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A HYBRID REVIEW ON ISLAMIC CHARACTER EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

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Kata Kunci:	ABSTRAK
Kata kunci: islamic character education; moral education; pesantren; islamic values; bibliometric-systematic literature review	Pendidikan Karakter Islam telah menjadi isu yang semakin penting dalam pendidikan kontemporer karena meningkatnya kekhawatiran terhadap degradasi moral, transformasi digital, dan integrasi nilai-nilai religius dalam sistem pembelajaran modern. Namun, penelitian yang mengkaji perkembangan dan struktur intelektual Pendidikan Karakter Islam masih terbatas. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi evolusi, landasan teoretis, konteks, karakteristik, dan tren metodologis penelitian Pendidikan Karakter Islam di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan hybrid bibliometric dan systematic literature review dengan kerangka TCCM (Theory-Context-Characteristics-Methodology). Data dikumpulkan dari database Scopus pada April 2026 menggunakan kata kunci yang berkaitan dengan karakter Islam, moralitas, etika, nilai, dan pendidikan tanpa batasan tahun publikasi. Sebanyak 759 dokumen yang terindeks Scopus digunakan untuk analisis bibliometrik, sedangkan proses penyaringan berdasarkan protokol PRISMA menghasilkan 50 artikel yang memenuhi kriteria untuk dianalisis lebih lanjut dalam systematic literature review. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penelitian Pendidikan Karakter Islam mengalami tingkat pertumbuhan publikasi tahunan sebesar 14,69%, khususnya setelah tahun 2017, dengan tema dominan meliputi pendidikan moral, akhlak, nilai-nilai Islam, pendidikan pesantren, integrasi kurikulum, dan transformasi digital. Literatur yang ada umumnya didasarkan pada teori perkembangan moral, teori pendidikan karakter, konstruktivisme sosial, dan etika pedagogi Islam, sedangkan konteks penelitian sebagian besar berfokus pada pesantren, madrasah, dan sekolah Islam di Indonesia. Secara metodologis, pendekatan kualitatif masih mendominasi, meskipun penelitian kuantitatif, mixed-method, dan berbasis digital mulai berkembang dalam beberapa tahun terakhir. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Pendidikan Karakter Islam telah berkembang menjadi bidang kajian yang dinamis dan multidisipliner, sementara penelitian masa depan perlu berfokus pada pengembangan teori pendidikan Islam yang lebih

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kontekstual serta mengkaji isu-isu baru terkait kecerdasan buatan dan tantangan pendidikan global..

Keywords:

Keyword: islamic character education; moral education; pesantren; islamic values; bibliometric-systematic literature review

ABSTRACTS

Islamic Character Education has become an increasingly important issue in contemporary education due to concerns regarding moral degradation, digital transformation, and the integration of religious values into modern learning systems. However, research examining the development and intellectual structure of Islamic Character Education remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore the evolution, theoretical foundations, contextual settings, characteristics, and methodological trends of Islamic Character Education research in Indonesia. This study employed a hybrid bibliometric and systematic literature review approach using the TCCM (Theory–Context–Characteristics–Methodology) framework. Data were collected from the Scopus database in April 2026 using keywords related to Islamic character, morality, ethics, values, and education without publication year limitation. An initial dataset of 759 Scopus-indexed documents was used for bibliometric analysis, while the PRISMA screening process resulted in 50 eligible articles for systematic review. The findings reveal that Islamic Character Education research has experienced a substantial annual growth rate of 14.69%, particularly after 2017, with dominant themes including moral education, akhlaq, Islamic values, pesantren education, curriculum integration, and digital transformation. The literature is mainly grounded in moral development theory, character education theory, social constructivism, and Islamic pedagogical ethics, while the research context is largely concentrated in pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools in Indonesia. Methodologically, qualitative approaches remain dominant, although quantitative, mixed-method, and digital-based studies have recently emerged. Overall, this study demonstrates that Islamic Character Education has developed into a dynamic and interdisciplinary research field, while future studies should focus on developing more contextually grounded Islamic educational theories and examining emerging issues related to artificial intelligence and global educational challenges.

A. INTRODUCTION

Islamic Character Education has become one of the most significant issues in contemporary educational discourse, particularly in Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia. As the world's largest Muslim-populated nation, Indonesia has long positioned character education as an integral part of national development and educational transformation. Islamic Character Education, which is deeply rooted in the concept of *akhlaq*, aims not only to strengthen students' religious understanding but also to cultivate morality, social responsibility, tolerance, discipline, and ethical behavior within broader societal life. The growing concern regarding moral degradation, intolerance, violence among students, digital disruption, and weakening social cohesion has intensified the urgency of strengthening Islamic-based character education in schools, *pesantren*, and higher education institutions. Islamic Character Education in Indonesia has evolved dynamically through the integration of traditional Islamic values, local wisdom, multicultural approaches, and modern pedagogical innovation, including digital and hybrid learning models (Sutomo 2014).

Historically, Islamic Character Education in Indonesia has been strongly associated with *pesantren* traditions, Islamic moral teachings, and the transmission of *akhlaq* values through religious instruction and habituation practices. *Pesantren* institutions have played a central role as agents of moral formation, social cohesion, and cultural preservation within Indonesian Muslim society (Purwanto, Mukharrom, and Rahmah 2021). Previous studies emphasized that *pesantren* education not only functions as a center for religious learning but also as an environment for developing students' moral character, discipline, tolerance, and humanitarian values (Anam et al. 2019; Purwanto, Mukharrom, and Rahmah 2021) argued that Islamic character education in Indonesia should be reconstructed as *akhlaq* education to address the moral and social challenges emerging from globalization and modern society. The increasing modernization of Islamic education has also encouraged *pesantren* and *madrasah* institutions to adapt their educational models through curriculum integration, digital learning innovation, and multicultural approaches while maintaining their Islamic identity (Nisak et al. 2025; Wasehudin et al. 2023).

