



Research Trends On Reading The Yellow Book Using The *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method: A Bibliometric Study

M. Rifqi Almahmudi^{1*}, Abdur Rofik²

Universitas Islam Raden Rahmat, Malang, West Java, Indonesia

*rifqialmahmudi@staisidogiri.ac.id

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Abstract:

The yellow book learning method plays a fundamental role in Indonesia's Islamic boarding school education system, as it is the primary means of mastering the treasures of classical Islamic science. One method that is widely used is the Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method from Sidogiri Islamic boarding school, a learning innovation that offers a systematic approach to improving the ability to read classical Arabic texts without harakat. This study aims to analyze the development of scientific studies on the Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method using a bibliometric approach. Data were collected from Google Scholar and the Garuda database using the keywords "Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method", "yellow book", "Sidogiri Islamic boarding school", and "yellow book reading method" for the 2012–2025 period. The analysis was conducted using Publish or Perish and VOSviewer to examine publication trends, citation rates, author collaboration, and keyword linkage mapping. The analysis shows a significant increase in publications since 2018, with the peak in research occurring in 2021–2023. The dominant themes include the implementation of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* in Islamic boarding schools, its influence on students' ability to read the yellow book, and innovations in Islamic boarding school learning. These findings confirm that the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* has evolved from a local practice into a focus of national academic studies relevant to the development of Islamic educational pedagogy in Indonesia.

Key Words: *Yellow Book, Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method, Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School, Bibliometrics, Research Trends.*

Abstrak:

Metode pembelajaran buku kuning memainkan peran mendasar dalam sistem pendidikan pesantren Indonesia, karena merupakan sarana utama untuk menguasai harta keilmuan Islam klasik. Salah satu metode yang banyak digunakan adalah Metode Al-Miftah Lil Ulum dari pesantren Sidotiri, sebuah inovasi pembelajaran yang menawarkan pendekatan sistematis untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca teks bahasa Arab klasik tanpa harakat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perkembangan kajian ilmiah tentang Metode Al-Miftah Lil Ulum dengan menggunakan pendekatan bibliometrik. Data dikumpulkan dari Google Scholar dan database Garuda menggunakan kata kunci "Metode Al-Miftah Lil Ulum", "buku kuning", "pesantren Sidogiri", dan "metode membaca buku kuning" untuk periode

2012–2025. Analisis dilakukan menggunakan Publish or Perish dan VOSviewer untuk memeriksa tren publikasi, tingkat kutipan, kolaborasi penulis, dan pemetaan keterkaitan kata kunci. Analisis menunjukkan peningkatan publikasi yang signifikan sejak 2018, dengan puncak penelitian terjadi pada 2021–2023. Tema yang dominan antara lain penerapan Metode Al-Miftah Lil Ulum di pondok pesantren, pengaruhnya terhadap kemampuan siswa membaca buku kuning, dan inovasi dalam pembelajaran pondok pesantren. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa Metode Al-Miftah Lil Ulum telah berkembang dari praktik lokal menjadi fokus studi akademik nasional yang relevan dengan perkembangan pedagogi pendidikan Islam di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: *Kitab Kuning, Metode Al-Miftah Lil Ulum, Pesantren Sidogiri, Bibliometrik, Tren Penelitian.*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education plays a crucial role in shaping not only religious understanding but also the moral and intellectual foundations of Muslim societies. In Indonesia, pesantren occupy a strategic position as the oldest and most resilient Islamic educational institutions, continuously contributing to the preservation and transmission of classical Islamic knowledge while responding to social change. One of the core competencies cultivated in pesantren education is the ability to read and comprehend the yellow book (*kitab kuning*), which serves as the primary gateway to Islamic jurisprudence, theology, Qur'anic exegesis, and prophetic traditions. Mastery of this textual tradition is widely regarded as an indicator of scholarly authority and religious literacy (Ruslan & Irham, 2022; Whyte, 2022). However, in an era characterized by accelerating knowledge production and demands for educational efficiency, traditional learning models face increasing pressure to demonstrate effectiveness and adaptability. Consequently, innovations in instructional methods for classical Islamic texts are not merely pedagogical concerns but also societal necessities, as they determine how future generations access religious knowledge responsibly, accurately, and sustainably within a rapidly changing educational landscape.

