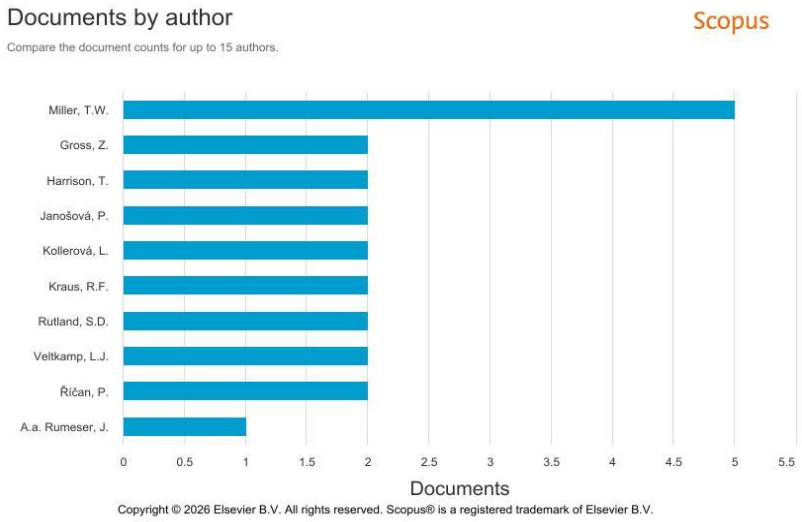


Figure 3. Documents by author

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Vol. 6, No. 4, September-November 2026
e-ISSN : 2807-1808 | p-ISSN : 2807-2294
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The distribution of documents by author indicates that publication output is concentrated among a small number of researchers. Miller, T.W. has the highest number of publications, with 5 documents, while Gross, Z.; Harrison, T.; Janošová, P.; Kollerová, L.; Kraus, R.F.; Rutland, S.D.; Veltkamp, L.J.; and Říčan, P. each contributed 2 documents. Meanwhile, A. a. Rumeser, J. appears with 1 document. This distribution suggests that, although multiple researchers have contributed to the topic, repeated publication by individual authors remains relatively limited.

Overall, the author-level distribution reflects a moderately dispersed authorship pattern, with no single author accounting for a dominant share of the publications. The relatively small number of documents attributed to most of the leading authors may indicate that research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education encompasses contributions from researchers with varied and potentially interdisciplinary research backgrounds. However, the figure represents document counts rather than author influence or research impact; therefore, publication frequency alone should not be interpreted as an indicator of scholarly prominence.

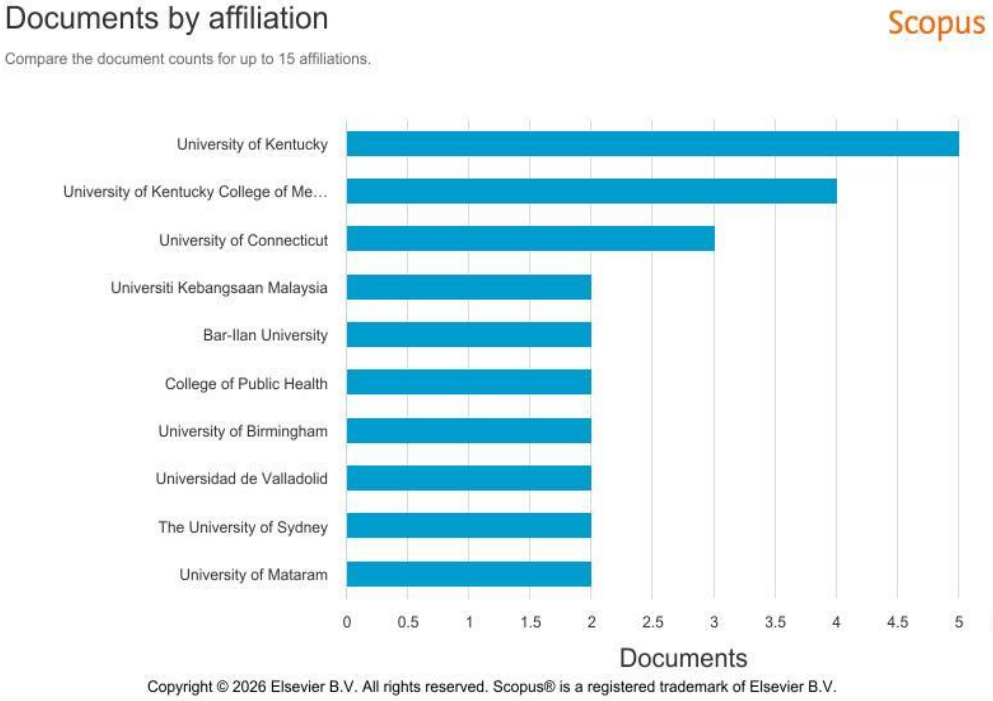


Figure 4. Documents by affiliation

The Scopus affiliation analysis shows that the University of Kentucky has the highest number of documents, with 5 publications, followed by the University of Kentucky College of Medicine with 4 publications and the University of Connecticut with 3 publications. Several other institutions, including Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bar-Ilan University, College of Public Health, University of Birmingham, Universidad de Valladolid, The University of Sydney, and University of Mataram, each contributed 2 publications.

