

MAPPING QUR'ANIC CONTEMPLATION RESEARCH (2001–2025): TRENDS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS^(*)

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the development and trends in Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research based on publications indexed in the Scopus database between 2001 and 2025. The objective is to provide a comprehensive overview of publication growth, thematic focus, authorship patterns and institutional contributions while identifying areas for future scholarly advancement. However, despite the growing volume of studies on *tadabbur* and related Islamic scholarship, existing bibliometric research has not systematically mapped the intellectual structure, thematic evolution and interdisciplinary orientation of *tadabbur* studies over an extended period. Using VOSviewer, R-Studio (Bibliometrix) and Microsoft Excel, the study analyzes 358 documents from 175 sources to map the intellectual and thematic evolution of this field. The findings indicate a steady annual growth rate of 16.37%, reflecting a significant surge in global scholarly interest. Malaysia emerges as the leading contributor, followed by Indonesia and Turkiye, with Universiti Malaya and Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia identified as the most productive institutions. Citation and keyword analyses reveal a strategic shift from classical exegesis toward interdisciplinary engagements integrating hermeneutics, ontology, ethics and digital humanities. The study identifies five major thematic clusters—interpretive ethics, linguistic

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hermeneutics, ontological reflection, gender and education and comparative scriptural studies—demonstrating the expansion of *tadabbur* into broader intellectual and socio-developmental domains. Nonetheless, international collaboration remains limited, highlighting the need for stronger cross-border partnerships to enhance methodological diversity and research impact. Overall, these insights contribute to a deeper understanding of contemporary Qur'anic studies and underscore the potential of interdisciplinary and technology-assisted approaches in enriching future scholarship.

Keywords: *Qur'anic Studies; Qur'anic Contemplation; Tadabbur; Bibliometric Analysis; Research Trends; Global Collaboration.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The field of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) has witnessed remarkable scholarly growth and diversification over the past few decades. This increasing academic attention reflects the intellectual depth and spiritual richness of the Qur'an, as well as the evolving capacity of Qur'anic studies to engage with contemporary research paradigms. Scholars have adopted diverse approaches—ranging from classical hermeneutics to interdisciplinary and digital humanities frameworks—illustrating the dynamic nature of scholarly engagement with the Qur'anic text (Nirwana et al., 2025; Azaiez & Mensia, 2023). Within this landscape, *tadabbur* is increasingly explored not merely as a devotional practice, but as a reflective mode of engagement that mediates between textual meaning, human consciousness and ethical orientation.

However, despite the expanding body of literature on *tadabbur* and the growing application of bibliometric methods in Islamic and Qur'anic studies, existing research has yet to provide a systematic and longitudinal mapping of the intellectual structure, thematic evolution and collaborative patterns of *tadabbur* scholarship. Much of the existing work remains fragmented, descriptive or limited to specific themes, periods or methodological lenses, thereby leaving the overall development and interdisciplinary trajectory of *tadabbur* studies insufficiently examined.

Against this backdrop, the present bibliometric analysis seeks to map research trends and intellectual developments in *tadabbur* by identifying its main thematic directions, methodological evolution and patterns of scholarly collaboration. By visualizing publication trajectories, keyword networks and institutional linkages, this study elucidates how *tadabbur* has progressively emerged as an increasingly distinctive and rapidly expanding area of inquiry

within Qur'anic studies. To contextualize this development, the following section reviews key studies that have shaped contemporary scholarly discourse on *tadabbur* and informed its methodological orientations.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent scholarship reveals a steady rise in publications related to Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*) and contemplation (*tadabbur*), with the latter developing as a focused subfield within the broader interpretive tradition of Qur'anic studies, particularly since the early 2000s. The integration of advanced bibliometric and data visualization techniques has made it possible to track this growth more systematically, highlighting the increasing number of contributors and institutions involved worldwide (Nirwana et al., 2024, 2025). Among these, Malaysia has emerged as one of the leading contributors, with institutions such as Universiti Malaya playing a central role in advancing *tadabbur* research, as highlighted in recent bibliometric analyses. Over time, the thematic scope of this scholarship has expanded significantly to include issues of religious moderation, digital discourse and social engagement alongside traditional discussions on exegesis, linguistics and theology (Nirwana et al., 2025).

The intellectual diversity of *tadabbur* is further reflected in the wide range of hermeneutical models that have shaped modern interpretation. These include modernist, Islamist, scientific, translationalist, revisionist and feminist approaches, each offering a distinct epistemological lens through which the Qur'an is read and understood (Ohlander, 2009). The integration of technological innovation—particularly digital databases, corpus linguistics and AI-assisted textual analysis—has opened new frontiers for research, enabling more sophisticated engagement with Qur'anic data (Nirwana et al., 2024; Syahir et al., 2025). Despite these advancements, however, international collaboration remains relatively limited, with much of the research still concentrated within specific linguistic or regional networks (Nirwana et al., 2024, 2025). Strengthening transnational cooperation and shared data repositories would therefore be vital to enriching perspectives and promoting methodological innovation in the future.

Previous bibliometric studies in Islamic and Qur'anic studies have primarily focused on mapping publication growth, institutional contributions and thematic distributions within broader domains such as *tafsir*, Islamic thought and digital Islamic studies (Nirwana et al., 2024, 2025). While these studies have successfully demonstrated the increasing role of technology and data-driven methods in Islamic scholarship, they have not specifically examined *tadabbur* as a distinct and evolving subfield, nor have they provided a systematic and longitudinal analysis of its intellectual structure, thematic evolution and collaborative patterns. Consequently, the present study addresses this gap by

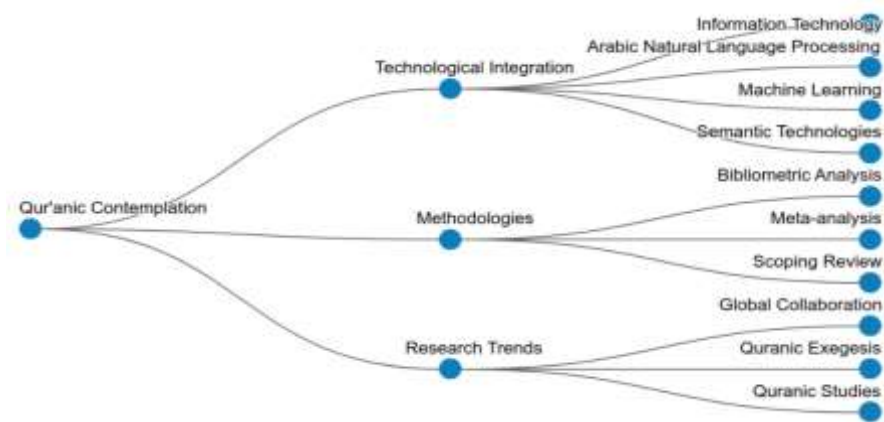
offering a comprehensive bibliometric mapping of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research over a 25-year period, thereby clarifying its developmental trajectory, interdisciplinary orientation and position within contemporary Qur'anic studies.

Overall, the body of literature on *tadabbur* demonstrates significant progress in both thematic diversity and methodological sophistication. The field's evolution has been driven by improved access to Qur'anic resources, the adoption of contemporary analytical tools and the creative integration of technology within Islamic scholarship. The emergence of multiple interpretive models and the incorporation of interdisciplinary frameworks highlight the field's vitality and adaptability in addressing contemporary intellectual and spiritual concerns.

Nevertheless, recent bibliometric studies indicate that the level of global collaboration remains relatively modest, suggesting the need for more inclusive academic networks that bridge geographical and linguistic divides. Encouraging joint research, shared databases and multi-institutional projects would further enhance the field's academic maturity and global relevance (Nirwana et al., 2024, 2025).

