

## English Language Teaching in Islamic Education: A Bibliometric Analysis

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### Abstract

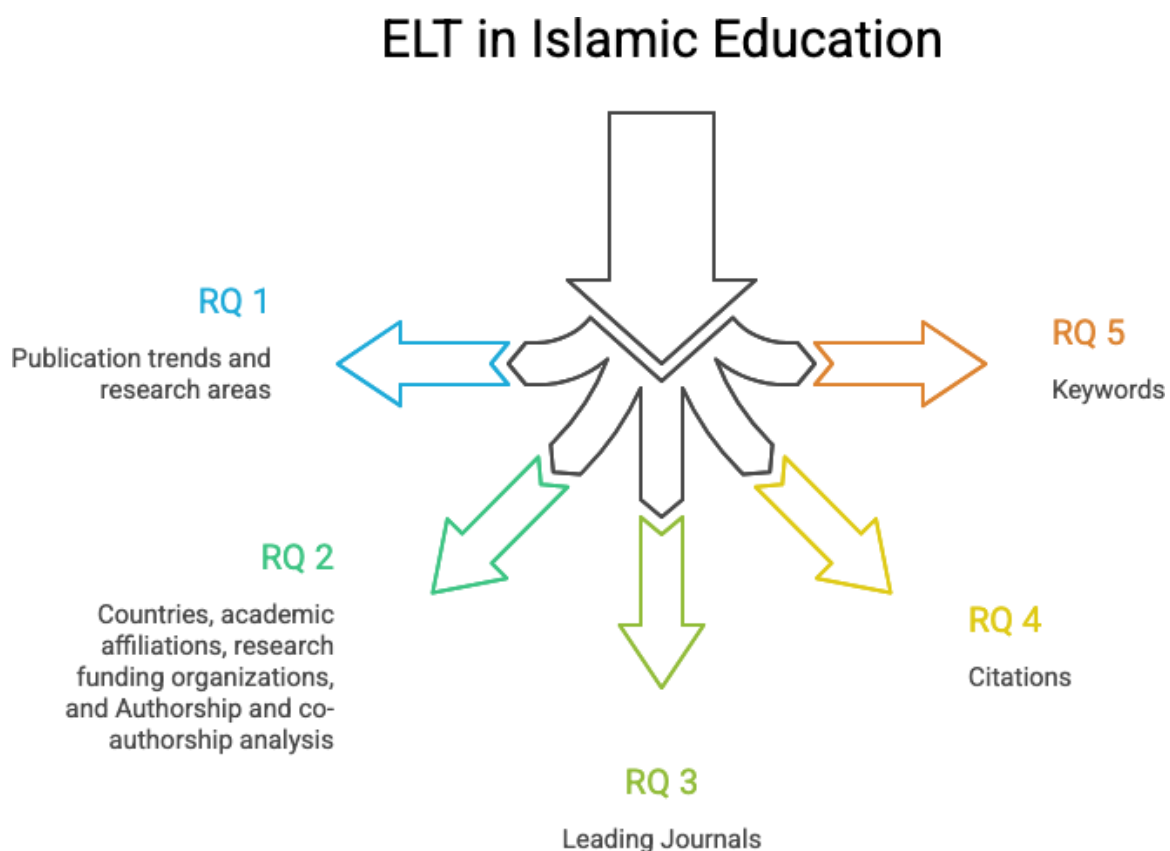
The integration of English language teaching into Islamic education has expanded in response to global academic demands. However, comprehensive quantitative mapping of this field remains limited. This study aims to examine publication trends, intellectual structure, and thematic gaps in ELT within Islamic education. Using the Scopus database, the study analyzed 98 journal articles published between 2004 and 2026. Bibliometric analysis was performed with VOSviewer to explore keyword co occurrence, author collaboration networks, and citation patterns. The findings indicate a marked increase in research output after 2018. Indonesia appears as the leading contributor and an important center of international collaboration. Keyword co occurrence analysis shows a dominant focus on “English language teaching” and “Islamic education,” with increased attention to teachers’ roles and blended learning during the COVID 19 period. Citation analysis highlights key foundational studies and leading journals, including the Asian EFL Journal and Studies in English Language and Education, as central to the development of the field. The study also reveals thematic gaps in bilingualism, cultural schemas, teacher roles, competency-based curricula, technology integration, and the development of specialized instructional materials suited to the sociocultural context of Islamic institutions. These gaps provide clear directions for future research.

**Keywords:** *English Language Teaching, English for Islamic studies, Islamic Education, Pesantren*

### 1. PENDAHULUAN

The integration of Islamic studies and English language teaching (ELT) is rapidly evolving to meet increasing global academic demands (Irwansyah, 2018; Sahlan et al., 2018). Islamic institutions are now tasked with enhancing students' English language proficiency while simultaneously maintaining the core foundations of Islamic value (Ridwan et al., 2024; Sukirman, 2022; Syuhda et al., 2024). This dual necessity has popularized academic terms such as "English for Islamic Studies" (EFIS) and "English for Islamic Education," which serve as frameworks for curriculum development, teaching material design, and the integration of Islamic values into the language learning process (Ilyas, 2025; Nyoni et al., 2023; Ulpah, 2025). While numerous review studies have discussed English for Specific Purposes (ESP) within this context, the scholarship remains scattered across diverse journals and disciplines (Abdalla, 2025; Astuti et al., 2024; Djamdjuri et al., 2023; Nurfazri et al., 2026; Rezky & Qamariah, 2025; Sidqurrahman, 2024; Suryanto et al., 2025; Wafiroh & Indah, 2022).