Overall, the distribution indicates that publications are concentrated among a relatively small number of institutions, with the University of Kentucky and its affiliated College of Medicine accounting for the largest contributions in the dataset. The presence of institutions from the United States, Malaysia, Israel, the United Kingdom, Spain, Australia, and Indonesia also reflects a geographically diverse pattern of institutional contributions.

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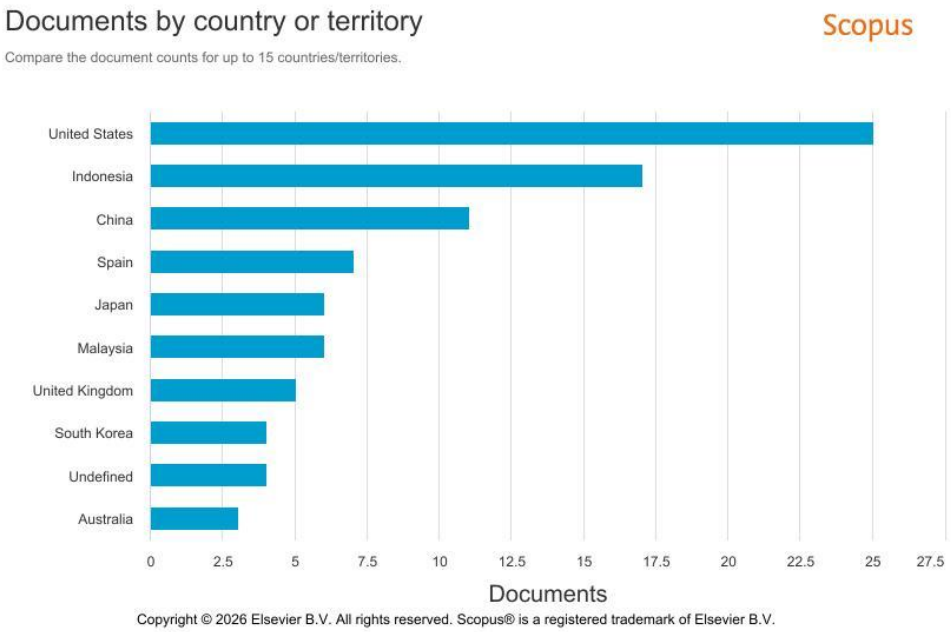


Figure 5. Documents by country or territory

The Scopus analysis of documents by country or territory shows that the United States has the highest number of publications, with 25 documents, followed by Indonesia with 17 documents and China with 11 documents. Other countries contributing to the dataset include Spain (7 documents), Japan and Malaysia (6 documents each), the United Kingdom (5 documents), South Korea and undefined affiliations (4 documents each), and Australia (3 documents).

The distribution indicates that the publications are geographically diverse, involving countries from North America, Asia, Europe, and Oceania. The United States accounts for the largest share of documents, while Indonesia represents the second-largest contributor. The presence of multiple countries with substantial publication counts suggests that research on the topic has involved international contributions across different.

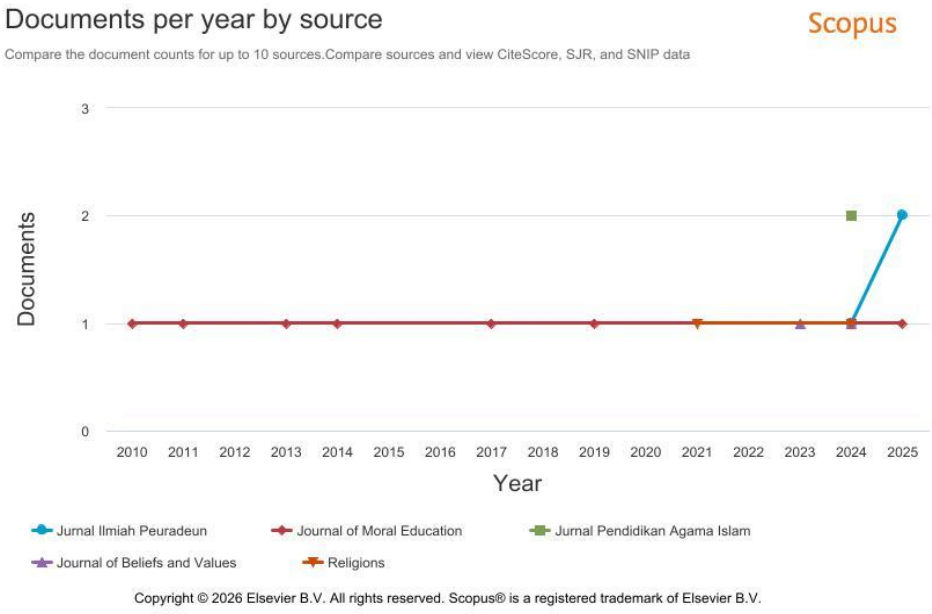


Figure 6. Documents per year by source

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The figure presents the annual distribution of documents indexed in Scopus according to their publication sources from 2010 to 2025. The *Journal of Moral Education* shows a consistent publication count of one document per year throughout the period, indicating a continuous presence in the dataset. Other sources appear only in specific years. *Religions* contributed one document in 2021, followed by the *Journal of Beliefs and Values* with one document in 2023 and the *Journal Pendidikan Agama Islam* with one document in 2024.