Figure 1 presents a synthesized overview of the literature, categorizing the field into three major trajectories: Technological Integration, Methodological Approaches and Research Trends. These trajectories collectively reflect the current scholarly direction of *tadabbur*, highlighting the growing interconnection between traditional interpretive frameworks and digital and interdisciplinary paradigms.

Figure 1
Overview of Literature Review



3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employs the bibliometric analysis method, a quantitative research approach that evaluates scholarly literature by identifying patterns, trends and intellectual linkages within a particular field (Marvi & Foroudi, 2023; Passas, 2024; Wulansari et al., 2020). Bibliometric analysis involves a systematic process of data collection, refinement and interpretation to extract meaningful insights from bibliographic records indexed in major academic databases such as Scopus and Web of Science (Nowakowska, 2025; Passas, 2024). Historically, this method evolved from the concept of statistical bibliography in the late nineteenth century and developed substantially throughout the twentieth century (Danesh & Nejad, 2020). The primary objective of bibliometric analysis is to map the development of a research domain, identify influential publications and authors and uncover the intellectual structure of the discipline (Benton & Alexander, 2016; Khongwir & Sharmiladevi, 2023; Toaza & Kiss, 2024).

Bibliographic data were retrieved from the Scopus database using a Boolean search strategy designed to capture publications related to Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*). The search string applied was:

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TITLE-ABS-KEY ( ( "qur'an" OR quran OR quranic OR qur'anic OR koran OR qurān ) W/3 ( reflect* OR contemplat* OR "spiritual reflection" OR tadabbur OR engag* OR "deep reading" OR "understanding" ) ) AND PUBYEAR > 2000 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( DOCTYPE , "ar" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( DOCTYPE , "re" ) )
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This query retrieved journal articles and review papers published between 2001 and 2025 that discuss reflection and contemplation on the Qur'an. The search was conducted on November 2, 2025 (18:45 MYT, UTC +8). The resulting dataset underwent a systematic cleaning process to remove duplicates, incomplete metadata and irrelevant records, ensuring analytical precision and reliability.

The final dataset was analyzed using VOSviewer, RStudio and the Bibliometrix package. These tools enabled co-citation, co-word and bibliographic coupling analyses. Network visualizations were generated to reveal patterns of collaboration, keyword co-occurrence and thematic evolution in *tadabbur* research (Nowakowska, 2025; Wulansari et al., 2020).

Scopus was chosen as the principal data source due to its comprehensive coverage, reliability and compatibility with leading bibliometric tools. It indexes a broad range of peer-reviewed journals and provides detailed citation information, making it particularly suitable for mapping research trends in Qur'anic and Islamic studies (Bakhmat et al., 2022; Vieira & Gomes, 2009). Moreover, Scopus has been widely employed in Islamic-related bibliometric

studies—such as those examining Islamic work ethics, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* and Qur'anic interpretation—further affirming its relevance to this research domain (Johara et al., 2023; Tubarad et al., 2022).

In addition, Scopus offers a user-friendly interface and integrates seamlessly with VOSviewer and Bibliometrix, which facilitates efficient data extraction, cleaning and visualization. Although other databases such as Web of Science or Google Scholar may contain additional records, Scopus provides the most balanced combination of breadth, precision and analytical functionality, making it the most appropriate and efficient choice for this study.

The bibliometric approach provides a structured and objective means of assessing the intellectual landscape of *tadabbur*. It allows researchers to trace the evolution of key themes, identify influential authors and publications and highlight emerging research gaps. Moreover, this method offers an evidence-based perspective on how contemporary scholarship engages with the Qur'an's spiritual, psychological and structural dimensions (Abdekhoda & Ranjbaran, 2022; Almajeedy, 2022). Consequently, bibliometric analysis serves as an essential tool for understanding the trajectory of *tadabbur* research and for informing future directions in Qur'anic and Islamic studies.

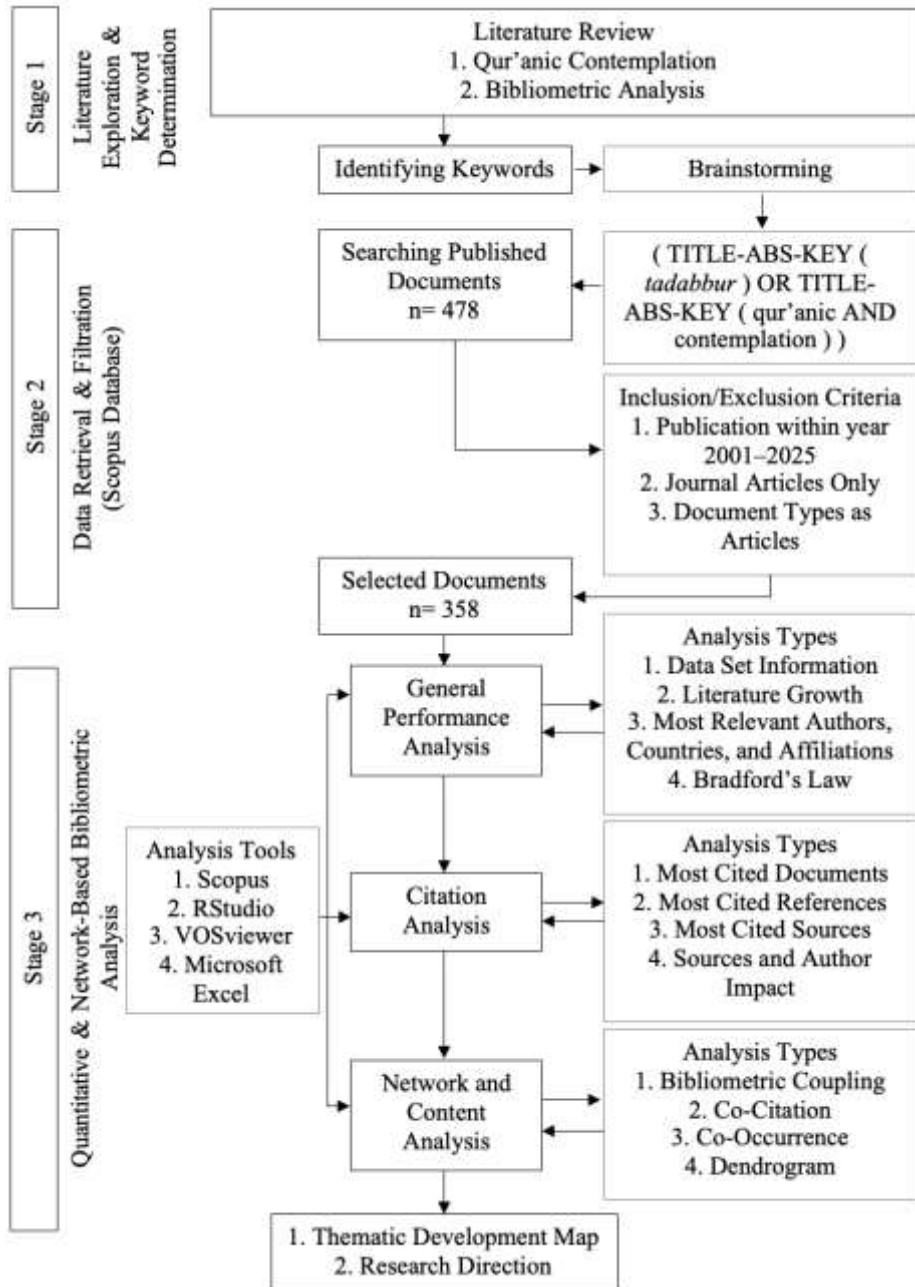
Figure 2 illustrates the three-stage process employed in this study's bibliometric analysis of *tadabbur* research.