In the broader educational context, the Indonesian government has continuously promoted character education through national curriculum reforms, including Curriculum 2013 and the more recent Kurikulum Merdeka. These reforms emphasize the integration of religious values, national identity, and twenty-first-century competencies into educational practices (Mahmud, Rahmi, and Nurdin 2023). Several studies reported that Islamic schools and integrated Islamic institutions have increasingly implemented student-centered learning, project-based learning, digital pedagogy, and collaborative approaches to strengthen students' moral and social development (Amalia et al. 2024; Safitri et al. 2025). In addition, research has shown that Islamic Character Education contributes positively to students' religiosity, critical thinking, tolerance, empathy, and social cohesion, especially when schools, families, and communities work collaboratively in supporting character development (Rahmat and Supriadi 2016). For example, Rahmat and Supriadi (2016) demonstrated that *sufistic* and Qur'anic story-based learning models effectively improve students' moral behavior and reflective thinking, while Fahmi et al. (2025) found that multicultural Islamic education strengthens tolerance and social harmony in diverse educational settings.

Despite the growing body of literature, Islamic Character Education research remains fragmented and methodologically diverse. Existing studies predominantly focus on specific educational contexts, such as pesantren, madrasah, or integrated Islamic schools, while broader analyses concerning the intellectual structure and development of the field remain limited. Several studies identified important gaps within the literature, including the lack of multidisciplinary and participatory approaches, limited regional representation beyond Java and Sumatra, and insufficient integration between qualitative, quantitative, and bibliometric methods (Abdullah et al. 2019; Puspitarini et al. 2023; Kistoro et al. 2023). Moreover, most studies continue to emphasize practical implementation and local case studies rather than examining the evolution of theories, contextual patterns, methodological trends, and emerging research themes within Islamic Character Education research as a whole. Previous studies have also highlighted that research on early childhood education, higher education, minority Muslim contexts, and digital character education remains relatively underexplored (Tolla 2024; Oviyanti, Astuti, and Yussof 2025).

Another important issue concerns the theoretical orientation of Islamic Character Education research. Many studies still rely heavily on classical moral development theories, Western character education models, or general Islamic pedagogical concepts without constructing more contextually grounded and independent theoretical frameworks rooted in Islamic epistemology. Although scholars have attempted to integrate concepts such as *akhlaq*, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, local wisdom, and Islamic moderation into educational practices (Mahmud, Rahmi, and Nurdin 2023; Burga and Damopolii 2022), the literature remains dominated by fragmented conceptual discussions rather than systematic theoretical synthesis. Furthermore, rapid technological transformation and the expansion of artificial intelligence in education have introduced new challenges regarding digital ethics, online learning, and Islamic moral formation, yet only a limited number of studies have addressed these emerging issues comprehensively (Rohid et al. 2026; Sapiudin et al. 2026).

Methodologically, previous research also demonstrates several limitations. Most Islamic Character Education studies employ qualitative case study approaches focusing on single institutions or local communities. Although qualitative inquiry provides deep contextual understanding, the dominance of isolated case studies creates difficulties in identifying broader publication trends, intellectual structures, and interdisciplinary developments within the field. Bibliometric studies on Islamic Character Education remain scarce. One notable study by Kistoro et al. (2023) mapped research networks and publication trends in Islamic Character Education; however, the study primarily focused on bibliometric visualization without integrating systematic qualitative synthesis. Similarly, Puspitarini et al. (2023) explored humanistic pesantren values through bibliometric and literature review analysis, yet the scope was limited to pesantren and moral values rather than the broader landscape of Islamic Character Education research in Indonesia. Consequently, there remains a significant gap concerning comprehensive hybrid reviews that integrate bibliometric analysis with systematic literature review methods to provide a holistic understanding of the field.

This study attempts to address these research gaps by employing a hybrid bibliometric and systematic literature review approach using the TCCM (Theory–Context–Characteristics–Methodology) framework. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on specific institutions, pedagogical practices, or isolated thematic issues, this

research systematically examines the intellectual evolution, theoretical foundations, contextual settings, research characteristics, and methodological trends of Islamic Character Education research in Indonesia. By integrating bibliometric analysis with systematic literature review techniques, this study provides both quantitative mapping and qualitative interpretation of the literature, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic Character Education has evolved over time. Furthermore, this study contributes to the literature by identifying dominant theories, emerging themes, methodological patterns, and future research directions related to Islamic Character Education in the context of digital transformation, multiculturalism, sustainability, and global educational challenges.

Therefore, this study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of Islamic Character Education research. Theoretically, the study offers a comprehensive synthesis of the intellectual structure of Islamic Character Education and highlights the need for more contextually grounded Islamic educational theories. Moreover, the study contributes to the advancement of Islamic educational theory by integrating fragmented perspectives on akhlaq, character education, Islamic pedagogy, and moral development into a more coherent understanding of Islamic Character Education within contemporary educational contexts. Practically, the findings may provide insights for policymakers, educators, curriculum developers, and Islamic educational institutions in designing more adaptive, inclusive, and culturally responsive character education models. In addition, this study responds directly to the methodological and conceptual gaps identified in previous research by integrating bibliometric mapping and systematic review approaches to generate a more holistic and evidence-based understanding of Islamic Character Education in Indonesia..

B. METHOD

This study employs a hybrid review approach by integrating bibliometric analysis and a systematic literature review (SLR) to provide a comprehensive understanding of Islamic Character Education research in Indonesia. The hybrid method enables the exploration of publication trends, intellectual structures, dominant themes, and emerging research directions from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. Previous studies have demonstrated that bibliometric mapping is useful for identifying research networks, publication trends, and thematic developments in Islamic Character Education research (Kistoro et al. 2023; Nirwana 2024). Meanwhile, systematic literature review approaches have been widely applied to synthesize moral, ethical, and character values within Islamic education and pesantren studies (Puspitarini et al. 2023). Furthermore, this study adopts the TCCM (Theory–Context–Characteristics–Methodology) framework to systematically classify and analyze the theoretical foundations, contextual settings, research characteristics, and methodological approaches employed in previous Islamic Character Education studies. The TCCM framework enables a more structured understanding of dominant perspectives, conceptual developments, and future research opportunities within the field.