A notable increase can be observed in 2025 for the *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun*, which reached two documents, compared with one document in 2024. Overall, the figure indicates that the distribution of publications is relatively limited across the identified sources, with the *Journal of Moral Education* demonstrating the most consistent annual representation, while the other journals contribute documents sporadically during the observed period.

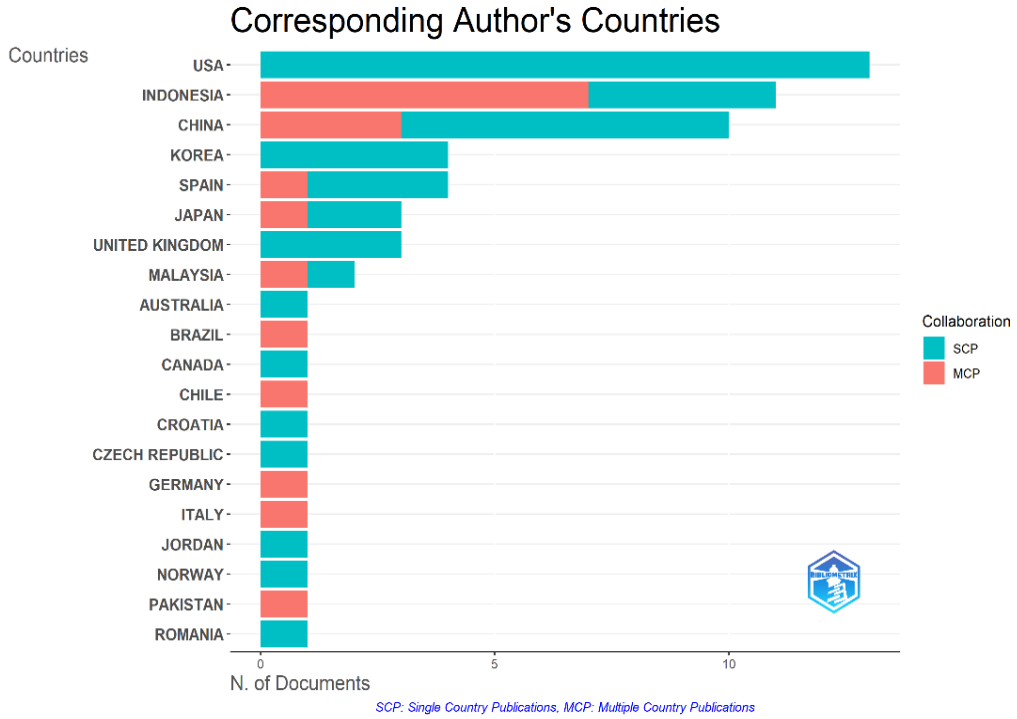


Figure 7. Corresponding author's Countries

The analysis of corresponding authors' countries shows that the United States (USA) has the largest number of corresponding-author documents, followed by Indonesia and China. Korea, Spain, and Japan also contribute a notable number of documents, while the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Norway, Pakistan, and Romania account for smaller numbers of publications. This distribution indicates that corresponding authors are geographically distributed across several regions, with the United States, Indonesia, and China representing the largest contributions.

The figure also distinguishes between Single-Country Publications (SCP) and Multiple-Country Publications (MCP). The United States is predominantly represented by SCP, whereas Indonesia and China show both SCP and MCP contributions, indicating participation in both domestic and international collaborative publications. Spain, Japan, and Malaysia likewise include a combination of SCP and MCP, while several countries, such as Australia, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Jordan, Norway, and Romania, are represented primarily through SCP. Overall, the visualization demonstrates variation in international collaboration patterns among the countries contributing corresponding authors.

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Table 2. Most Globally Cited Documents

Paper	Total Citations	TC per Year
OSHER D, 2016, REV RES EDUC	295	26.8
SANCASSIANI F, 2015, CLIN PRACT EPIDEMIOL MENT HEALTH	149	12.4
NOBORU T, 2021, PEDIATR INT	36	6
KIM H, 2015, ASIA PAC EDUC REV	35	2.9
FREEMAN GG, 2014, EARLY CHILD EDUC J	34	2.6
ARIF M, 2024, J ILM PEURADEUN	29	9.7
WAS CA, 2006, EDUC RES REV	27	1.3
HARRISON T, 2016, PASTORAL CARE EDUC	26	2.4
CHEURPRAKOBKIT S, 2005, EDUC RES	26	1.2
GU X, 2023, IEEE TRANS VISUAL COMPUT GRAPHICS	26	6.5

The table presents the ten most globally cited documents within the analyzed Scopus dataset, based on their total citation counts, citations per year, and normalized citation values. Osher et al. (2016) has the highest citation impact, with 295 total citations, followed by Sancassiani et al. (2015) with 149 citations. Other highly cited publications include Noboru et al. (2021) with 36 citations, Kim et al. (2015) with 35 citations, and Freeman et al. (2014) with 34 citations. The table also shows that publication age does not solely determine citation performance. For example, the relatively recent study by Arif et al. (2024) has received 29 citations, resulting in a relatively high 9.7 citations per year, despite being published more recently than most documents listed.