- Stage 1 (Literature Exploration and Keyword Determination) involved identifying relevant keywords through literature review and brainstorming to define the scope of the study.
- Stage 2 (Data Retrieval and Filtration) focused on extracting and refining data from the Scopus database using the specified Boolean query and inclusion criteria.
- Stage 3 (Quantitative and Network-Based Analysis) utilized multiple analytical tools—RStudio, VOSviewer and Microsoft Excel—alongside Scopus as the primary data source to conduct performance analysis, citation mapping and network visualization.

This structured workflow ensured both methodological rigor and analytical transparency, ultimately leading to the development of a thematic map and the identification of future research directions in *tadabbur* studies.

Figure 2

Stages of Bibliometric Analysis Method for Qur'anic Contemplation Study



4.0 RESULTS

This section presents the results of the bibliometric analysis of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research from 2001 to 2025. The analysis is structured around three components. First, the General Performance Analysis examines publication productivity, authorship patterns and growth trends to assess the field's development and maturity. Second, the Citation Analysis evaluates the academic influence of highly cited works, identifying both foundational and emerging contributions that shape the discourse on *tadabbur*. Third, the Network and Content Analysis visualizes the intellectual and thematic structure of the field through co-authorship, co-word and keyword co-occurrence mappings, revealing major research clusters and evolving thematic directions. Collectively, these analyses provide a concise overview of the scholarly landscape of *tadabbur*, highlighting its growth trajectory, influential works and emerging interdisciplinary trends within global research contexts.

4.1 General Performance Analysis

This analysis examines key bibliometric indicators to assess the maturity and scholarly engagement of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research from 2001 to 2025. By evaluating metrics such as publication output, growth rate and authorship patterns, it demonstrates the field's evolution from a niche interest into an expanding interdisciplinary domain. As summarized in Table 1, the dataset comprises 358 documents from 175 sources, exhibiting a robust annual growth rate of 16.37%. The average citation rate of 3.87 per document indicates consistent academic visibility within the scholarly community. Authorship patterns reveal a highly collaborative research culture among 812 contributors, with an average of 4.15 co-authors per paper; notably, no single-authored documents were identified. Furthermore, the corpus consists primarily of research articles (93.8%) rather than review papers, indicating a strong orientation toward original empirical and conceptual contributions. Collectively, these findings underscore the steady expansion, collaborative character and increasing methodological diversity of *tadabbur* research.

Table 1

General Information and Descriptive Statistics of Qur'anic Contemplation Publications (2001–2025)

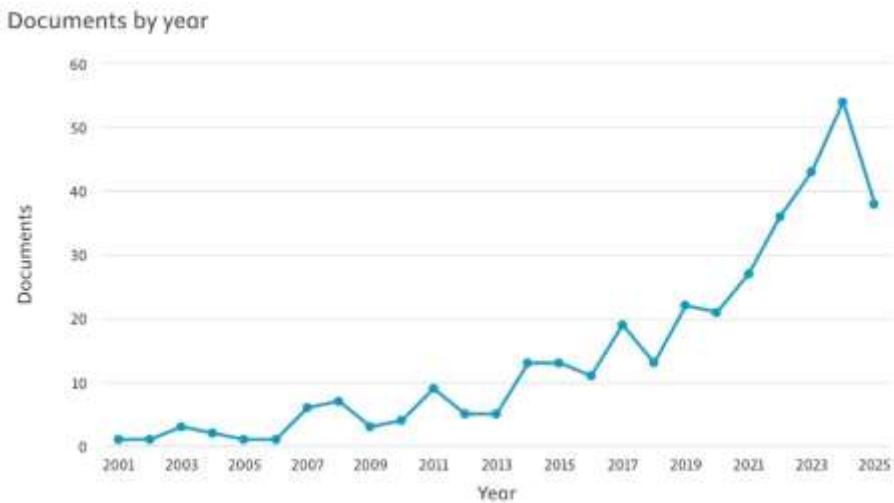
Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	2001:2025
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	175
Documents	358
Annual Growth Rate %	16.37
Document Average Age	5.55
Average Citations Per Doc	3.872
References	3143
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	63
Author's Keywords (DE)	1246
AUTHORS	
Authors	812
Authors of Single-Authored Docs	0
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-Authored Docs	0
Co-Authors per Doc	4.15
International Co-Authorships %	6.704

DOCUMENT TYPES

Article	336
Review	22

As shown in Figure 3, the publication output for Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) between 2001 and 2025 exhibits a significant upward trajectory. Research activity from 2001 to 2010 remained modest, with fewer than ten publications annually. Scholarly interest rose in 2011 as *tadabbur* increasingly emerged as a focal point within broader theological and spiritual discourses. A decisive acceleration occurred after 2018, reflecting a notable shift toward interdisciplinary applications in psychology, education and digital engagement. This momentum peaked with 54 documents in 2024. Despite a slight decline to 38 documents in 2025, the field maintains a robust average annual growth rate of 16.37%. This sustained momentum confirms the maturation of *tadabbur* as a dynamic scholarly field and highlights its growing relevance as a framework for contemporary intellectual, ethical and social development.

Figure 3
Annual Publication Trend of Qur'anic Contemplation Research (2001–2025)



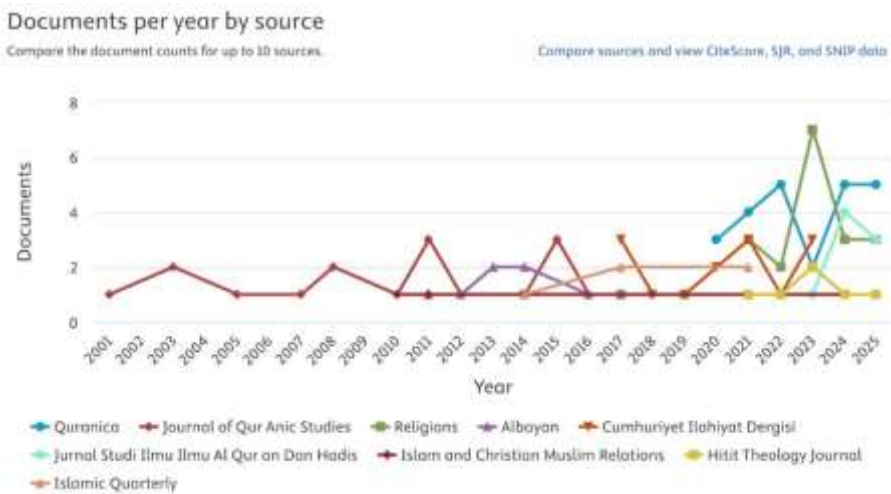
As illustrated in Figure 4, research on Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) is disseminated through a diverse range of academic journals across

multiple disciplines. The *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* recorded the highest output (n = 25), followed closely by *Quranica* (n = 24) and *Religions* (n = 21). These outlets function both as specialized platforms and interdisciplinary venues, attracting scholars from traditional Islamic studies as well as broader social science and humanities perspectives. Other notable outlets include *Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi* (n = 14), *Albayan* (n = 10) and *Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* (n = 8), reflecting active scholarly participation from Turkiye, Indonesia and the Middle East.