To ensure transparency and methodological rigor, this study follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol proposed by Moher et al. (2009), which consists of four stages: identification,

screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. Figure 1 presents the main stages of the review process adopted in this study

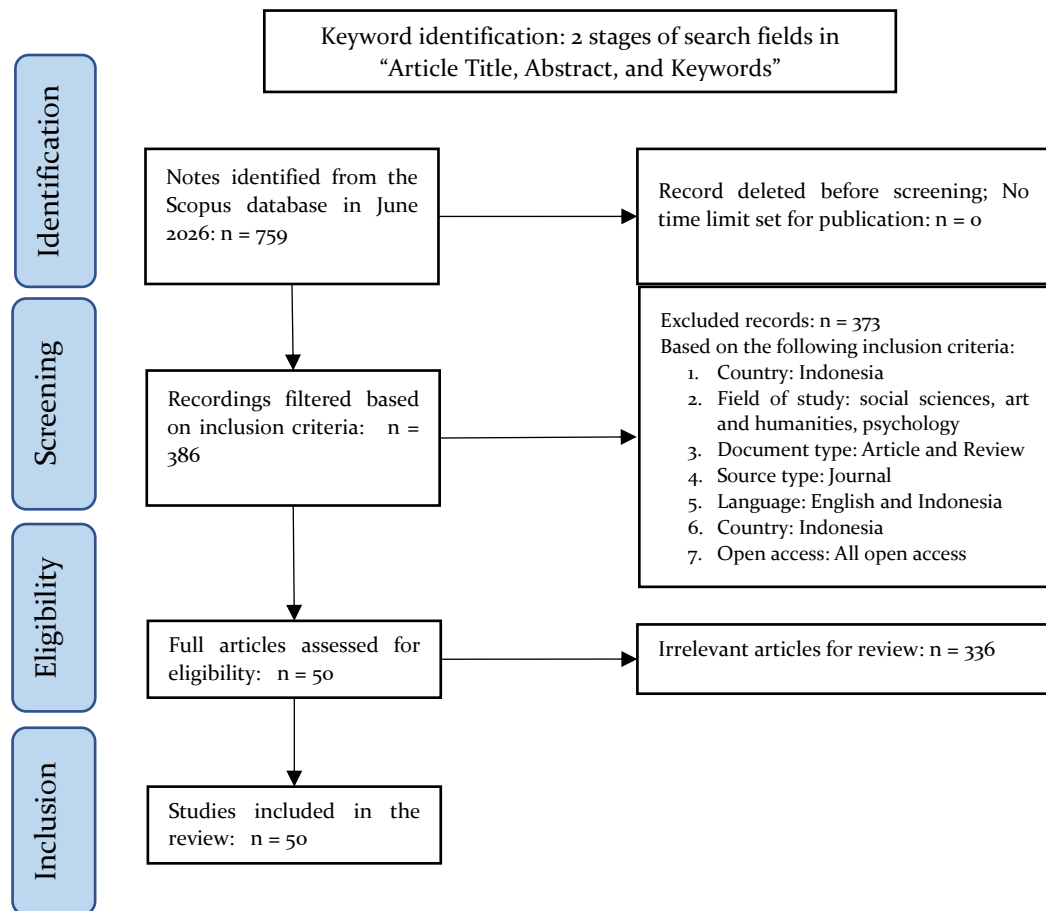


Figure 1. PRISMA adapted from Alshater et al. (2022)

The identification stage began with a document search conducted in June 2026 using the Scopus database. The search employed keywords related to Islamic Character Education, namely: “Islamic” AND “character” OR “morality” OR “ethics” OR “values” OR “virtue” OR “akhlaq” OR “moral development” OR “religious values” OR “personality” AND “education” AND “Indonesia” OR “Indonesian”, which were applied to article titles, abstracts, and keywords. The search process was conducted without publication year limitation to capture the broadest development of Islamic Character Education research in Indonesia. As presented in Figure 1, the initial search identified 759 documents indexed in the Scopus database. These documents were used for bibliometric analysis to examine publication trends, intellectual structures, author productivity, institutional contributions, keyword evolution, and research developments within the field.

The screening stage was subsequently conducted using several inclusion criteria. The study only included publications originating from Indonesia and related to the fields of social sciences, arts and humanities, and psychology. In addition, only journal articles and review papers written in English and Indonesian were included, while conference proceedings, books, book chapters, and other non-peer-reviewed publications were excluded. Furthermore, only open-access publications were

considered to ensure accessibility and transparency of data collection. Based on these criteria, 373 documents were excluded, resulting in 386 records remaining for further assessment.

In the eligibility stage, the full texts of the remaining articles were examined to assess their relevance to Islamic Character Education within the Indonesian context. Articles focusing on general moral education, non-Islamic character education, unrelated educational issues, or studies conducted outside Indonesia were excluded from the review process. Following this refinement procedure, 336 articles were removed due to irrelevance, leaving 50 articles that met all eligibility criteria. These 50 selected articles were then used for the systematic literature review analysis employing the TCCM (Theory–Context–Characteristics–Methodology) framework to identify theoretical developments, dominant themes, contextual settings, research characteristics, methodological patterns, and future research directions in Islamic Character Education research in Indonesia.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Figure 2 presents the main information related to the bibliometric data on Islamic Character Education research indexed in the Scopus database during the period 1995–2026. The dataset consists of 759 documents published across 332 different sources, involving 2,352 authors, which indicates a broad and continuously expanding scholarly network in this field. The annual growth rate reached 14.69%, reflecting a significant increase in academic attention toward Islamic Character Education over time. In terms of collaboration patterns, the average number of co-authors per document was 3.55, while international co-authorship accounted for 18.18%, demonstrating a moderate level of global research collaboration. Furthermore, the dataset contains 2,242 author keywords and 35,164 references, suggesting substantial thematic diversity and a rich intellectual foundation within the literature. The average age of the documents was 3.58 years, indicating that the field is relatively recent and rapidly developing, while the average citation per document reached 5.991 citations, reflecting a growing academic impact and relevance of Islamic Character Education research in contemporary educational discourse.