Although publications in this field have significantly increased over the past two decades—particularly in nations with established Islamic education systems—a comprehensive quantitative mapping of its intellectual structure is still lacking. To date, bibliometric studies specifically dedicated to mapping the growth patterns, collaborative networks, and thematic focuses of EFIS are notably limited. This gap necessitates a data-driven analysis to understand the field's dynamics and identify where research is most concentrated or neglected. Therefore, this study conducts a bibliometric analysis using the Scopus database to identify publication trends, key actors, and conceptual structures within the ELT-Islamic education nexus. Rather than providing a normative definition of EFIS, this research aims to identify scholarly publications and understand the intellectual structures that shape them through bibliometric indicators. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:



**Figure 1.** Bibliometric Guidelines

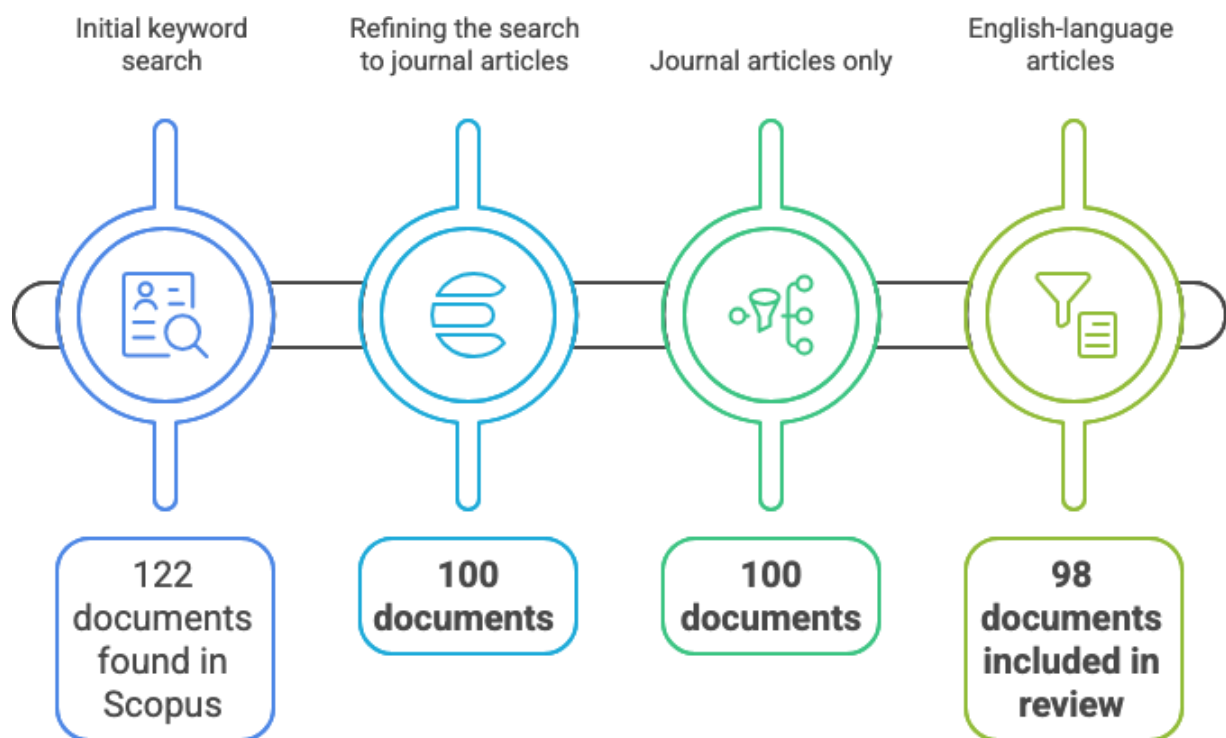
This paper consists of three principal parts: the research design and data sources, the bibliometric findings addressing each research question, and a concluding discussion outlining implications and recommendations for future studies.

## 2. METODE PENELITIAN

This study used the Scopus database as the primary data source because it provides comprehensive and standardised metadata suitable for bibliometric analysis. The search was conducted on 25 February 2026 using the keyword English language teaching AND Islamic

education in the title, abstract, and keywords fields. The initial keyword search identified 122 documents in Scopus. The search was then refined to journal articles, resulting in 100 documents. The dataset was further limited to journal articles only, which maintained the total at 100 documents. Finally, the results were restricted to English-language articles, leading to 98 documents included in the review (See Figure 2).

The screening process focused on ensuring topical relevance to English language teaching within Islamic education contexts. Titles and abstracts were reviewed to confirm alignment with the research focus. No additional exclusions were made beyond the predefined database filters. All 98 documents were exported from Scopus in CSV format for analysis. The bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer to examine keyword co-occurrence, identify conceptual structures, analyse publication trends, and explore potential thematic gaps within the field of English language teaching in Islamic education contexts.



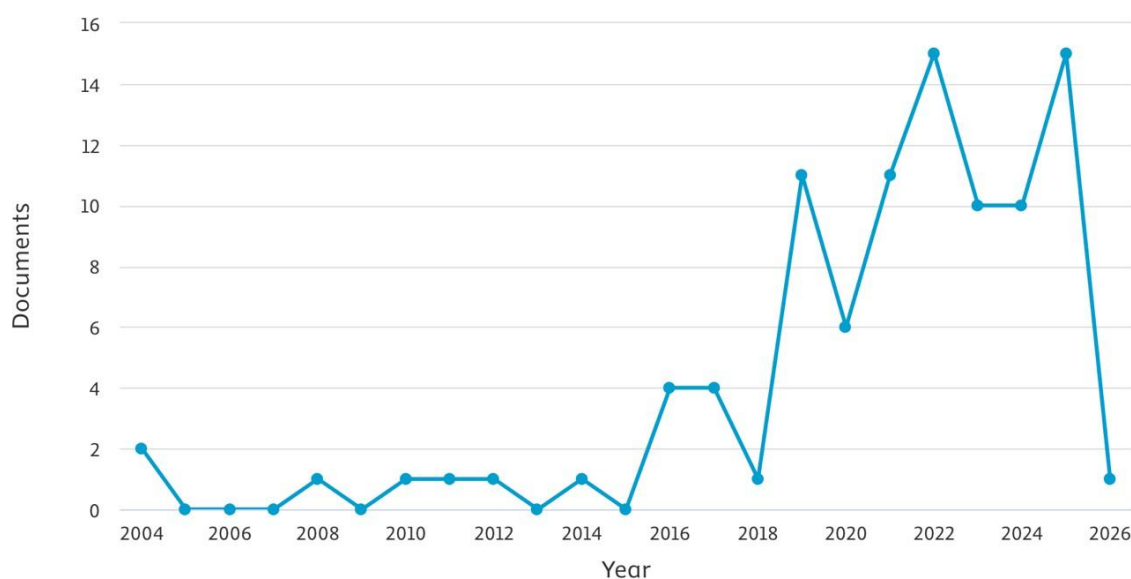
**Figure 2.** Document selection

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Analysis of publication time trend

Figure 3 presents the annual distribution of publications on ELT and Islamic education between 2004 and 2026. The overall pattern indicates a substantial increase in output, particularly after 2018. During the period 2004 to 2015, publications remained sporadic and very limited, often ranging between zero and one document per year. A gradual increase began in 2016 and 2017, with four publications recorded in each year. However, a significant upward shift occurred from 2019 onward, marking the beginning of a more consistent growth phase.