The emergence of newer journals such as *Quranica* and *Albayan* points to the increasing diversification of publication outlets in this field. While earlier works (2001–2015) were primarily published in long-established journals such as *The Islamic Quarterly*, the period from 2020 to 2025 witnessed a marked increase in publications within Scopus-indexed and open-access venues, enhancing the global visibility and accessibility of *tadabbur* research. Overall, this distribution highlights the interdisciplinary and transnational character of *tadabbur* scholarship, particularly within Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

Figure 4

Distribution of Qur'anic Contemplation Publications by Source (2001–2025)



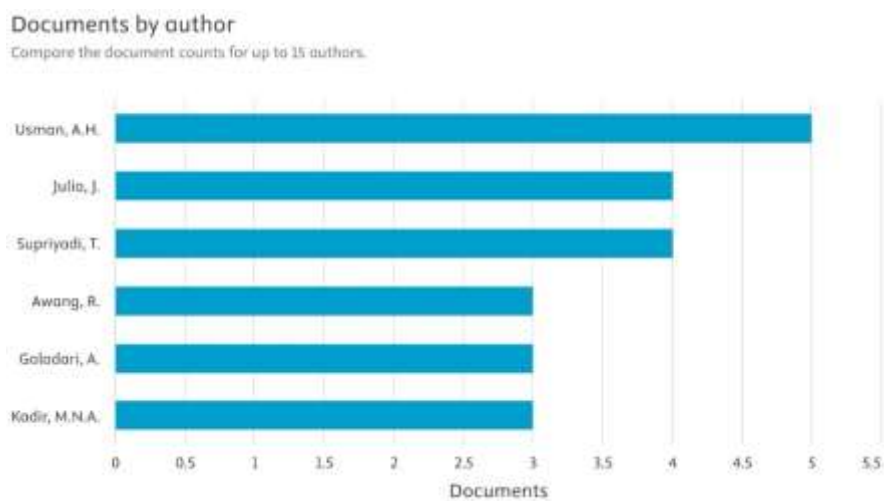
Author productivity analysis reveals a decentralized authorship structure, with research distributed across numerous contributors rather than concentrated among a small group of prolific scholars. As illustrated in Figure 5, Usman, A.H. is the most productive author (n = 5), followed by Julia, J. and Supriyadi, T. (n = 4 each). Other active contributors, including Awang, R., Galadari, A. and

Kadir, M.N.A., produced three publications each, highlighting a collaborative and inclusive research culture.

This dispersion suggests that Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) remains a dynamic, emerging area characterized by a steady influx of new scholars. Affiliations spanning Qur'anic studies, Islamic education, philosophy and psychology underscore the topic's interdisciplinary appeal. Overall, these trends reflect a field undergoing institutional consolidation while remaining open to conceptual innovation and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Figure 5

Most Productive Authors in Qur'anic Contemplation Research (2001–2025)

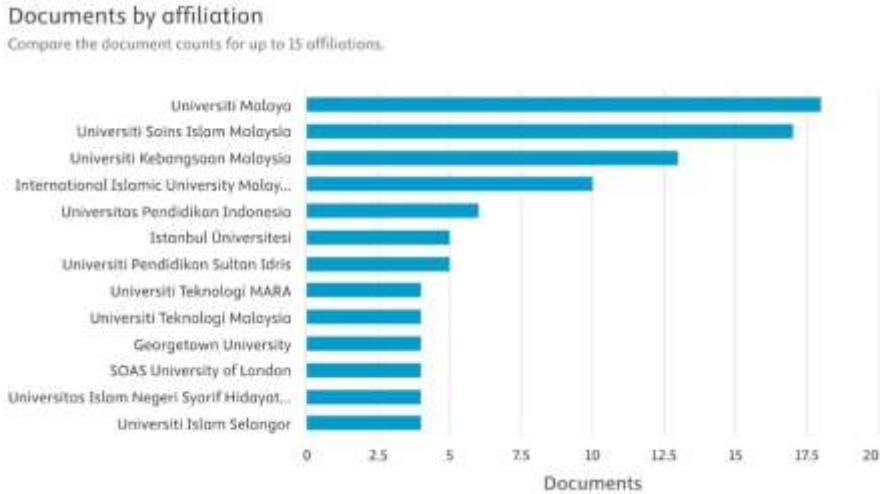


As illustrated in Figure 6, Malaysia dominates the global research landscape in Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*). Universiti Malaya recorded the highest publication output (n = 18), followed by Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (n = 17), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (n = 13) and International Islamic University Malaysia (n = 10). Collectively, Malaysian institutions—including Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Universiti Teknologi MARA and Universiti Islam Selangor—account for more than half of global publications, establishing Malaysia as the principal hub of contemporary *tadabbur* scholarship.

Beyond Malaysia, notable contributions are observed from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (n = 6) and Istanbul Üniversitesi (n = 5), indicating strong scholarly engagement from Indonesia and Türkiye. Furthermore, participation from institutions such as Georgetown University and SOAS University of London (n = 4 each) reflects an expanding transnational and interdisciplinary research landscape. Overall, while Malaysia remains the epicenter of institutional

productivity, *tadabbur* research continues to gain traction across diverse academic contexts, bridging Islamic and Western scholarly traditions.

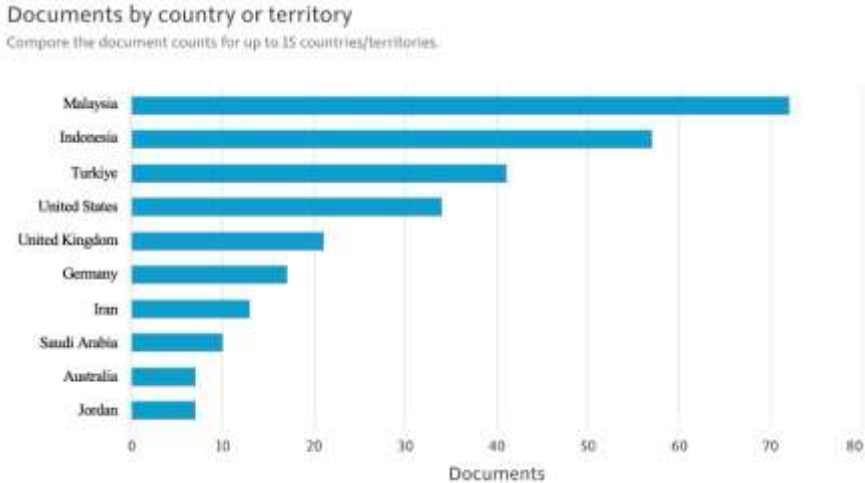
Figure 6
Institutional Distribution of Qur'anic Contemplation Publications (2001–2025)



As shown in Figure 7, research output is concentrated in Southeast Asia and selected Western regions. Malaysia leads with 72 publications, followed by Indonesia (n = 57) and Turkiye (n = 41). Collectively, these three countries contribute more than half of the total global output, highlighting their pivotal role in advancing contemporary Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) scholarship. Beyond Southeast Asia, significant engagement is observed in the United States (n = 34) and the United Kingdom (n = 21), reflecting growing academic interest within Western theological contexts. Other contributing countries include Germany (n = 17), Iran (n = 13) and Saudi Arabia (n = 10), demonstrating a diverse global research landscape. This broad distribution underscores the internationalization of *tadabbur* studies. While Muslim-majority nations remain at the forefront, increasing Western involvement signifies a widening recognition of the Qur'an as a subject of cross-cultural intellectual discourse.