The Normalized TC indicator further illustrates differences in citation impact relative to expected citation patterns. Osher et al. (2016) records the highest normalized citation value (5.22), followed by Noboru et al. (2021) (4.95) and Gu et al. (2023) (4.37). In contrast, Harrison et al. (2016) has a normalized citation value of 0.46, despite having 26 total citations. Overall, the table demonstrates substantial variation in scholarly impact among the documents, with several publications achieving considerably higher citation rates and normalized citation values than others.

Table 3. Most Locally Cited Documents

Paper	Local Citations	Global Citations	LC/GC Ratio (%)
MILLER TW, 2005, J PRIM PREV	3	20	15
CHAN WYA, 2021, TEACH RELIG LIT TO COMBAT RELIG BULLYING: INSIGHTS FROM NORTH AM SECOND SCH	2	15	13.33333
FATHONI AM, 2024, J PENDIDIK AGAMA ISLAM	2	18	11.11111
ARIF M, 2024, J ILM PEURADEUN	2	29	6.896552
JACOBSON RB, 2010, J MORAL EDUC	2	13	15.38462
HUNT J, 2021, RELIGIONS	1	4	25
HARRISON T, 2016, PASTORAL CARE EDUC	1	26	3.846154
VON REININGHAUS GN, 2013, INTERDISCIPLINARIA	1	9	11.11111
MARSHALL JC, 2011, J MORAL EDUC	1	21	4.761905
OSHER D, 2016, REV RES EDUC	1	295	0.338983

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Vol. 6, No. 4, September-November 2026
e-ISSN : 2807-1808 | p-ISSN : 2807-2294
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The table presents the local and global citation patterns of ten selected publications, highlighting the extent to which each document has been cited within the analyzed research set compared with the broader global scholarly community. Osher et al. (2016) has the highest global citation count, with 295 citations, but only one local citation, resulting in a very low LC/GC ratio of 0.34%. Similarly, Harrison et al. (2016) has 26 global citations but only one local citation (3.85%). In contrast, Hunt et al. (2021) has the highest LC/GC ratio at 25%, indicating that one-quarter of its recorded global citations are represented by citations within the local dataset. Other publications with relatively higher LC/GC ratios include Jacobson et al. (2010) at 15.38% and Miller et al. (2005) at 15%.

The normalized citation indicators also demonstrate differences between local and global impact. Chan et al. (2021) records the highest normalized local citation value (7.33), while Osher et al. (2016) has the highest normalized global citation value (5.22). Arif et al. (2024) also shows a notable global citation performance, with 29 global citations and a normalized global citation value of 3.33, despite being published relatively recently. Overall, the table indicates that high global visibility does not necessarily correspond to high representation within the local citation network. The differences between local and global citation measures suggest that some publications have broader international scholarly influence, whereas others are more strongly represented within the specific research field or dataset examined.

co-occurrence analysis

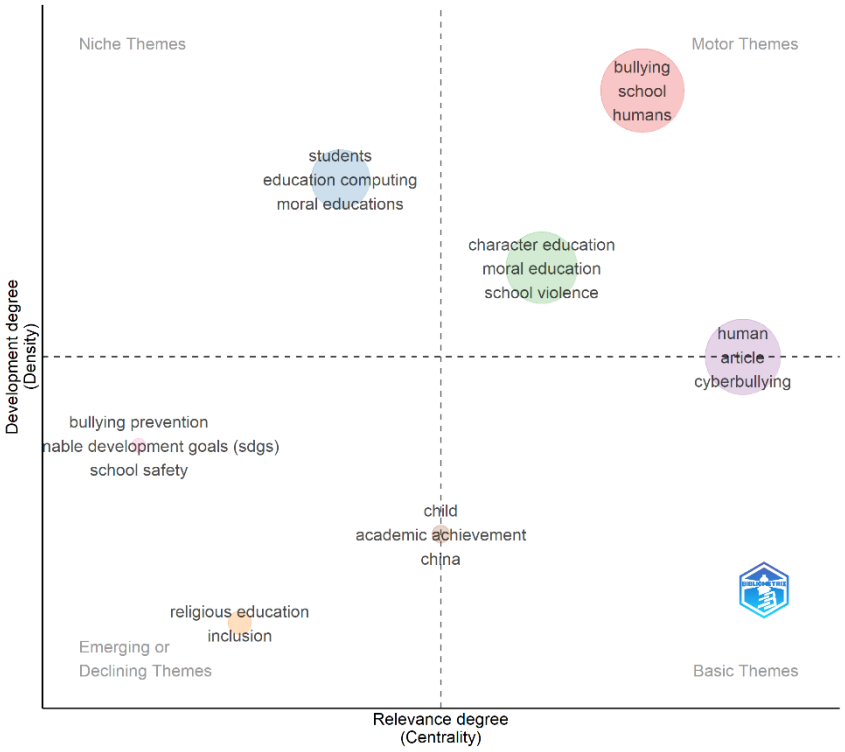


Figure 8. Thematic Map

The thematic map reveals four distinct thematic quadrants based on centrality (relevance degree) and density (development degree). The Motor Themes quadrant contains *bullying*, *school*, and *humans*, indicating themes that are both highly connected to the broader research field and relatively well developed. Another cluster comprising *character education*, *moral*