The most productive years were 2022 and 2025, with 15 publications each. The period from 2021 to 2025 shows sustained high productivity, with annual outputs consistently above 10 documents. This concentration indicates that a large proportion of the total 98 documents were published within the last five years. The sharp rise after 2018 may reflect increased institutional attention to integrating ELT into Islamic education contexts, internationalisation of curricula, and the expansion of research on English-medium or English-based instruction in Islamic institutions. Although 2026 shows a lower count, this likely reflects incomplete indexing for the current year. The upward trajectory observed in recent years suggests that research in this area is gaining momentum and is likely to expand further.

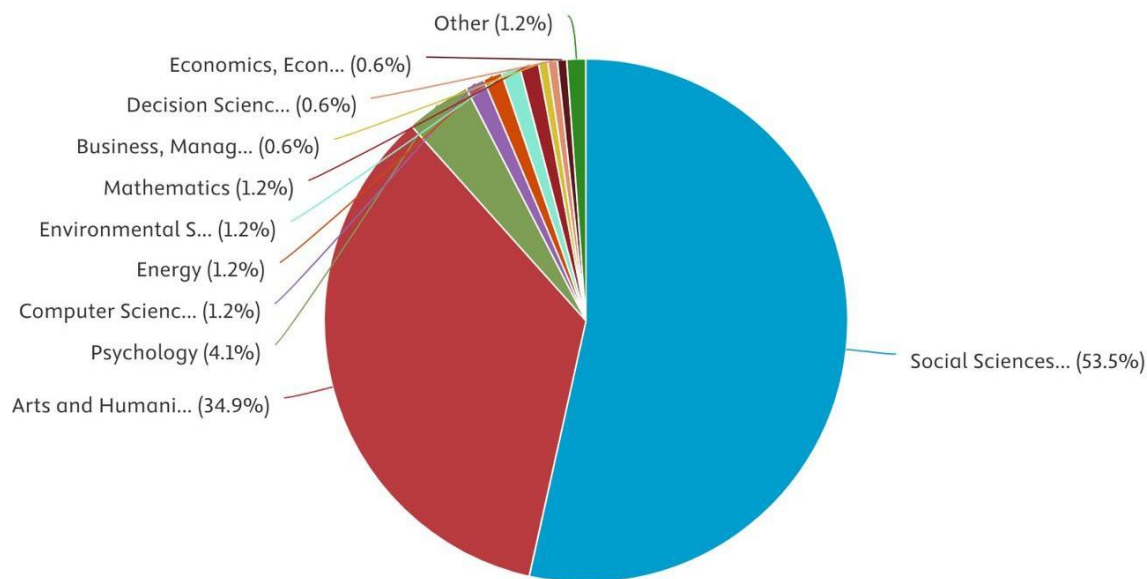


**Figure 3.** Documents by year (Scopus)

Meanwhile, the dominant research areas in publications on English language teaching and Islamic education are Social Sciences (53.5%) and Arts and Humanities (34.9%). Psychology contributes a smaller yet notable share (4.1%). Several other subject areas appear with limited representation, including Computer Science (1.2%), Energy (1.2%), Environmental Science (1.2%), Mathematics (1.2%), and Other categories (1.2%). Business, Management and Accounting (0.6%), Decision Sciences (0.6%), and Economics, Econometrics and Finance (0.6%) show marginal involvement (See Figure 3).

The data indicate that research on ELT in Islamic education contexts is strongly anchored in the social sciences and the arts and Humanities. This concentration reflects the field's pedagogical, curricular, and socio-cultural orientation. The presence of Psychology suggests attention to learner variables, motivation, and language acquisition processes in Islamic institutions. The limited contribution from technical and quantitative disciplines shows that the field remains primarily education-driven rather than interdisciplinary. The distribution confirms that the research domain is shaped mainly by educational theory, language pedagogy, and humanities-based

inquiry.