Figure 7

Distribution of Publications by Country on Qur'anic Contemplation (2001–2025)



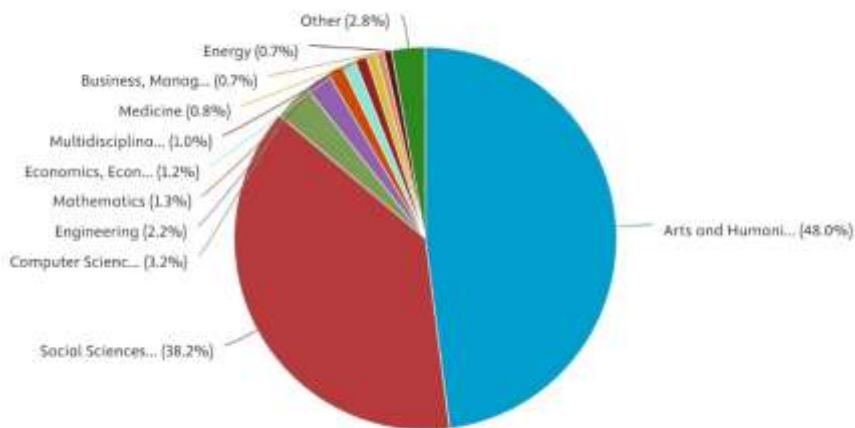
As shown in Figure 8, research output is heavily concentrated in the Arts and Humanities (48.0%) and Social Sciences (38.2%). Together, these domains account for over 86% of publications, reflecting the field’s deep roots in religion, philosophy, education and culture. This distribution underscores the interpretive orientation of Qur’anic contemplation (*tadabbur*), which has traditionally been situated within humanistic and social inquiry.

However, an emerging interdisciplinary trend is evident. Contributions from Computer Science (3.2%), Engineering (2.2%) and Mathematics (1.3%) indicate an increasing integration of digital and computational approaches, including text mining, semantic analysis and artificial intelligence (AI). Smaller contributions from Economics (1.2%) and Medicine (0.8%) further suggest that *tadabbur* research is gradually extending beyond classical theological domains. Overall, this subject-area pattern highlights the field’s evolution toward a more multidisciplinary research landscape.

Figure 8

Distribution of Publications by Subject Area on Qur'anic Contemplation (2001–2025)

Documents by subject area

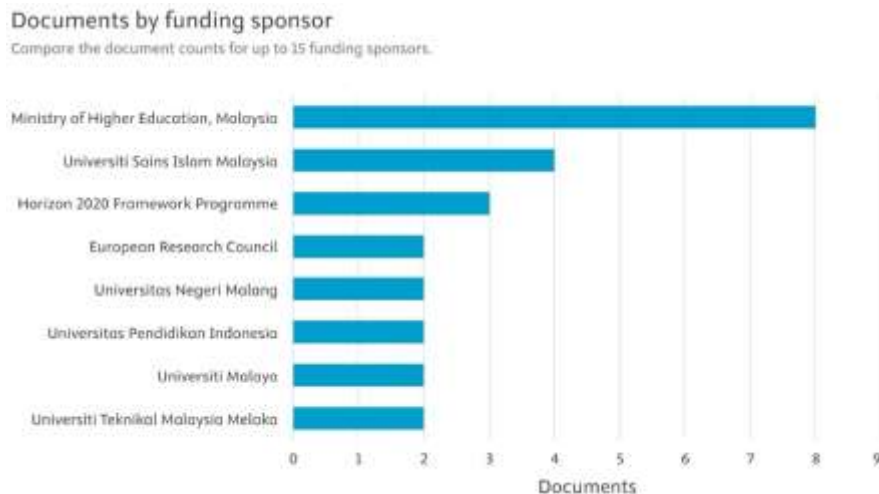


As illustrated in Figure 9, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), Malaysia, is the leading financial supporter of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research (n = 8). This pattern reflects Malaysia's strong institutional support for Qur'anic scholarship within its higher education research agenda. Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) ranks second (n = 4), indicating sustained involvement at the institutional level through coordination between academic and governmental stakeholders.

At the international level, funding bodies such as the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme (n = 3) and the European Research Council (n = 2) also appear among the leading contributors, suggesting that *tadabbur*-related research has gained recognition within broader interdisciplinary research contexts. Other notable funding institutions include Universitas Negeri Malang, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia and Universiti Malaya (n = 2 each). Overall, the funding distribution indicates that Malaysia remains a central source of institutional and financial support for contemporary *tadabbur* research, alongside emerging international contributions.

Figure 9

Distribution of Publications by Funding Sponsor on Qur'anic Contemplation (2001–2025)



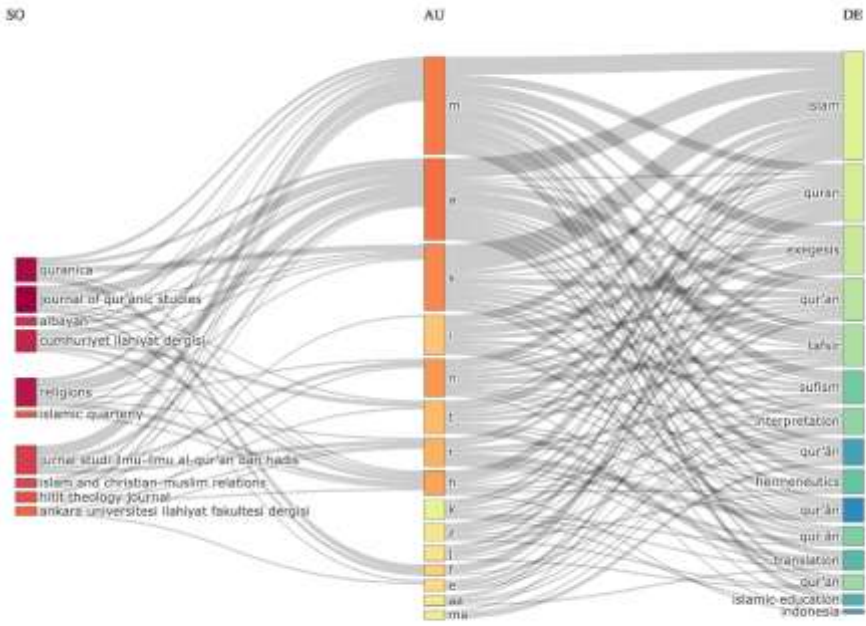
As illustrated in Figure 10, the three-field plot visualizes the relationships among source journals (SO), authors (AU) and author keywords (DE) in Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research. The analysis highlights how scholarly production in this field is structured through interconnected publication outlets, author networks and recurring thematic foci.

Journals such as *Quranica*, *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, *Religions* and *Cumhuriyet Ilahiyat Dergisi* emerge as central publication platforms, functioning as intellectual nodes that connect authors exploring diverse dimensions of *tadabbur*, ranging from classical *tafsir* methodologies to contemporary philosophical and interpretive approaches. The author dimension reveals a collaborative scholarly community closely associated with recurring keywords such as “Islam,” “Qur'an,” “tafsir,” “hermeneutics” and “interpretation,” indicating a thematic convergence between traditional exegetical scholarship and modern analytical frameworks.

The presence of keywords such as “Sufism” and “Islamic education” further demonstrates the expanding scope of *tadabbur* research beyond purely linguistic or textual analysis toward spiritual, ethical and pedagogical dimensions of Qur'anic engagement. Overall, the three-field analysis reveals a multidimensional and interdisciplinary research structure, anchored in classical Qur'anic sciences while increasingly open to contemporary philosophical, spiritual and methodological developments.

Figure 10

Three-Field Plot Linking Source Journals (SO), Authors (AU) and Keywords (DE) in Qur'anic Contemplation Research (2001–2025)



As presented in Table 2 and Figure 11, the distribution of corresponding authors indicates a concentration of scholarly activity in Malaysia (n = 36; 10.1%), Turkiye (n = 35; 9.8%) and Indonesia (n = 32; 8.9%). These countries represent the most productive contributors to Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research, reflecting the strength of domestic academic ecosystems within Muslim-majority contexts.