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education, and *school violence* also occupies the upper-right quadrant, reflecting themes with considerable relevance and development within the literature. In the Niche Themes quadrant, *students*, *education computing*, and *moral educations* show relatively high development but lower centrality, suggesting more specialized thematic areas with stronger internal development than connections to the overall research structure.

The Emerging or Declining Themes quadrant includes *bullying prevention*, *sustainable development goals (SDGs)*, *school safety*, *religious education*, and *inclusion*, which have relatively low centrality and density. Their position indicates comparatively limited integration and development within the thematic structure represented by the dataset. Meanwhile, the Basic Themes quadrant contains *human*, *article*, *cyberbullying*, as well as *child*, *academic achievement*, and *China*. These themes have relatively higher centrality but lower density, indicating that they are connected to the broader research field but are less internally developed. Overall, the thematic map demonstrates that the literature is organized around bullying and school-related issues, while educational, religious, preventive, and contextual themes occupy different positions according to their degree of relevance and development.

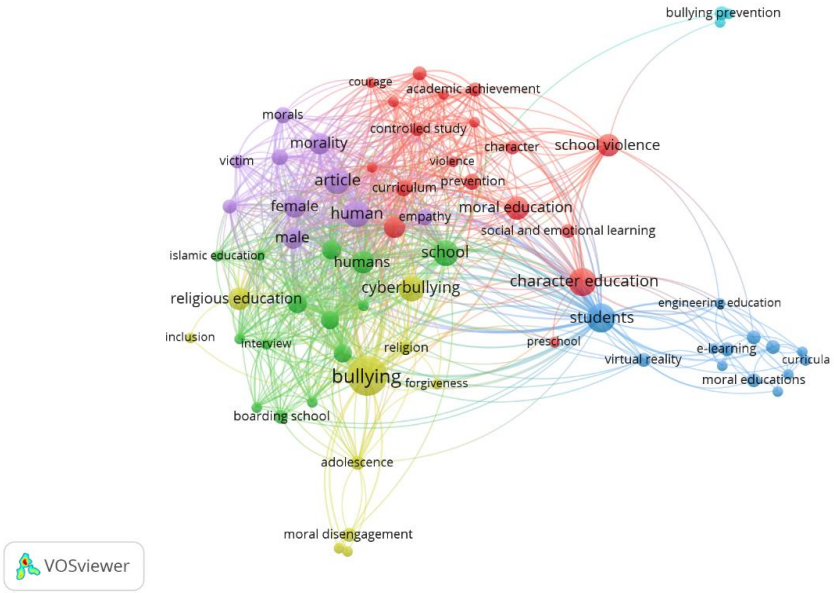


Figure 9. Network

The keyword co-occurrence network illustrates the conceptual structure of research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education through interconnected thematic clusters. The size of the nodes represents the relative frequency of keywords, while the connecting lines indicate co-occurrence relationships. The network is highly interconnected, with bullying, school, human/humans, students, religious education, character education, and moral education appearing as prominent nodes. Several thematic clusters can be identified. One cluster is strongly associated with *school violence, character education, moral education, violence, prevention,* and *social and emotional learning*, reflecting research connecting bullying with school-based violence and character development. Another cluster centers on *religious education, Islamic education, school, humans,* and *cyberbullying*, indicating the connection between bullying research and educational or religious contexts.

Other clusters extend the research into more specific dimensions. The cluster surrounding *bullying* is connected with *adolescence, forgiveness, religion,* and *moral disengagement*, suggesting attention to developmental and moral dimensions of bullying. A

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e-ISSN : 2807-1808 | p-ISSN : 2807-2294
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further cluster links *students* with *engineering education, e-learning, virtual reality,* and *curricula*, representing an educational-technology-oriented dimension. Meanwhile, keywords such as *victim, female, male, morality,* and *morals* indicate attention to victim characteristics and moral perspectives. Overall, the dense connections among the major keywords demonstrate that bullying research is not limited to the occurrence of bullying itself but intersects with school violence, moral and character education, religious education, student characteristics, prevention, and educational technology.