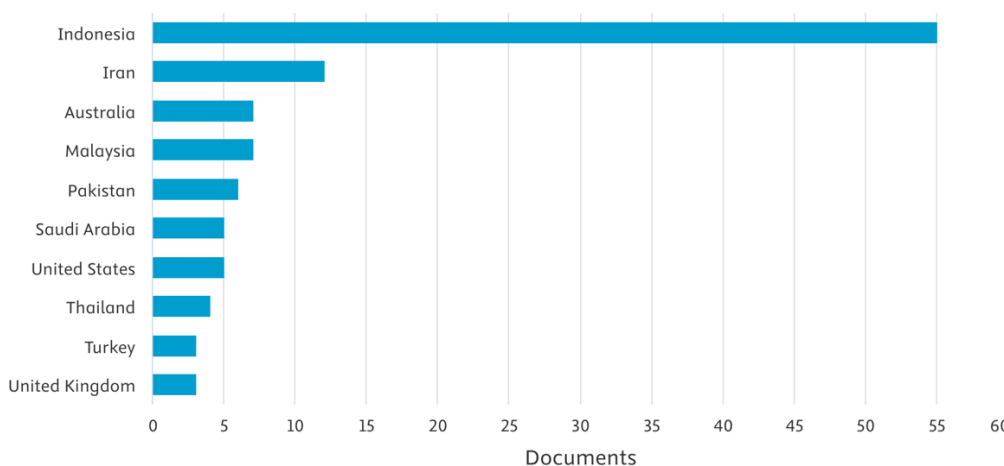


**Figure 4.** Research areas (Scopus)

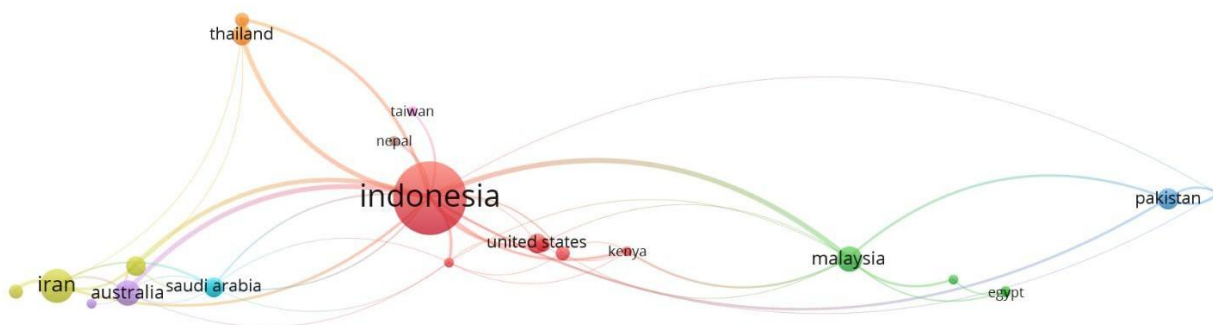
### 3.2 Countries

Researchers from multiple countries have contributed to this field, although the distribution of output is uneven. Indonesia ranks first with 55 publications, showing a substantial lead over other countries. Iran follows with 12 publications. Australia and Malaysia each contribute 7 publications, while Pakistan records 6. Saudi Arabia and the United States each contribute 5 publications. Thailand contributes 4 publications, while Turkey and the United Kingdom each contribute 3.

Indonesia's dominance indicates a strong concentration of research activity in Southeast Asia. This pattern reflects Indonesia's extensive network of Islamic universities, pesantren, and schools, which provide a broad institutional base for scholarly production. Iran also demonstrates notable productivity, signalling sustained academic engagement in this area. The collaboration network visualisation positions Indonesia as the central hub, with strong linkages to Malaysia, Pakistan, Australia, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and Thailand. Malaysia functions as a regional connector linking Southeast Asia with South Asia and the Middle East. Pakistan forms a smaller but distinct cluster connected through Malaysia and Indonesia. The overall network structure shows regionally concentrated collaboration, with Indonesia acting as the primary driver of international linkage.



**Figure 5.** 10 countries/regions with the most active publication (Scopus)



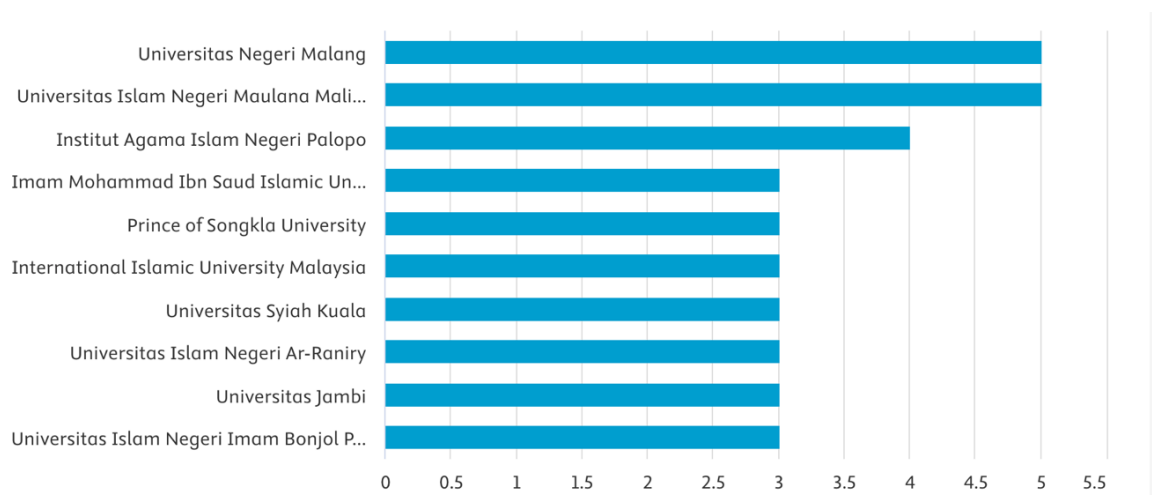
**Figure 6.** Network visualization for international collaboration between countries (VosViewer)

### 3.3 Academic affiliation

The data in figure 7 represent the ten largest academic affiliates in the Scopus database that contributed to publications on ELT and Islamic education during the period under review. The list shows that Malang State University and Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang top the list, each with five papers, confirming Malang’s role as a key cluster for Islamic-based ELT studies in Indonesia. Palopo State Islamic Institute follows with four papers, indicating that religious universities outside Java are also actively producing research integrating English language teaching with Islamic education.

Meanwhile, six other affiliates, such as Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Prince of Songkla University, International Islamic University Malaysia, Syiah Kuala University, Ar-Raniry State Islamic University, Jambi University, and Imam Bonjol State Islamic University in Padang—each contributed three papers, forming a regional network connecting Indonesia, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia in the discourse of ELT and Islamic education. Cumulatively, the contributions of these ten institutions represent the most productive centres of knowledge production in the field, according to the Scopus index, with a relatively dispersed distribution pattern, so that no single