The dominance of Single Country Publications (SCP) across these nations suggests a high degree of nationally driven research activity. Malaysia's 32 SCPs and Turkiye's 33 SCPs, in particular, indicate well-established institutional capacities that support sustained scholarly output without extensive reliance on international collaboration.

Nevertheless, the presence of Multiple Country Publications (MCP) points to a growing trend of cross-border engagement. Saudi Arabia (25%), the

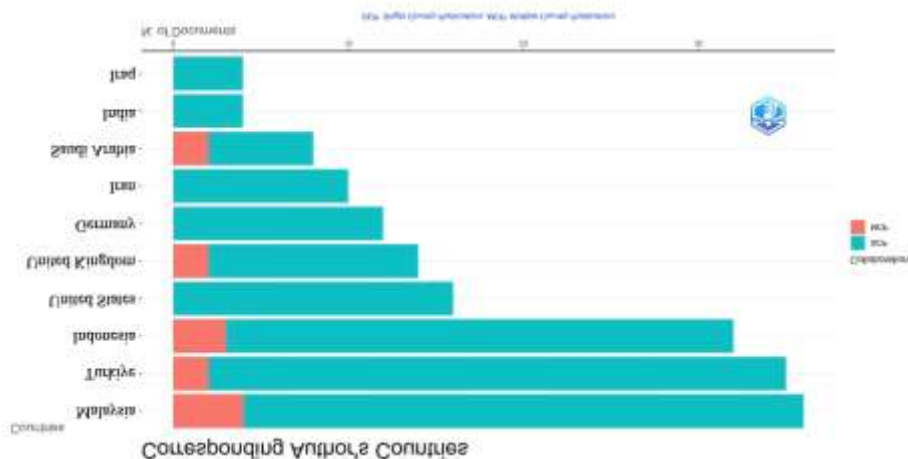
United Kingdom (14.3%) and Malaysia (11.1%) record the highest proportions of MCPs, highlighting their roles in facilitating international research linkages. The involvement of Western institutions, especially from the United Kingdom and the United States, reflects an expanding dialogue between Islamic and non-Islamic academic environments.

Overall, these patterns reveal a dual structure within *tadabbur* research: strong nationally anchored scholarship in Southeast Asia and Turkiye, alongside emerging international collaborations that contribute to methodological diversity and broader epistemic exchange. Malaysia, in particular, appears as a key node in connecting regional research productivity with global academic networks.

Table 2
Distribution and Collaboration Patterns of Corresponding Authors in Qur'anic Contemplation Research (2001–2025)

Country	Articles	Articles %	SCP	MCP	MCP %
Malaysia	36	10.1	32	4	11.1
Turkiye	35	9.8	33	2	5.7
Indonesia	32	8.9	29	3	9.4
United States	16	4.5	16	0	0.0
United Kingdom	14	3.9	12	2	14.3
Germany	12	3.4	12	0	0.0
Iran	10	2.8	10	0	0.0
Saudi Arabia	8	2.2	6	2	25.0
India	4	1.1	4	0	0.0
Iraq	4	1.1	4	0	0.0

Figure 11
Corresponding Authors' Countries and Collaboration Types (SCP vs MCP)



In summary, the steady growth of publications, strong institutional participation and expanding thematic diversity indicate that Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) has matured into a well-established domain within contemporary Islamic scholarship. This development reflects not only sustained academic engagement but also the field's increasing relevance within interdisciplinary and global research contexts.

Building upon this overview, the following section presents a Citation Analysis that examines the most influential publications, authors and journals shaping the intellectual foundations of *tadabbur* research.

4.2 Citation Analysis

As summarized in Table 3, the ten most cited publications reflect the intellectual evolution and thematic diversification of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research over the past two decades. The most influential contribution is Neuwirth (2003), published in the *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, with 76 citations (TC per year = 3.30; normalized TC = 2.75). This seminal work established a rigorous structural and rhetorical framework that continues to inform contemporary exegetical and hermeneutical inquiry.

Subsequent high-impact studies illustrate a shift toward integrative and context-sensitive approaches. Al-Tarawneh (2020), published in *Hamdard Islamicus* (59 citations; normalized TC = 10.59), combines linguistic analysis with spiritual reflection, while Djawas et al. (2022) achieves the highest

normalized citation impact (10.80), reflecting strong scholarly momentum for research connecting *tadabbur* with socio-religious and educational contexts.

Earlier influential works by Moore (2008), Stefanidis (2008), Sinai (2011a, 2011b) and Lombard (2015) remain frequently cited, underscoring continuity between classical textual analysis and modern hermeneutical perspectives within the citation network. Their contributions serve as conceptual anchors for later interdisciplinary developments.

Notably, studies such as Rahman et al. (2018) and Eidhamar (2014) signal the expansion of *tadabbur* into applied ethics, engineering and interfaith discourse, indicating a gradual diffusion of Qur'anic reflection beyond traditional religious scholarship.

Overall, the citation pattern reveals a clear transition from early structural and linguistic explorations toward contemporary interdisciplinary engagements, highlighting the maturation and adaptive capacity of *tadabbur* within evolving academic and societal contexts.

Table 3

The Ten Most Cited Documents in Qur'anic Contemplation Research (2001–2025)

Paper	Total Citations	TC per Year	Normalized TC
Neuwirth (2003)	76	3.30	2.75
Al-Tarawneh (2020)	59	9.83	10.59
Moore (2008)	43	2.39	2.84
Djawas et al. (2022)	42	10.50	10.80
Stefanidis (2008)	38	2.11	2.51
Lombard (2015)	34	3.09	4.91
Sinai (2011b)	28	1.87	2.29
Rahman et al. (2018)	27	3.38	3.90
Sinai (2011a)	24	1.80	1.96

Eidhamar (2014)	23	1.92	2.93
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Building upon these findings, the next section presents the Network and Content Analysis, which examines the structural and thematic interconnections within *tadabbur* research. Using co-authorship networks, keyword co-occurrence and content visualization, this analysis maps the intellectual architecture of the field, identifying dominant research clusters, evolving conceptual linkages and emerging interdisciplinary orientations.

4.3 Network and Content Analysis

Figure 12 presents the keyword co-occurrence network generated using VOSviewer, based on a minimum occurrence threshold of two, yielding 139 keywords. This analysis visualizes semantic relationships among frequently used terms, revealing the intellectual structure and thematic evolution of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research.

The most frequent keyword is “Islam” (36 occurrences; total link strength = 72), followed by “Qur’an” (24; 39), “Qur’anic studies” (19; 44), “exegesis” (19; 38) and “tafsir” (18; 32). This dominance indicates that contemporary scholarship remains firmly anchored in interpretive methodologies and theological inquiry.

Frequently co-occurring terms such as “hermeneutics,” “translation,” “interpretation,” “modernity” and “ethics” further demonstrate the expansion of *tadabbur* into interdisciplinary domains that integrate linguistic analysis, philosophical hermeneutics and ethical reflection.

The network reveals five interconnected thematic clusters. Cluster 1 (Red) centers on interpretation and socio-ethical dimensions, encompassing themes such as ethics, gender, religion and peace. Cluster 2 (Green) represents hermeneutical and linguistic approaches, emphasizing Arabic language, semantics, revelation and interpretive methodology. Cluster 3 (Yellow) reflects ontological and thematic studies, linking ontology, metaphor, context and worldview within Qur’anic interpretation. Cluster 4 (Blue) highlights the integration of *tadabbur* with education, knowledge and ethical discourse, signaling engagement with human development and pedagogical concerns. Cluster 5 (Purple/Orange) focuses on comparative and historical approaches, situating the Qur’an within broader interreligious and scriptural dialogues.