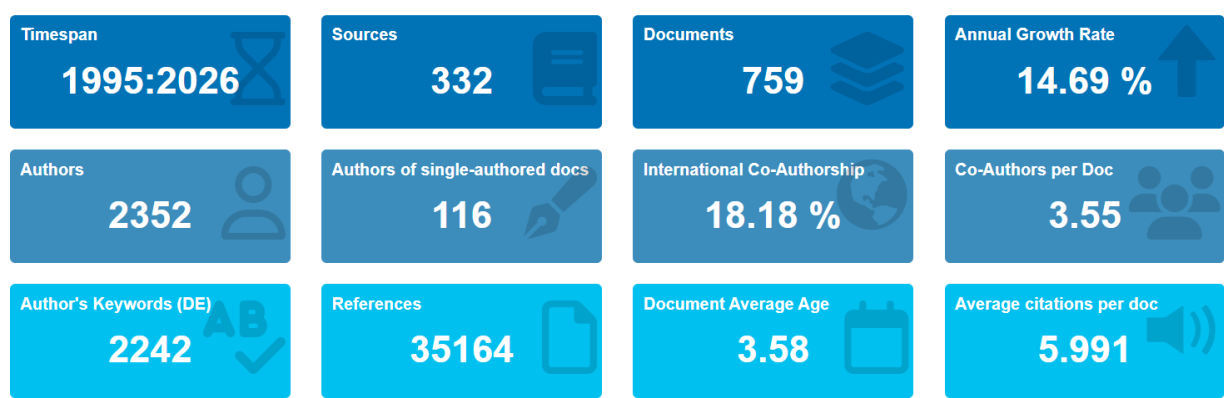


Figure 2. Main Information

Source: Biblioshiny (2026)

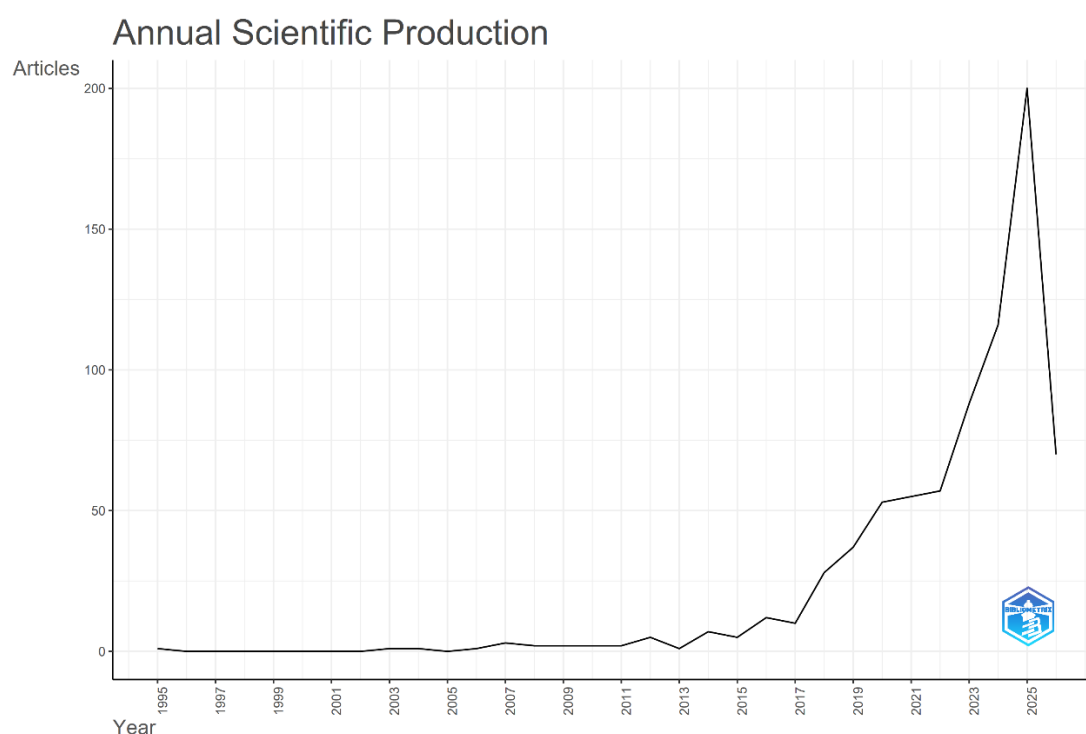


Figure 3. Annual Scientific Production
Source: Biblioshiny (2026)

Figure 3 demonstrates a substantial evolution in Islamic Character Education research between 1995 and 2026. During the earlier period, publication output remained relatively low, indicating limited scholarly attention to the topic. However, research productivity began to increase noticeably after 2017 and continued to rise significantly in subsequent years, particularly from 2019 onward. This upward trend reflects the growing importance of issues related to moral values, religious character formation, and the integration of Islamic educational principles within contemporary educational discourse. The highest publication growth occurred in 2025, suggesting that Islamic Character Education has become an increasingly relevant and interdisciplinary field of study. Meanwhile, the lower number of publications recorded in 2026 should be interpreted carefully, as the data collection was conducted in April 2026, meaning that not all publications for the year had yet been indexed in the Scopus database.

Research Trends

Most Productive Authors

Figure 4 illustrates the most productive authors in Islamic Character Education research based on the number of published documents. The figure shows that Kusaeri and Nuryana Z. are the leading contributors, each producing six publications, indicating their strong and consistent involvement in the development of this research field. They are followed by Rahman A., Sulaiman, and Wekke I.S., each with five publications, reflecting their significant academic contributions to discussions surrounding Islamic education, moral values, and character formation. Meanwhile, Abdullah I., Ahmadi A., Degeng I.N.S., Fua J.L., and Huda M. each contributed four publications, demonstrating

a relatively active scholarly presence in the literature. Overall, the distribution of publications suggests that research on Islamic Character Education is supported by a diverse group of scholars, although the field is still dominated by a limited number of highly productive authors who play an important role in shaping the direction and development of the discipline.