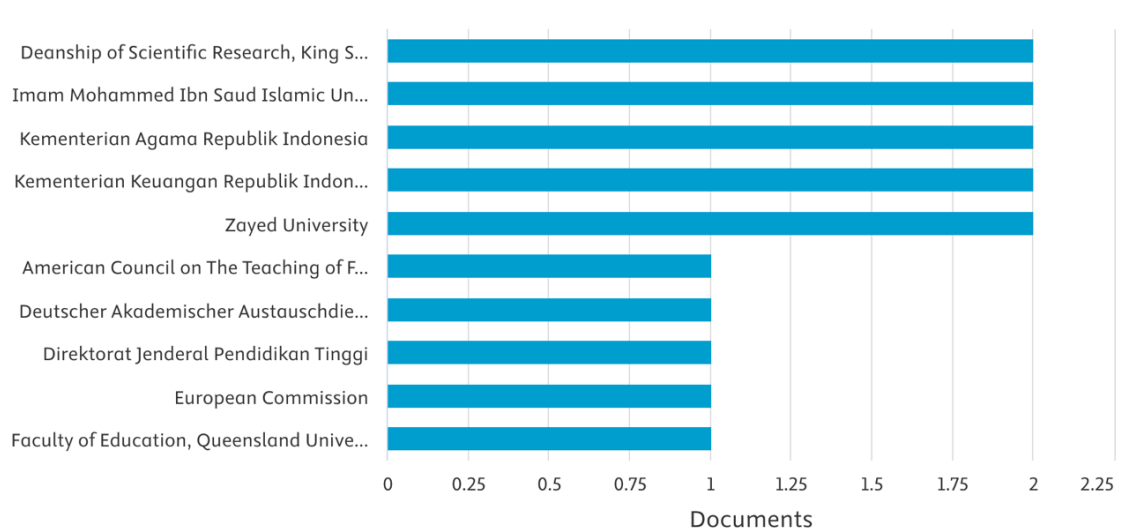
university completely dominates the publication landscape. This pattern suggests that the study of ELT in the context of Islamic education is growing through collaboration across countries and institutional traditions, which has the potential to enrich the theoretical and methodological frameworks used in subsequent research.



**Figure 7.** Documents by affiliation (Scopus)

### 3.4 Research funding organisations

The Scopus data identify 10 major research funding organisations that have supported publications on this field during the study period, shedding light on how financial support shapes the field’s development. At the forefront are the Deanship of Scientific Research, King Saud University; Imam Mohammed Ibn Saud Islamic University; the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia; the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia; and Zayed University, each funding two documents, which indicates strong institutional backing from Gulf and Indonesian governmental as well as university-based sponsors for research that integrates English language pedagogy with Islamic educational contexts. The remaining five organisations, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), the Directorate General of Higher Education of Indonesia, the European Commission, and the Faculty of Education, Queensland University, each support one document, reflecting additional but more targeted investments from professional associations, international scholarship bodies, national higher education authorities, and overseas universities. Collectively, these ten organisations demonstrate that a single global sponsor does not dominate funding for research in ELT and Islamic education; rather, funding is distributed among national governments, Islamic universities, and international agencies, encouraging a diversity of perspectives, methodologies, and cross-border collaborations in the emerging scholarship of this field.



**Figure 8.** Top 10 funding organisations (Scopus)

### 3.5 Authorship and co-authorship analysis

Of the 160 authors who have contributed to publications on ELT in Islamic education in the analysed Scopus dataset (Table 1), Mirhosseni, S.A., Yustina, Bonsuk, and Irwansyah are the most active, each with 3 publications. However, Mirhosseni has the highest total citations (n=20) since 2023–2024. Besides, six contributors in the top 10, namely Indah, Mukminin, Zulfikar, Heriansyah, Marhaban, and Muslem, each have two publications. Furthermore, Table 1 depicts the authorship-authorship network of authors with at least one publication and one citation, illustrating the pattern of collaborative links between authors throughout the study.

**Table 1.** Top ten authors

| Ranking | Author             | Number of articles | TC | FP   | LP   |
|---------|--------------------|--------------------|----|------|------|
| 1       | Mirhosseni, S. A.  | 3                  | 20 | 2023 | 2024 |
| 2       | Yustina, Luli Sari | 3                  | 12 | 2021 | 2023 |
| 3       | Bonsuk, Y.         | 3                  | 4  | 2022 | 2026 |
| 4       | Irwansyah, Dedi    | 3                  | 4  | 2021 | 2024 |
| 5       | Indah, Nur Rohamni | 2                  | 39 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 6       | Mukminin, Amirul   | 2                  | 26 | 2017 | 2019 |
| 7       | Zulfikar, Teuku    | 2                  | 17 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 8       | Heriansyah, Hendra | 2                  | 16 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 9       | Marhaban, Saiful   | 2                  | 16 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 10      | Muslem, Asnawi     | 2                  | 16 | 2021 | 2022 |

TC: total citation, FP: first publication, LP: last publication

### 3.6 Journal

The retrieved documents (n = 98) were published in 78 journals across various fields of study. Table 2 shows the top ten journals (number of articles ≥ 2) that served as sources of literature in the field of ELT and Islamic education from 2004 to 2026. These



journals published 31 documents, accounting for 31.63% of the total literature. Each had at least two publications on this topic, with the top positions held by the Asian EFL Journal with 6 articles, Studies in English Language and Education with 5 articles, the Journal of Language and Language Teaching with 4 articles, the Forum for Linguistic Studies and Theory and Practice in Language Studies contributing 3 articles each, as well as journals that published 2 articles such as Current Issues in Language Planning, Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics, International Journal of Applied Linguistics United Kingdom, and International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education. In addition, four of the ten active and inactive journals in Table 2 are no longer listed in the JIF (discontinued).

**Table 2.** Top ten journals

| Ranking | Journal   | Number of articles | JIF              |
|---------|---|--------------------|------------------|
| 1       | Asian EFL Journal   | 6                  | Discontinued     |
| 2       | Studies in English Language and Education                     | 5                  | 2.6              |
| 3       | Journal of Language Teaching and Research                     | 4                  | 1.5              |
| 4       | Forum for Linguistic Studies                                  | 3                  | 0.7/Discontinued |
| 5       | Theory and Practice in Language Studies                       | 3                  | 1.3              |
| 6       | Asian ESP Journal   | 2                  | Discontinued     |
| 7       | Current Issues in Language Planning                           | 2                  | 5.7              |
| 8       | Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics                       | 2                  | 2.0/Discontinued |
| 9       | International Journal of Applied Linguistics United Kingdom   | 2                  | 2.7              |
| 10      | International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education | 2                  | 2.8              |