Overall, the dense interconnections among clusters indicate a maturing interdisciplinary orientation, in which classical exegetical traditions are

Overall, the temporal distribution illustrates an evolution from predominantly text-centered hermeneutics toward more contextual, applied and interdisciplinary research trajectories, highlighting the field's adaptive engagement with contemporary scholarly challenges.

Figure 13

Overlay Visualization of Keyword Co-occurrence in Qur'anic Contemplation Research (2001–2025)

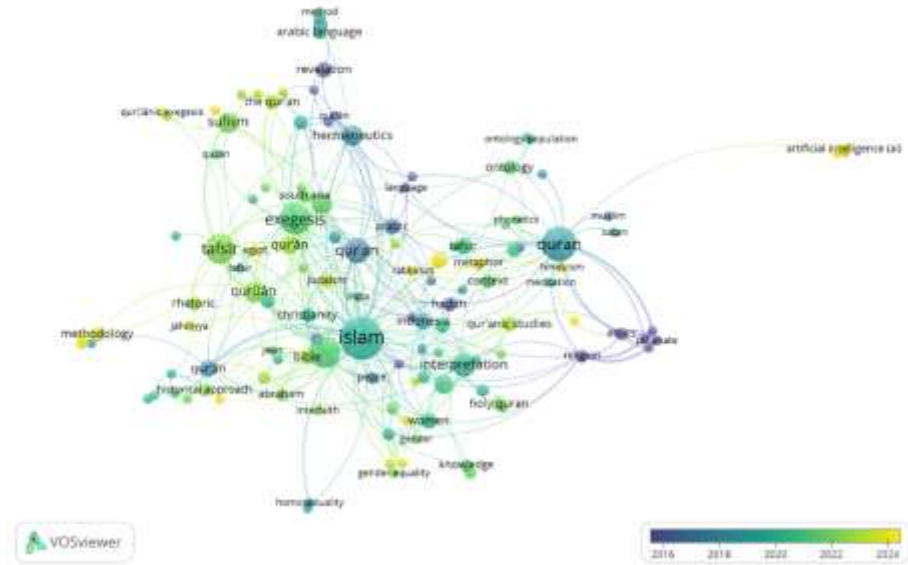


Figure 14 presents the density visualization of the 139 most relevant keywords associated with Qur'anic studies. In this map, the color gradient represents keyword concentration, with yellow regions indicating high research density and blue regions denoting less frequent co-occurrence.

The highest-density clusters are centered on the keywords “Islam,” “Qur’an,” “tafsīr,” “exegesis” and “interpretation”. These terms constitute the intellectual nucleus of Qur’anic scholarship, reflecting their sustained prominence within theological and interpretive traditions. Their close spatial proximity indicates strong conceptual interconnections among Islamic theology, exegetical practices and interpretive methodologies.

Moderate-density zones, represented in green hues, include keywords such as “hermeneutics,” “ontology,” “translation,” “religion,” “women” and “context”. These areas reflect expanding scholarly engagements that connect

inquiry and emerging interdisciplinary approaches, including digital humanities, ontological inquiry and ethical philosophy.

The subsequent Discussion synthesizes these findings to interpret the intellectual evolution, epistemological orientations and future trajectories of *tadabbur* within the broader landscape of contemporary Islamic scholarship.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The bibliometric results demonstrate that Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) has evolved from a specialized subfield of *tafsir* into a multidimensional domain engaging theology, linguistics, philosophy and social thought. This progression reflects a broader epistemic transformation in Qur'anic scholarship—one that seeks to reconcile classical interpretive heritage with modern intellectual, technological and methodological challenges in engaging revelation.

The dominance of Malaysian institutions and authors underscores the region's emerging role as a global center for Qur'anic and contemplative studies. Meanwhile, the rising presence of interdisciplinary keywords such as ontology, hermeneutics and artificial intelligence (AI) signifies a paradigm shift toward integrating traditional Qur'anic epistemology with contemporary analytical and computational tools. To contextualize these trends, the following section traces the intellectual evolution of *tadabbur* and its shifting paradigms over the past two decades.

5.1 *Intellectual Evolution of Qur'anic Contemplation*

The intellectual evolution of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) between 2001 and 2025 reveals a progressive shift from textual and structural analysis toward multidimensional interpretive frameworks integrating philosophical, scientific, educational and socio-ethical perspectives.

Early scholarship in the 2000s was primarily concerned with philological and structural coherence (*naẓm al-Qur'ān*), emphasizing the Qur'an's linguistic precision and rhetorical harmony. Foundational works such as Neuwirth (2003) and Sinai (2011a) approached the Qur'an as a self-referential text whose form and composition embodied divine order. This structuralist orientation reflects continuity with classical notions of *naẓm* and *balāghah*, emphasizing textual coherence and rhetorical harmony later revisited by contemporary scholars such as Almajeedy (2022) to demonstrate the intricate thematic unity across *surahs*.

During the 2010s, the field experienced a decisive epistemological expansion, marked by the integration of hermeneutical and philosophical approaches. Scholars began to situate *tadabbur* within broader discourses of ontology, ethics and human cognition. Studies by Adeel (2019) and Decharneux (2023) underscored how the Qur'an's call to contemplation engages both the

rational and perceptual faculties of humankind, situating Qur'anic epistemology in dialogue with the wider intellectual milieu of Late Antiquity. Concurrently, the rise of contextual and intertextual studies — including semiotic and sociological readings — reflected an effort to align revelation with contemporary human experience and historical consciousness.

Entering the 2020s, the methodological landscape of Qur'anic studies expanded further through digital humanities and computational tools. Initiatives such as Safeena and Kammani (2015) demonstrated how computational and algorithm-assisted text mining could illuminate lexical and semantic networks within the Qur'an, while Syahir et al. (2025) highlighted the ethical implications of algorithmic interpretation, urging a balance between technological innovation and the moral integrity of Qur'anic inquiry.

This period also witnessed the contextual diversification of *tadabbur*, particularly across Southeast Asia. Indonesian and Malaysian scholars, for instance, explored thematic interpretations that connect the Qur'an with contemporary challenges such as education, ethics and evolution theory (Ayub & Lukman, 2024; Kocsenda, 2024). The emergence of creative pedagogical models — such as *Jejak Anbiya'* (Nordin et al., 2025) — signifies a renewed emphasis on experiential and reflective learning, embodying the Qur'an's holistic educational philosophy rooted in *tilāwah* (reflective recitation), *tazkiyah* (spiritual purification) and *ta'lim* as a form of integrative learning that unites cognitive understanding, ethical formation and spiritual awareness.

Overall, the intellectual trajectory of *tadabbur* reflects its gradual transformation from descriptive exegesis toward a reflective, interdisciplinary paradigm. This evolution harmonizes classical *tadabbur* with modern inquiry, reaffirming the Qur'an's role not merely as a sacred text for recitation and analysis, but as a comprehensive framework for spiritual, ethical and intellectual development.

5.2 *Emerging Interdisciplinary Trajectories*

The recent decade has witnessed a decisive turn in Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research toward interdisciplinary integration, where traditional exegetical inquiry intersects with modern sciences, humanities and technology. The bibliometric keyword analyses (Figures 12–14) reveal that recent scholarship increasingly engages with themes such as digital humanities, philosophy of language, ontology, cognitive science and artificial intelligence (AI). This trajectory signals a methodological reorientation of *tadabbur* from purely textual exegesis toward a broader epistemological engagement that links revelation, intellect and contemporary human experience.