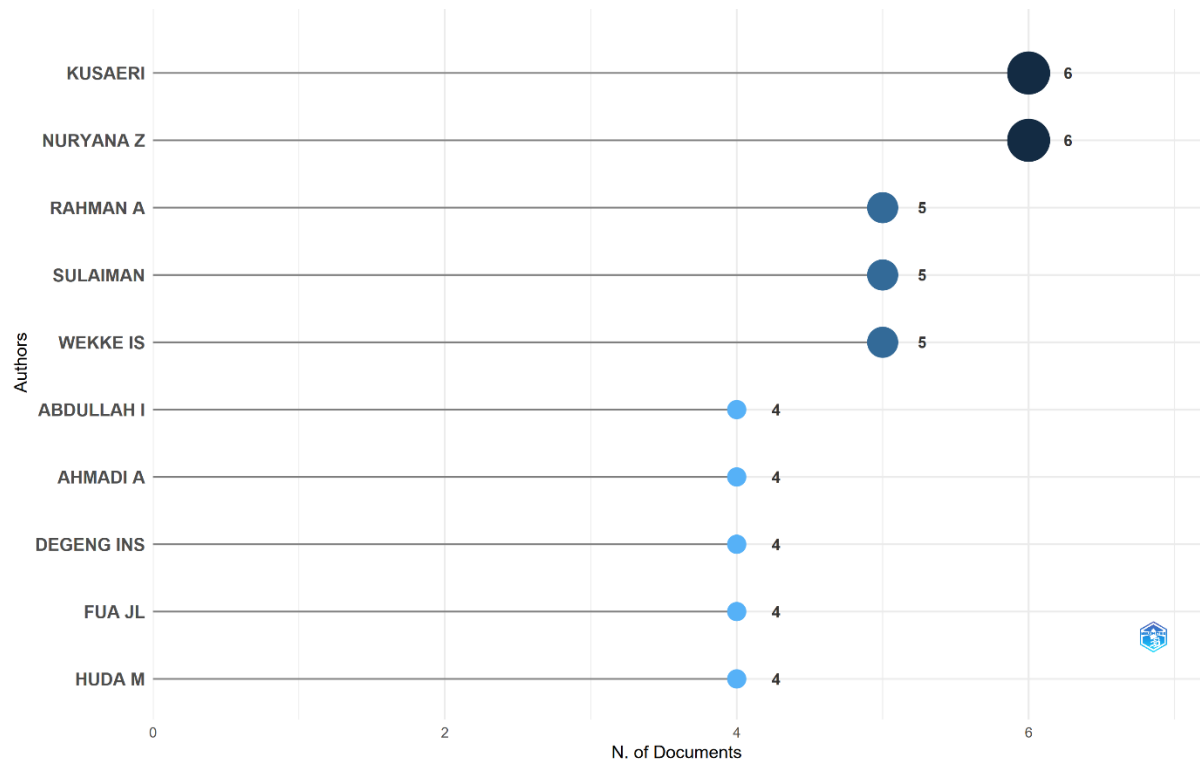


Figure 4. Most Productive Authors in Character Education Research Publication
Source: Biblioshiny (2026)

Most Productive Universities

Figure 5 presents the most relevant universities contributing to Islamic Character Education research. The figure indicates that Universitas Negeri Malang is the most productive university, contributing 25 publications, which highlights its dominant role in advancing research on Islamic Character Education in Indonesia. It is followed by Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta with 18 publications, while Universitas Airlangga and Universitas Islam Indonesia each contributed 17 publications. Other significant contributors include Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (16 publications), Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga and Universitas Syiah Kuala (15 publications each), as well as Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Universitas Indonesia, and Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Overall, the findings demonstrate that both public universities and Islamic higher education institutions play substantial roles in the development of Islamic Character Education research. The dominance of Indonesian universities also reflects the strong academic concern toward character formation, moral education, and Islamic values within the national educational discourse.

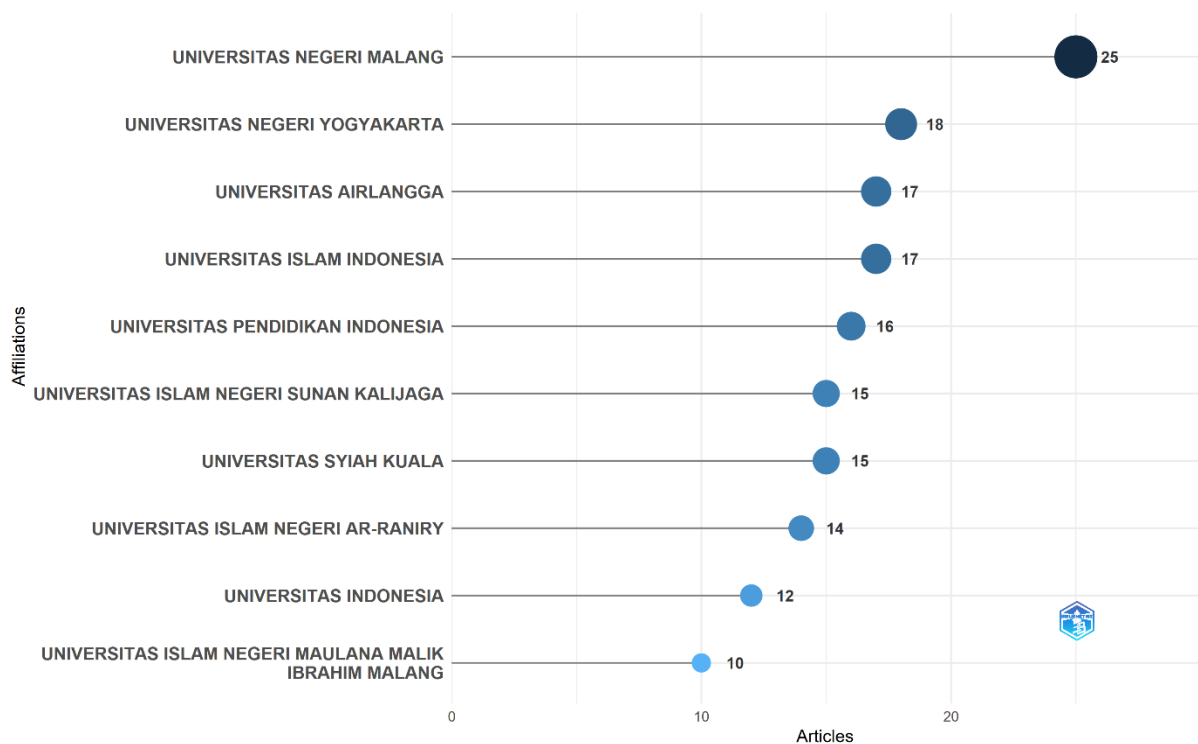


Figure 5. Most Productive University in Character Education research Publication

Source: Biblioshiny (2026)

Most Relevant Sources

Figure 6 presents the most relevant publication sources in Islamic Character Education research. The figure shows that *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* is the most dominant source, publishing 33 documents, indicating its strong focus on issues related to Islamic education, moral values, and character development. It is followed by *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* with 22 publications, while *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research* and *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* each contributed 20 publications. Other notable sources include *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* and *Munaddhomah* with 19 publications each, as well as the *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Education*, *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, and *Journal of Islamic Marketing*. Overall, the findings indicate that research on Islamic Character Education is predominantly disseminated through journals focusing on Islamic education, educational studies, and interdisciplinary social sciences, reflecting the growing academic attention toward character formation and Islamic values in contemporary educational discourse.