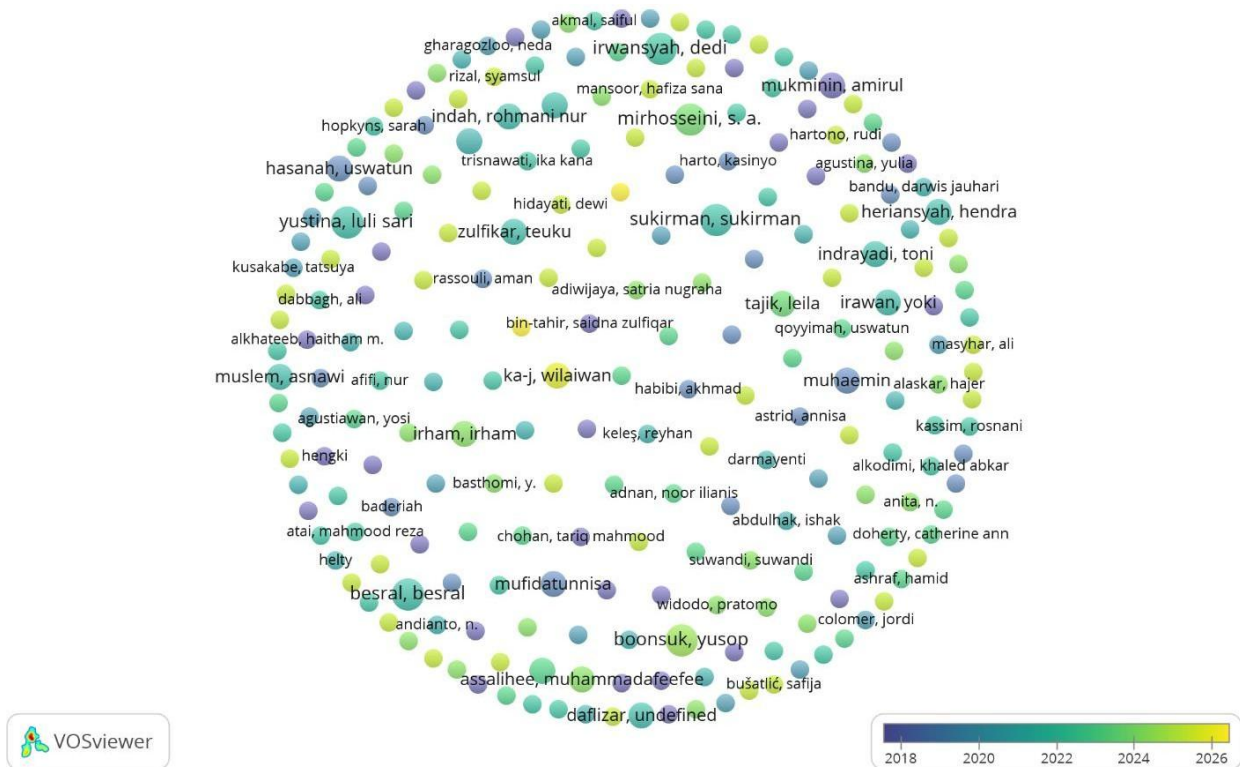
JIF: Journal Impact Factor

### 3.7 Citation Analysis

Citation analysis of the dataset was conducted using VOSviewer software, following systematic steps: author analysis, publication analysis to identify the most influential articles, and journal analysis as the publication platform. Figure 9 shows the network of relationships between authors with at least one publication and one citation, with authors such as Sukirman, Sukirman; Mirhosseini, S.A.; and Yustina, Luli Sari emerging as prominent researchers within the network. In addition, Table 3 displays the 10 most highly cited documents, starting with the study by Asif et al. (2020) on moral education for sustainable development, leading with 65 citations, followed by Qoyyimah et al. (2023) on Professional Identity and Imagined Student Identity of EIL Teachers in Islamic Schools, with 16 citations.

Furthermore, Figure 10 presents the citation network of articles with at least one citation, highlighting the interrelationships and the chronological evolution of the

English language teaching (ELT) literature in Islamic settings. Foundational works such as Hayati (2010), Rahman (2004), and Al-Issa (2020) serve as key hubs within this network, while recent contributions by Indah (2022) and Qoyyimah (2023) demonstrate the growing interconnectivity in recent years. An analysis of the publication medium in Figure 11 reveals that Asian EFL Journal and Studies in English Language and Education are the dominant journals with significant citation weights. These journals, along with Sage Open and the International Journal of Instruction, form a cluster indicating strong intellectual dialogue among publications in similar fields in the Scopus database.