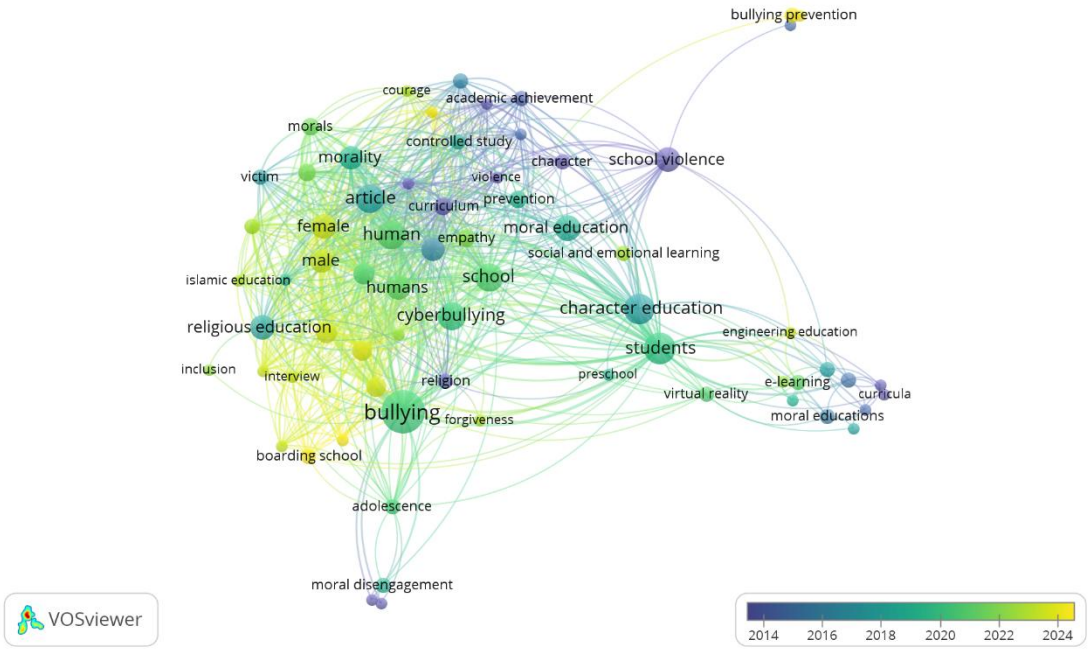


Figure 10. Overlay

The overlay visualization presents the temporal evolution of keyword usage in the literature, with colors ranging from blue/purple representing earlier research activity (approximately 2014–2017) to green and yellow representing more recent activity (approximately 2020–2024). Earlier themes include *school violence, academic achievement, character, victim,* and *morality*, which are predominantly represented by darker blue and purple tones. In contrast, terms such as *bullying, cyberbullying, religious education, Islamic education,* and *character education* appear mainly in the green range, indicating that these topics have become more prominent in the relatively recent period. The visualization also shows that *students* and *moral education* occupy intermediate-to-recent positions, reflecting their continued presence in the evolving research landscape.

More recent thematic activity is particularly visible in *bullying prevention*, which appears in a yellow tone corresponding to the latest period of the overlay (around 2024). Other relatively recent terms, including *female, male, religious education, inclusion,* and *boarding school*, also display greener-to-yellowish tones. This temporal distribution suggests a shift from earlier emphasis on general school violence, morality, and victim-related issues toward more context-specific themes involving bullying prevention, religious education, Islamic education, inclusion, and student-related contexts. The overlay therefore indicates a gradual diversification of research topics, with prevention-oriented and educational-context themes becoming more visible in the later period.

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Vol. 6, No. 4, September-November 2026
e-ISSN : 2807-1808 | p-ISSN : 2807-2294
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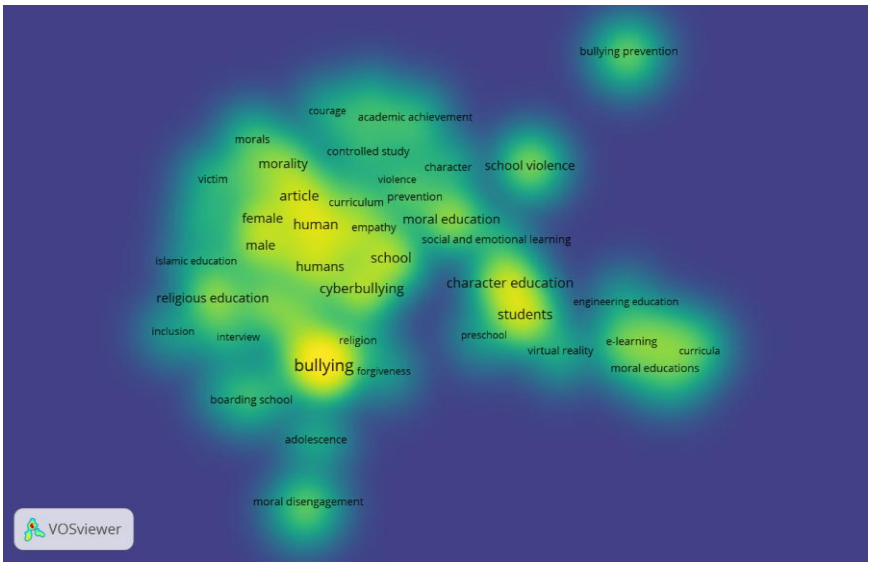


Figure 11. Density visualization

The density visualization illustrates the concentration of keyword activity within the research field, with yellow areas representing higher keyword density, green indicating moderate density, and blue representing relatively lower density. The strongest density is concentrated around bullying, which forms the most prominent hotspot in the lower-central area of the map. Other areas of relatively high density appear around human, article, female, male, school, cyberbullying, students, and character education, indicating that these keywords occur within highly interconnected regions of the literature. The concentration around *religious education* and *Islamic education* is also visible, although with comparatively lower density than the central *bullying* and *human/student* areas.