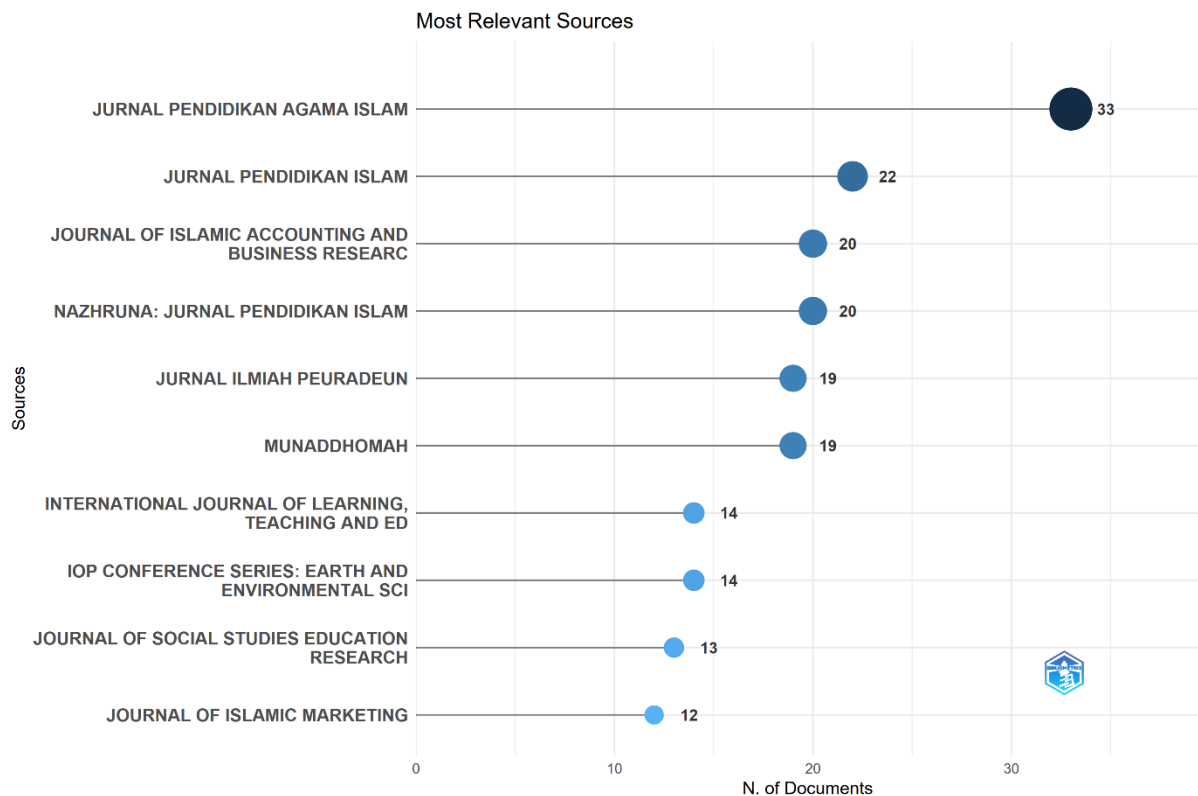


Figure 6. Most Productive Journal in Character Education research Publication
Source: Biblioshiny (2026)

Keyword and Research Focus in Islamic Character Education

Figure 7 presents the word cloud visualization of the most frequently occurring keywords in Islamic Character Education research. The visualization reveals that “Islamic education” and “character education” are the most dominant keywords, indicating that the literature is strongly centered on the integration of Islamic values within character formation and educational practices. Other prominent terms such as “Indonesia,” “moral education,” “religious character,” “Islamic higher education,” and “Islamic religious education” demonstrate that the research mainly focuses on moral development, religious values, and character-building processes within Indonesian educational contexts. Additionally, keywords including “curriculum development,” “curriculum integration,” “pesantren,” “Islamic values,” and “artificial intelligence” suggest the emergence of contemporary themes related to educational innovation, digital transformation, and the integration of Islamic character values into modern learning systems. Overall, the keyword distribution indicates that Islamic Character Education research is multidisciplinary and continues to evolve toward broader discussions involving pedagogy, technology, leadership, and social transformation.

classrooms into cultural traditions, communities, and socio-religious practices (Zulkarnain, Nasrulloh, and Kholis 2025; Roqib et al. 2025; Ridho, Wakhidah, and Adnan 2026). Other studies integrated modern perspectives such as Social Justice Theory in Islam, environmental ethics, reflective digital pedagogy, artificial intelligence, and the Big Five personality traits combined with Islamic leadership values including shiddiq, amanah, tabligh, and fathonah (Ghafar et al. 2025; Amirudin, I.A., and Nurhayati. 2026; Achruh, M., and Idris 2024). These developments suggest that Islamic Character Education research is gradually evolving from classical moral theories toward more integrative frameworks that combine Islamic values, local culture, technological transformation, and contemporary social issues. Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that a distinctive and independent theoretical framework specifically designed for Islamic Character Education remains limited, as many studies still adapt Western theories and subsequently integrate them with Islamic perspectives.

Context (C): Contextual Settings in Islamic Character Education Research

The Context dimension in Islamic Character Education research demonstrates that the majority of studies are situated within formal Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, particularly pesantren, madrasah, Islamic boarding schools, Islamic universities, and Islamic-based primary and secondary schools. These institutions are frequently portrayed as the central environments for cultivating moral values, religious identity, and character formation among students. Pesantren contexts dominate many studies because they are considered effective in integrating religious learning, daily habituation, discipline, and moral supervision within students' everyday lives. Several studies also emphasized the role of Islamic universities and teacher education institutions in promoting Islamic character values through curriculum development, pedagogical innovation, and leadership practices.