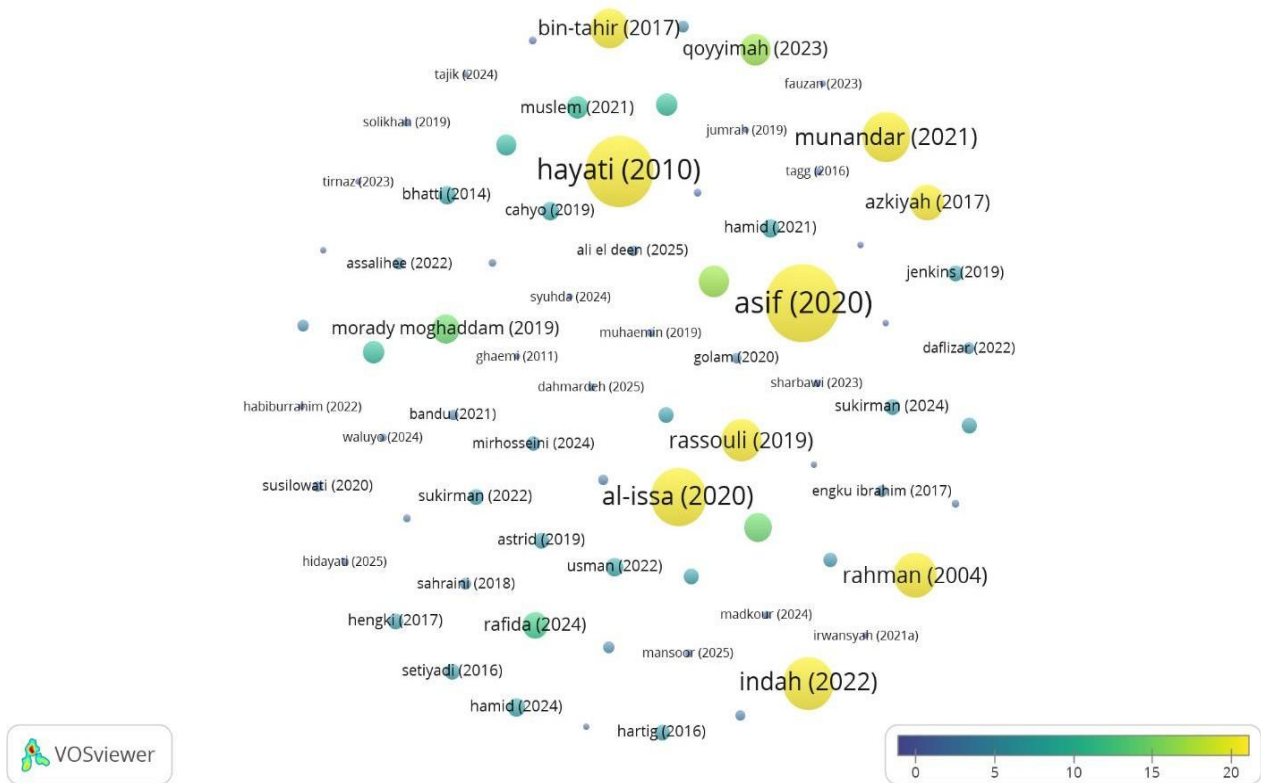


**Figure 9.** Citation network visualization of authors with a minimum threshold of one publication and one citation

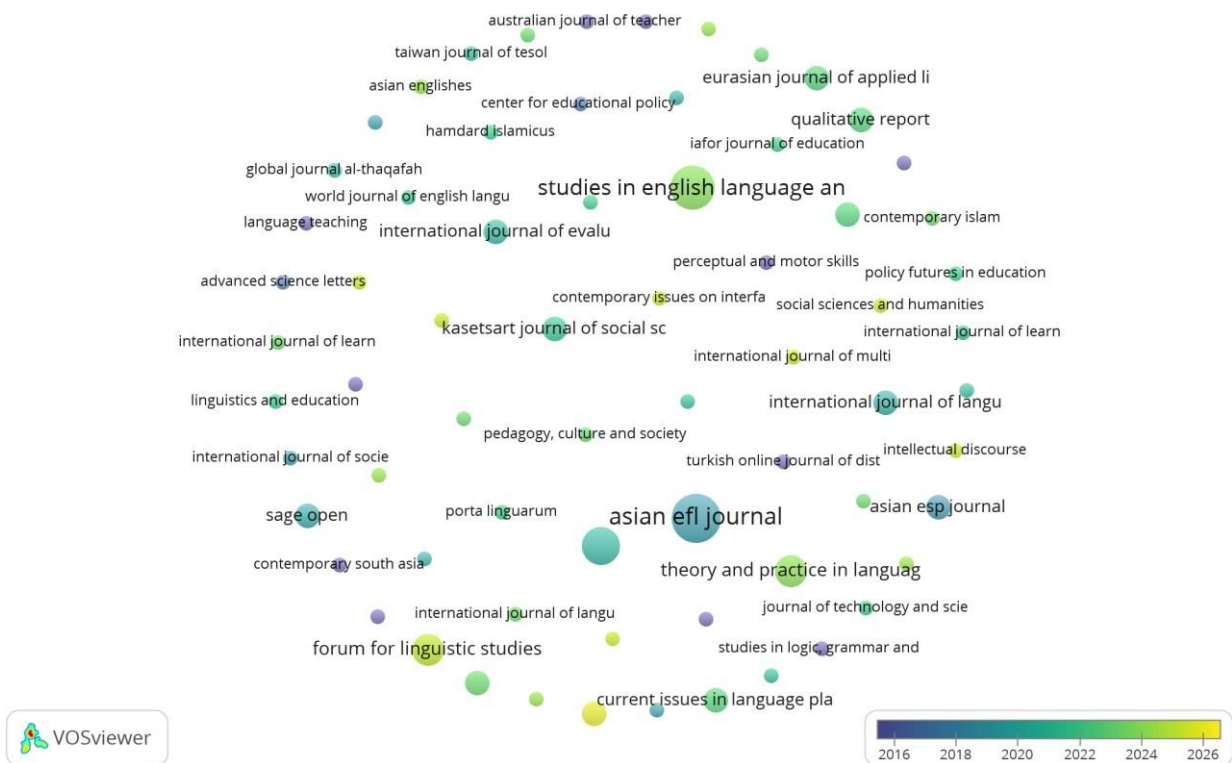
**Table 3.** Ranking of the top ten scholarly works by total citation count

| Ranking | Title   | Source                                  | Total Citation |
|---------|---|---|----------------|
| 1       | Moral education for sustainable development: Comparison of university teachers' perceptions in China and Pakistan | Sustainability Switzerland              | 65             |
| 2       | Language planning and language-in-education policy in Iran  | Language Problems and Language Planning | 58             |
| 3       | The language planning situation in the Sultanate of Oman  | Current Issues in Language Planning     | 41             |

|    |   |   |    |
|----|---|---|----|
| 4  | The Research Competence, Critical Thinking Skills and Digital Literacy of Indonesian EFL Students   | Journal of Language Teaching and Research     | 36 |
| 5  | Indonesian EFL teachers' pedagogic beliefs and classroom practices regarding culture and interculturality   | Language and Intercultural Communication      | 33 |
| 6  | Denizens of alien worlds: A survey of students and teachers at Pakistan's Urdu and English language-medium schools, and madrassas   | Contemporary South Asia                       | 28 |
| 7  | English Language Education Throughout Islamic Republic Reign in Iran: Government Policies and People's Attitudes  | Sage Open                                     | 25 |
| 8  | Multilingual teaching and learning at Pesantren Schools in Indonesia  | Asian Efl Journal                             | 23 |
| 9  | In search of teaching quality of EFL student teachers through teaching practicum: Lessons from a teacher education program   V iskanju kakovosti poučevanja prihodnjih učiteljev angleščine kot tujega jezika med pedagoško prakso: Program izobraževanja učiteljev | Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal | 20 |
| 10 | Professional Identity and Imagined Student Identity of EIL Teachers in Islamic Schools  | Journal of Language Identity and Education    | 16 |