The map further shows several peripheral and less densely connected topics, including bullying prevention, school violence, moral disengagement, boarding school, inclusion, virtual reality, e-learning, and engineering education, which are surrounded by broader green-to-blue regions. This distribution indicates that the bibliometric landscape contains a dense core of research centered on bullying and its relationship with students, schools, human behavior, and educational contexts, while other themes occupy more peripheral positions. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, the presence of *religious education*, *Islamic education*, *religion*, *moral education*, and *character education* within the broader density structure demonstrates the connection between bullying research and religious, moral, and character-oriented educational perspectives.

Discussion

The bibliometric findings demonstrate that research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education has experienced considerable development, particularly in recent years. The analysis of 102 publications covering the period from 1996 to 2025 reveals an annual growth rate of 9.79%, with a notable increase in publication activity after 2021 and the highest number of publications recorded in 2023. This development indicates growing scholarly attention to bullying as an educational issue that intersects with moral development, character formation, and religious education. Nevertheless, the fluctuations in annual publication output suggest that the development of this research area has not been consistently linear. The predominance of journal articles (68 documents) also indicates that scholarly discussions are primarily

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Vol. 6, No. 4, September-November 2026
e-ISSN : 2807-1808 | p-ISSN : 2807-2294
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disseminated through journal publications, although books and book chapters continue to contribute to the conceptual development of the field. This pattern is consistent with the broader development of bullying research, which has increasingly attracted attention across educational disciplines and research contexts (Cretu & Morandau, 2022).

The geographical distribution reveals that the United States leads the publication output with 25 documents, followed by Indonesia with 17 documents and China with 11 documents. The dominance of the United States is particularly noteworthy because the research topic involves Islamic and Muslim-related contexts, while Indonesia is the country with the world's largest Muslim population. This difference suggests that the volume of scholarly publications cannot be explained solely by the demographic size of a religious community. Instead, it may also reflect differences in research infrastructure, international academic networks, publication capacity, and access to internationally indexed journals. Furthermore, research conducted in the United States may address Muslim communities, religious diversity, multicultural education, and the experiences of minority groups rather than exclusively examining Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, the higher publication output from the United States should not automatically be interpreted as greater research activity within Islamic educational settings. Indonesia's second-place position nevertheless demonstrates its substantial contribution to this research area, although there remains an opportunity to strengthen international collaboration and increase the visibility of Indonesian research. This interpretation is also supported by the relatively limited international co-authorship rate of 21.57%, suggesting that research collaboration across national boundaries has not yet become a dominant characteristic of this field.

The authorship and institutional findings further illustrate the distribution of scholarly contributions. Miller, T.W. emerges as the most productive author with five publications, while several other researchers contribute two publications each. This pattern indicates that research productivity is distributed across multiple scholars rather than concentrated in a single dominant author. At the institutional level, the University of Kentucky records the highest contribution with five documents, followed by the University of Kentucky College of Medicine with four documents and the University of Connecticut with three documents. The presence of institutions from different geographical regions indicates that research on bullying in Islamic and educational contexts has developed through contributions from various academic environments. However, the concentration of publications within a limited number of leading institutions suggests that opportunities remain for broader institutional participation and more sustained research collaboration.

The citation analysis provides another perspective on the intellectual development of the field. Osher et al. (2016) records the highest global citation count, with 295 citations, followed by Sancassiani et al. (2015) with 149 citations. These results indicate that influential publications within the dataset are not necessarily limited to studies explicitly discussing Islamic Religious Education but also include broader research addressing educational environments, student development, and related social issues. Meanwhile, the appearance of Arif et al. (2024) among the most globally cited publications, with 29 citations, demonstrates that relatively recent contributions can also achieve considerable scholarly visibility. The comparison between global and local citations further reveals that high international visibility does not necessarily correspond to strong influence within the specific research network examined. For example, Osher et al. (2016) has 295 global citations but only one local citation. This distinction suggests that the intellectual foundations of bullying research extend beyond

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publications specifically addressing religious education and draw upon broader educational and behavioral literature.