In addition to formal educational settings, a number of studies explored broader socio-cultural and community contexts influencing Islamic character formation. Research on local wisdom, ethnopedagogy, traditional games, cultural rituals, and community-based Islamic education suggests that character education is not limited to classroom instruction but is also shaped by cultural traditions, family environments, and social interactions within Muslim communities (Roqib et al. 2025)(Ridho, Wakhidah, and Adnan 2026). Furthermore, some studies examined Islamic Character Education in multicultural and pluralistic environments, particularly in relation to religious moderation, tolerance, social harmony, and intercultural understanding. These studies indicate that Islamic Character Education is increasingly positioned as an instrument for strengthening social cohesion and preventing radicalism in diverse societies.

Recent studies also reveal an emerging shift toward digital and technological contexts in Islamic Character Education research. Several articles investigated the integration of digital learning platforms, artificial intelligence, online learning environments, and social media into Islamic moral education practices (Ghafar et al. 2025; Amirudin, I.A., and Nurhayati. 2026; Achruh, M., and Idris 2024). This trend became more visible after the COVID-19 pandemic, where educational transformation accelerated the use of technology in Islamic teaching and character development. Consequently, the contextual landscape of Islamic Character Education research has expanded from traditional religious institutions toward more dynamic environments

involving digital ecosystems, global communication, and contemporary societal challenges. However, most studies remain concentrated within the Indonesian context, indicating that comparative cross-country and global perspectives in Islamic Character Education research are still relatively underdeveloped.

Characteristics (C): Main Characteristics of Islamic Character Education Research

One of the most dominant characteristics identified in Islamic Character Education research is the integration of Islamic moral and spiritual values into the educational process. The reviewed studies consistently emphasized the development of *akhlaq*, discipline, honesty, responsibility, and religious commitment as the primary objectives of character formation. For example, (Mujahid 2021) highlighted the importance of Islamic orthodoxy-based character education in shaping moderate Muslim identities, while C.S. Juwaini et al. (2025) emphasized the harmonization of reason, emotion, and morality through Ibn Miskawaih's ethical philosophy. Similarly, several studies conducted in *pesantren* and Islamic schools demonstrated that character development is strongly influenced by religious habituation, role modeling, and the internalization of Qur'anic values within students' daily activities.

Another important characteristic concerns the implementation of curriculum integration and pedagogical innovation in Islamic Character Education. Many studies discussed the incorporation of Islamic values into formal curricula, extracurricular activities, and collaborative learning environments. Subandi et al. (2025), for instance, explored digital Islamic character education models based on local wisdom for early childhood education, whereas (Usman 2025) emphasized cooperative and socially interactive learning approaches to strengthen students' moral development. In addition, several studies focusing on *pesantren* education revealed that communal discipline, mentoring systems, and teacher exemplification remain central mechanisms for cultivating Islamic character values in Indonesian educational institutions.

Furthermore, recent studies increasingly addressed contemporary issues such as digital transformation, multiculturalism, environmental ethics, and religious moderation. Achruh, M., and Idris (2024) and Amirudin, I.A., and Nurhayati. (2026) examined the integration of artificial intelligence, digital pedagogy, and online learning into Islamic educational practices, indicating the growing adaptation of Islamic Character Education to technological change. Other studies, such as Andriana et al. (2025), linked Islamic character formation with environmental awareness and social justice values, while Roqib et al. (2025) and Ridho, Wakhidah, and Adnan (2026) emphasized the role of local wisdom and ethnopedagogy in contextualizing Islamic values within diverse socio-cultural settings. These findings suggest that Islamic Character Education research is evolving toward more interdisciplinary and adaptive approaches that respond to contemporary educational and societal challenges.

Methodology (M): Research Methods in Islamic Character Education Research

The methodological landscape of Islamic Character Education research is predominantly characterized by qualitative approaches. Most studies employed case studies, phenomenological research, ethnography, descriptive qualitative methods, narrative inquiry, and library research to examine the processes of value internalization, moral formation, and Islamic educational practices in schools, *pesantren*, and Muslim

communities. Qualitative inquiry was widely preferred because the field largely focuses on understanding religious experiences, socio-cultural interactions, pedagogical processes, and moral transformation within educational settings. For example, Mujahid (2021) adopted a qualitative case study to analyze Islamic orthodoxy-based character education in pesantren, while Roqib et al. (2025) and Ridho, Wakhidah, and Adnan (2026) utilized ethnographic and cultural approaches to investigate the integration of local wisdom, pesantren traditions, and Islamic values in character development. Similarly, Zulkarnain, Nasrulloh, and Kholis (2025) employed constructivist grounded theory to explore contextual Islamic learning practices rooted in community culture and religious traditions.

In addition to qualitative methods, several studies adopted quantitative approaches to empirically examine the relationship between Islamic values, character formation, leadership, religiosity, and educational outcomes. Survey methods, correlational designs, regression analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), and psychometric testing were commonly utilized to measure students' moral behavior, religious attitudes, learning engagement, and leadership competencies. (Ghafar et al. 2025), for instance, quantitatively integrated the *Big Five personality traits* with Islamic leadership values such as *shiddiq*, *amanah*, *tabligh*, and *fathonah* to evaluate character and leadership development among students. Other studies also used experimental and quasi-experimental designs to assess the effectiveness of Islamic learning models, character education interventions, and technology-assisted instruction in improving students' moral awareness and religious behavior.

Furthermore, recent Islamic Character Education studies demonstrate an increasing adoption of mixed-methods and technology-oriented methodologies. Several scholars combined interviews, classroom observations, questionnaires, and digital learning analysis to investigate the implementation of online Islamic learning, artificial intelligence, and reflective digital pedagogy in character education (Achruh, M., and Idris 2024; Amirudin, I.A., and Nurhayati. 2026). Subandi et al. (2025), for example, integrated digital educational design with moral development frameworks to construct Islamic character learning models for early childhood education. In addition, bibliometric studies, systematic literature reviews (SLR), and conceptual analyses have recently emerged as important methodological trends, indicating the growing maturity and interdisciplinarity of the field. These approaches are increasingly used to map publication trends, identify dominant themes, and synthesize the development of Islamic Character Education research across different educational and socio-cultural contexts.