**Figure 10.** Network visualization of citation interconnectivity among articles with a minimum threshold of five citations

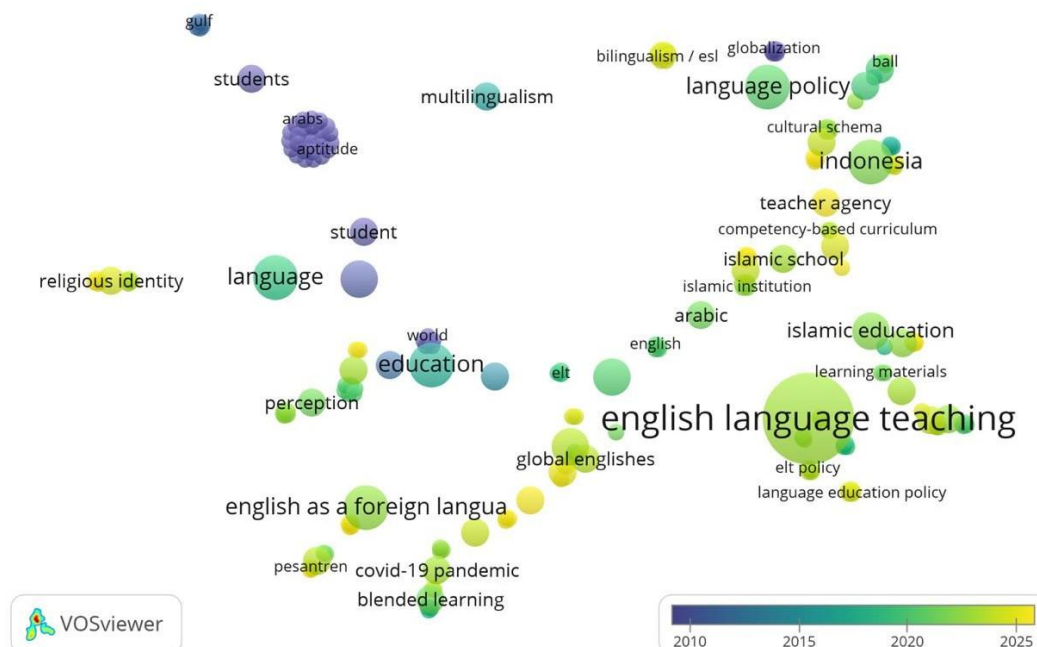


**Figure 11.** Network visualization of citation relationships between journals with a minimum threshold of one citation.

### 3.8 Keyword

In analyzing the discipline of English language teaching (ELT) in Islamic institutions, keywords play a crucial role in summarizing the core content of articles and uncovering emerging research trends. Visualization techniques, such as network and heat maps, were used to deepen our understanding of the academic landscape in this field. The proportional frequency and strength of relationships among terminology used in Islamic-based ELT studies are depicted in Figures 12 and 13. Terms such as “English language teaching,” “Islamic education,” “English as a foreign language,” and “Indonesia” emerged as the most dominant keywords in this dataset. Further analysis of these keywords provides insight into current research trends, including a focus on language policy and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on blended learning in Islamic educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren).

To this end, a keyword co-occurrence analysis was conducted using VOSviewer to map relationships between concepts visually. As illustrated in Figures 11 and 12, the keyword distribution highlights several key thematic clusters spanning religious identity, pedagogy in Islamic schools, and global issues such as global Englishes. The dominance of the keyword “English language teaching” indicates that research remains focused on teaching methodologies in general. However, there has been significant growth in interest in specific topics such as teacher agency, competency-based curriculum, and learning materials in the context of Islamic education. The heat map in Figure 12 highlights the concentration of research in these areas. It suggests future research opportunities in cooler, less-explored areas, such as the relationship between bilingualism and cultural schemas in Islamic education.



**Figure 12.** Co-occurrence of keywords.



**Figure 13.** Heat map of keywords.

## CONCLUSION

This study presents important trends from a bibliometric analysis of publications on ELT in Islamic education in the Scopus database from 2004 to 2026. The study findings demonstrate significant momentum in this field, evidenced by a sharp increase in publications after 2018. This reflects a growing research focus on integrating English language competencies with Islamic studies or Islamic education. Furthermore, a strong conceptual structure centered on “English language teaching” and “Islamic education” is identified, revealing an emerging shift toward specific themes such as the role of teachers, competency-based curricula, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on blended learning in Islamic institutions such as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). Furthermore, this study underscores Indonesia’s dominant role as a research hub in this field, supported by a strong regional and international collaborative network.

However, this study has limitations. First, the dataset is limited to Scopus; Scopus may not yet index local journals. Second, the search was restricted to English-language documents, potentially excluding important contributions written in other languages. While the current filtering ensures standardized data and high-quality metadata, incorporating more languages and databases in the future could provide a more holistic representation of the global discourse on English language teaching in Islamic education. Additionally, additional bibliometric analyses could be conducted on leading journals identified in this dataset, such as the Asian EFL Journal and Studies in English Language and Education. Such analyses could

further assess the long-term impact and academic standing of these journals within the specific field of Islam-based ELT.

Future research should prioritize exploring underrepresented thematic areas identified in the heatmap, such as the relationship between bilingualism and cultural schemas in Islamic education. Furthermore, future studies should address current linguistic and database limitations by including local journals published in languages such as Arabic, Indonesian, or Malay to provide a more holistic representation of the global discourse. Beyond quantitative mapping, researchers are encouraged to delve deeper into specific emerging topics, including the role of teachers, competency-based curricula, technology integration, and the development of specialized learning materials tailored to the unique socio-cultural contexts of Islamic institutions.

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