The thematic analysis demonstrates that bullying research is conceptually connected to several dimensions of educational practice and student development. The thematic map identifies bullying, school, and human-related concepts as central themes, while character education, moral education, and school violence also occupy important positions within the research structure. These relationships are reinforced by the keyword co-occurrence network, which illustrates connections among bullying, students, religious education, Islamic education, character education, and moral education. Such connections indicate that bullying is increasingly discussed not merely as an individual behavioral problem but also as an issue associated with the social and moral environment of educational institutions. The relationship between bullying and moral development is particularly relevant because bullying involves decisions about harming others, personal responsibility, empathy, and ethical behavior. Previous research has established associations between moral disengagement and bullying involvement (Gini et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2017), while meta-analytic evidence also highlights the importance of empathy in understanding students' responses to bullying, particularly bystander defending behavior (Deng et al., 2021). These findings provide a conceptual basis for understanding why moral and character-related themes are closely connected to bullying research.

Within this thematic structure, character education and moral education have particular relevance to Islamic Religious Education. Religious education is concerned not only with the transmission of religious knowledge but also with the development of ethical understanding, responsibility, and appropriate interpersonal behavior. Metcalfe and Moulin-Stozek (2021) highlight the relationship between religious education and character education through the perspectives of religious education teachers. Similarly, Berkowitz et al. (2023) demonstrate the broader educational significance of character education through their meta-analysis of character education programs. These studies provide a theoretical connection between the educational objectives of religious and character education and the moral dimensions identified in the bibliometric network. However, the presence of these themes in the same research network does not establish that Islamic Religious Education directly reduces bullying. Rather, it indicates that moral and character formation constitutes an important conceptual dimension through which bullying can be examined in Islamic educational contexts.

The temporal analysis further reveals changes in scholarly attention over time. Earlier research was more closely associated with school violence, academic achievement, victimization, character, and morality. In contrast, more recent publications increasingly feature bullying prevention, religious education, Islamic education, inclusion, and boarding school contexts. This development suggests a gradual movement from general discussions of bullying and its consequences toward more specific educational settings and prevention-oriented concerns. The increasing visibility of bullying prevention is particularly important because previous systematic reviews and meta-analyses have demonstrated that school-based interventions can reduce bullying perpetration and victimization, although their outcomes depend on program design and implementation (Gaffney et al., 2021; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). Consequently, the growing attention to prevention in the bibliometric dataset reflects the relevance of examining institutional responsibilities, educational practices, and contextual approaches to creating safer school environments.

The density visualization complements these findings by identifying bullying as the strongest concentration of research activity, followed by closely connected concepts such as

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human, school, students, cyberbullying, and character education. In contrast, religious education, Islamic education, boarding school, inclusion, and bullying prevention appear within less densely concentrated areas. This distribution indicates that although religious and Islamic educational perspectives are increasingly represented, they have not yet developed into research concentrations as strong as the broader bullying and school-related literature. The relatively peripheral position of these themes should not be interpreted as a lack of relevance. Instead, it points to an opportunity for further research that explicitly connects bullying prevention with Islamic educational principles, institutional practices, student interactions, and character development. The findings therefore suggest that the intersection between bullying research and Islamic Religious Education remains an area with considerable potential for further conceptual and empirical investigation.

Overall, the findings indicate that research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education is developing through the intersection of educational, behavioral, moral, and religious perspectives. Publication growth, international contributions, interconnected thematic clusters, and the emergence of prevention-oriented topics demonstrate an increasingly diversified research landscape. Nevertheless, the relatively limited density of Islamic and religious education themes, together with the modest level of international collaboration, indicates that this research area still requires stronger conceptual integration and empirical development. Future studies should move beyond identifying the relationship between religious education and moral formation by examining how specific Islamic Religious Education practices are implemented in preventing bullying, developing empathy, strengthening responsibility, and fostering inclusive school environments. Such investigations would help bridge the gap between the conceptual relationships identified through bibliometric analysis and evidence-based educational practices. Importantly, the present findings describe the development and structure of scholarly literature rather than establishing the causal contribution or effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education in preventing bullying.

CONCLUSION

This study provides a bibliometric overview of research on bullying in Islamic Religious Education (IRE) based on 102 publications indexed in Scopus from 1996 to 2025. The findings indicate that scholarly attention to this topic has increased, particularly since 2021, although publication patterns have fluctuated over time. The United States and Indonesia are among the leading contributors, while international co-authorship remains relatively limited. The thematic analyses reveal that bullying, school-related issues, and human behavior constitute central areas of research, closely connected to character education, moral education, school violence, and cyberbullying. More recent research trends show growing attention to bullying prevention, Islamic and religious education, inclusion, and boarding school contexts. These patterns indicate that the literature is gradually expanding beyond general discussions of bullying toward more context-specific and prevention-oriented perspectives. The findings also highlight opportunities to strengthen interdisciplinary research and international collaboration, particularly in examining the relationship between Islamic Religious Education, moral development, character formation, and bullying prevention. Future studies should investigate how Islamic Religious Education can be incorporated into evidence-based strategies for creating safer and more inclusive educational environments. However, this study is limited to publications retrieved from Scopus and selected according to the established inclusion criteria. Furthermore, bibliometric analysis identifies publication patterns and thematic relationships but does not establish the effectiveness of particular educational approaches. Therefore, empirical

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and intervention-based research is needed to assess how Islamic Religious Education may contribute to preventing bullying and promoting positive student behavior.

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