One major development lies in the computational and linguistic dimension of Qur'anic studies. Tools such as NVivo, AntConc and Qur'anic text-mining systems are now employed to map lexical coherence and rhetorical structures, enhancing the understanding of *taswir* and textual independence within the Qur'an (Abalkheel et al., 2025; Almajeedy, 2022). Similarly, Safeena and Kammani (2015) demonstrate how computational technologies facilitate structural and thematic analyses that support both linguistic and theological research. These advancements collectively give rise to what may be tentatively termed "computational hermeneutics," expanding the methodological possibilities of *tadabbur* in the digital age.

A parallel movement emerges in interdisciplinary hermeneutics, where diverse interpretive models — modernist, feminist, scientist and Sufi-influenced — contribute to an increasingly pluralistic yet methodologically grounded landscape of Qur'anic interpretation (Mauluddin et al., 2025; Ohlander, 2009). The rediscovery of mystical commentaries such as *Ḥaḳīqat Bismillāh* reflects renewed attention to metaphysical and spiritual cosmology within the contemporary study of the Qur'an. Such perspectives bridge classical hermeneutical traditions with culturally embedded worldviews, demonstrating how Qur'anic reflection adapts to local intellectual and spiritual contexts.

Beyond textual and hermeneutical boundaries, *tadabbur* is also intersecting with cognitive and life sciences. Recent studies explore how Qur'anic concepts correspond with neuroscientific models of cognition and learning (Syukri & Subagio, 2024), while others examine therapeutic interpretations of the Qur'an as *syifā'* (healing), connecting spiritual insight with conceptual models of psychological and physiological well-being (Lessani Feshraki et al., 2014). These interdisciplinary encounters reaffirm the Qur'an's enduring relevance as a moral and existential guide across multiple dimensions of human inquiry.

In educational and cultural contexts, Qur'anic principles are being integrated into pedagogical design and socio-ethical discourse. Islamic religious education increasingly combines the Qur'an with the social sciences, arts and technology to cultivate contextual and experiential learning (Masdin et al., 2025). Similarly, research from Southeast Asia, especially Malaysia, Indonesia and Turkiye, demonstrates institutional leadership in linking Qur'anic thought with ethics, governance and social justice (Arsadani et al., 2024; Ichwan et al., 2024). This pattern signifies a sustained commitment to translating *tadabbur* into actionable frameworks for cultural and human development.

In sum, the emerging interdisciplinary trajectories of *tadabbur* embody a synthesis of revelation and reason, combining classical exegetical fidelity with

scientific, philosophical and pedagogical innovation. This evolution situates *tadabbur* not merely as a reflective reading of scripture but as a dynamic intellectual endeavor — one that integrates *tilāwah* (reflective recitation), *tazkiyah* (spiritual purification) and *ta'lim* (integrative learning) into a unified paradigm of ethical, cognitive and societal transformation. In this sense, contemporary *tadabbur* emerges not as an auxiliary practice within *tafsīr*, but as a convergent epistemic space in which revelation-oriented knowledge interfaces dynamically with modern intellectual inquiry.

5.3 *Future Directions and Implications for Contemporary Qur'anic Scholarship*

The bibliometric findings indicate that Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) research is entering a transformative phase characterized by digital innovation, interdisciplinary expansion and renewed ethical engagement. Taken together, these findings reposition *tadabbur* not merely as a reflective practice, but as an integrative epistemic framework capable of informing contemporary scholarship, ethical reasoning and human development. Building on these findings, several trajectories emerge as central to the future of *tadabbur* research — namely epistemological integration, methodological innovation, human-centered development and the harmonization of technology with tradition.

First, epistemological integration. Future scholarship is expected to deepen the integration between classical Islamic intellectual traditions and contemporary paradigms of knowledge. The Qur'an's invitation to *tadabbur* inherently bridges *'aql* (reason) and *wahy* (revelation), providing an onto-epistemic foundation for balanced human understanding. Scholars such as al-'Ulwānī (2003) and Decharneux (2023) have shown that *tadabbur* cultivates not only intellectual inquiry but also moral and spiritual consciousness. Building upon this, future research may further articulate how the Qur'an's reflective ethos contributes to the formation of *al-insān al-kāmil* (the Perfect Human) — a morally grounded and spiritually aware being who anchors ethical civilization. This direction may further strengthen the integration of Qur'anic epistemology within contemporary human sciences and ethical development frameworks.

Second, methodological innovation marks one of the most visible shifts in contemporary Qur'anic scholarship. The emergence of digital and computational methodologies is redefining Qur'anic studies. Artificial intelligence (AI), natural language processing (NLP) and data visualization techniques are being used to map Qur'anic semantics, thematic structures and intertextual linkages (Ahmad & Musa, 2025; Syahir et al., 2025; Wasfey et al., 2022). Beyond textual analysis, augmented and virtual reality technologies are

now applied to Qur'anic education, transforming abstract concepts into immersive experiences (Ramadhan et al., 2024; Zohdi et al., 2024).

However, the integration of such tools necessitates a moral-epistemic framework rooted in the Qur'an's pedagogical triad — *tilāwah* (reflective recitation), *tazkiyah* (spiritual purification) and *ta'lim* (integrative learning). When guided by these principles, technological advancements not only enhance analytical precision but also safeguard the spiritual and ethical integrity of Qur'anic interpretation. In this way, the future of *tadabbur* lies not in choosing between tradition and innovation, but in cultivating a reflective epistemology where revelation, reason and technology co-operate in the service of ethical and civilizational flourishing.

Third, human-centered and collaborative development. Recent research also highlights a growing focus on the Qur'an's social and ethical dimensions. Studies increasingly address themes of justice, pluralism and inclusivity — situating Qur'anic interpretation within contemporary discourses on equality and coexistence (Harvey, 2017; Junaidi et al., 2023; Rijal et al., 2025). The concept of *'adl* (justice) is being revisited to explore distributive, political and corrective ethics within Qur'anic hermeneutics, while interfaith readings emphasize mutual respect and common moral ground.

Institutionally, Southeast Asia — particularly Malaysia, Indonesia and Turkiye — continues to lead in regional collaboration and educational innovation, integrating Qur'anic reflection with science, governance and social welfare (Arsadani et al., 2024; Zubaidi et al., 2025). This trend underscores the importance of establishing transnational partnerships among universities, think tanks and digital platforms to build a cohesive and inclusive research ecosystem for Qur'anic studies.

Fourth, balancing technology and tradition. As Qur'anic scholarship embraces machine learning, data-driven hermeneutics and interdisciplinary inquiry, an essential challenge lies in harmonizing innovation with tradition. The future of *tadabbur* depends on ensuring that modern methodologies remain anchored in Qur'anic ethics, avoiding the reduction of revelation to data alone. As Yasin et al. (2018) and Syahir et al. (2025) caution, technological tools must serve as instruments for illumination, not substitution — ensuring that digital innovation enhances, rather than eclipses, the contemplative spirit of the Qur'an.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In essence, the future trajectory of Qur'anic contemplation (*tadabbur*) lies in harmonizing textual fidelity with transformative application. By aligning *tadabbur* with universal values of ethical reflection, social justice and holistic

human development, contemporary scholarship can reaffirm the Qur'an's enduring role not only as a source of divine guidance, but also as a comprehensive epistemic framework for cultivating spiritually conscious, intellectually vibrant and socially responsible individuals. In this way, *tadabbur* re-emerges as a living expression of the prophetic model of reflective engagement with revelation — one that integrates understanding, ethical formation and transformative action.

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