Despite this methodological diversification, the literature still shows a strong dominance of localized and context-specific studies, particularly within pesantren, Islamic schools, and Indonesian Muslim communities. Longitudinal studies, comparative cross-country research, experimental digital learning studies, and large-scale empirical investigations remain relatively limited. This suggests that future Islamic Character Education research would benefit from broader methodological innovation, stronger interdisciplinary integration, and more robust empirical designs capable of addressing contemporary educational challenges in the digital and global era.

Synthesis of TCCM Findings

To provide a clearer synthesis of the findings, Table 1 summarizes the main results of the TCCM (Theory–Context–Characteristics–Methodology) analysis. The table highlights the dominant theoretical foundations, contextual settings, research characteristics, methodological approaches, and future research directions identified in Islamic Character Education studies in Indonesia. This synthesis demonstrates that the field has evolved into a multidisciplinary area of inquiry that integrates Islamic values, moral development, educational innovation, and contemporary societal challenges. Furthermore, the table facilitates a comprehensive understanding of how the reviewed studies collectively contribute to the development of Islamic Character Education research and offers a concise reference for future scholars interested in advancing the field.

Table 1. Summary of TCCM Analysis in Islamic Character Education Research in Indonesia

TCCM Dimension	Main Findings	Representative Studies
Theory	Islamic Character Education research is primarily grounded in Moral Development Theory, Character Education Theory, Social Constructivism, Islamic Pedagogical Ethics, Akhlaq-Based Education, and Religious Moderation frameworks. Recent studies increasingly integrate local wisdom, environmental ethics, and digital pedagogy.	Mujahid (2021); C.S. Juwaini et al. (2025); Subandi et al. (2025); Ghafar et al. (2025)
Context	Research is predominantly conducted in pesantren, madrasah, Islamic schools, Islamic universities, and Muslim communities. Emerging studies also examine multicultural environments and digital learning ecosystems.	Purwanto et al. (2021); Roqib et al. (2025); Ridho et al. (2026); Amirudin et al. (2026)
Characteristics	The literature emphasizes moral internalization, akhlaq development, religious habituation, character formation, curriculum integration, multicultural education, environmental awareness, and digital character education.	Fahmi et al. (2025); Andriana et al. (2025); Subandi et al. (2025)
Methodology	Qualitative approaches remain dominant, including case studies, ethnography, phenomenology, and library research. Quantitative, mixed-methods, bibliometric, and digital-	Kistoro et al. (2023); Ghafar et al. (2025); Achruh and Idris (2024)

TCCM Dimension	Main Findings	Representative Studies
	based studies have emerged in recent years.	
Future Research Directions	Future studies should focus on developing contextually grounded Islamic educational theories, comparative studies across Muslim countries, artificial intelligence and digital ethics, sustainability education, global citizenship, and longitudinal research designs.	Synthesized from reviewed literature

The synthesis presented in Table 1 reveals several important patterns within the Islamic Character Education literature. First, the theoretical foundations remain largely influenced by moral and character education theories integrated with Islamic values and pedagogical traditions. Second, the dominant research contexts continue to be Islamic educational institutions, particularly pesantren and madrasah, although digital and multicultural settings are becoming increasingly relevant. Third, the characteristics of the literature indicate a strong commitment to integrating moral, spiritual, and social values into educational practices. Finally, methodological developments suggest a gradual transition from predominantly qualitative inquiry toward more diverse and interdisciplinary research designs. These patterns collectively indicate that Islamic Character Education research is moving toward greater theoretical sophistication and contextual diversity while maintaining its foundational emphasis on Islamic moral values.

CONCLUSION

This study employed a hybrid bibliometric and systematic literature review approach to examine the development of Islamic Character Education research in Indonesia through the TCCM framework. The findings indicate that research in this field has grown significantly, particularly after 2017, reflecting increasing academic attention toward moral education, religious values, character formation, and the integration of Islamic principles within contemporary educational systems. Bibliometric analysis revealed that the literature is predominantly contributed by Indonesian universities and Islamic educational institutions, with major themes focusing on Islamic education, character education, akhlaq, religious moderation, curriculum integration, pesantren education, and digital transformation. The TCCM analysis further showed that Islamic Character Education research is largely grounded in moral development theory, character education theory, social constructivism, Islamic pedagogical ethics, and Islamic values-based education, while its contextual focus remains centered on pesantren, madrasah, Islamic schools, and Muslim communities in Indonesia. In terms of characteristics, the literature emphasizes moral internalization, religious habituation, local wisdom, and holistic character formation,

whereas methodologically, qualitative approaches remain dominant despite the growing emergence of quantitative, mixed-methods, bibliometric, and digital-based studies. Overall, the findings suggest that Islamic Character Education has evolved into a dynamic and interdisciplinary research field; however, future studies are still needed to develop more contextually grounded Islamic theoretical frameworks, expand comparative international perspectives, and explore the implications of digital technology, artificial intelligence, sustainability, and global citizenship in Islamic education. This study is limited to Scopus-indexed publications and focuses primarily on the Indonesian context, which may not fully represent the broader landscape of Islamic Character Education research globally. In addition, the analysis mainly relied on titles, abstracts, and keywords during the screening and classification process. Therefore, future research should expand comparative studies across Muslim countries to examine differences in Islamic Character Education models, policies, and cultural approaches. Future scholars are also encouraged to develop more contextually grounded Islamic educational theories based on *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* and contemporary educational challenges. Moreover, further studies should investigate the role of artificial intelligence, digital ethics, sustainability education, and global citizenship in shaping Islamic Character Education through empirical, longitudinal, and mixed-method research design

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The authors declare no conflict of interest. The authors affirm that there are no personal, professional, or financial relationships that could be perceived as influencing the research process, analysis, interpretation, or reporting of the findings presented in this study.

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All authors contributed substantially to the conception and design of the study, data collection, bibliometric and systematic literature review analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript preparation. All authors reviewed, revised, and approved the final version of the manuscript and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in accordance with the authorship guidelines and contribution policies.

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The data supporting the findings of this study were obtained from the Scopus database and consist of bibliometric records and published articles analyzed during the review

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