Despite its central importance, the learning of the yellow book remains a major challenge for many beginner students in pesantren. The primary difficulty lies in the linguistic complexity of classical Arabic texts, which are typically written without diacritical marks and require advanced mastery of nahwu and sharaf. For novice learners, these demands often result in slow reading progress, fragmented comprehension, and reduced learning motivation. Traditional instructional approaches such as bandongan and sorogan have historically ensured continuity of scholarly transmission (Asyiah & Sari, 2025; Subagyo & Arifin, 2025), yet they are frequently criticized for being time-consuming and less responsive to diverse student learning capacities (AlKhuzaey et al., 2024; Chandrakumar & Vivek, 2023). As pesantren increasingly engage with broader educational systems and societal expectations, these limitations become more visible. The challenge, therefore, is not to replace tradition but to enhance its pedagogical effectiveness. This situation has encouraged pesantren educators to

explore structured and innovative methods that can accelerate grammatical comprehension while maintaining fidelity to classical Islamic scholarship.

In response to these pedagogical challenges, a growing body of research has examined innovative methods for teaching the yellow book, particularly those emphasizing systematic grammar instruction and learner accessibility. Among these, the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method, developed by KH. Muhammad Romli Tamim at the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School, has attracted significant scholarly attention. The method introduces structured sentence patterns, symbolic grammatical markers, and color-coding techniques to help students identify syntactic functions without relying solely on memorizing abstract rules (Binger et al., 2024; Liao & Liu, 2026). Empirical studies have demonstrated its effectiveness in improving reading accuracy and comprehension speed. For instance, (Adipat & Chotikapanich, 2022; Relyea et al., 2023) reported that a large proportion of beginner students achieved functional reading competence within three months of instruction. Similarly, studies by M. Yunus et al., (2025) and Zahid et al., (2024) confirmed a statistically significant impact of the method on students' ability to read classical fiqh texts such as *Fathul Qarib*.

Although existing studies consistently affirm the pedagogical effectiveness of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method, most of this literature remains limited in scope and methodological orientation. The majority of studies adopt qualitative case-study designs or experimental approaches confined to specific institutions, focusing primarily on learning outcomes and student perceptions (Alkaabi et al., 2023; Capone, 2022; Hendrisab et al., 2022). While valuable, these studies provide only fragmented insights into the broader academic landscape surrounding this method. There is a noticeable absence of research that systematically examines publication trends, thematic concentrations, author productivity, and institutional collaboration patterns. As a result, the cumulative development of knowledge on the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method remains under-mapped. This gap limits scholars' ability to assess the research field's maturity, identify dominant and emerging themes, and identify underexplored areas that warrant further investigation. Addressing this limitation is essential for advancing Islamic education research beyond descriptive accounts toward a more integrative and strategic understanding.

Learning the yellow book has long been embedded in the intellectual tradition of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago (Fatahillah et al., 2023; Husnaini & Fuady, 2023; Mu'awanah et al., 2025). Classical texts covering jurisprudence, hadith, Qur'anic interpretation, and Arabic linguistics form the epistemological backbone of pesantren curricula. Historically, instructional methods such as *bandongan* and *sorogan* have ensured close teacher-student interaction and textual authenticity (Arif et al., 2025)(Subagyo & Arifin, 2025; Sulusiyah & Sugiono, 2025). However, contemporary educational discourse increasingly emphasizes structured learning pathways, measurable outcomes, and pedagogical efficiency. In this context, the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method seeks

to harmonize classical textual fidelity with modern instructional design. Its spiral learning approach, gradual reinforcement of grammatical concepts, and visual aids are designed to systematically scaffold students' understanding. This pedagogical positioning makes the method an important subject of scholarly attention, not only as a teaching technique but also as a reflection of broader transformations in Islamic educational thought and practice.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the development of research on the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method, a bibliometric analysis provides a robust, objective methodological framework. Bibliometrics enables quantitative assessment of scientific production through publication and citation data, revealing patterns of knowledge growth, collaboration networks, and thematic evolution (Hassan & Duarte, 2024; Pessin et al., 2022). Recent methodological advances highlight bibliometric analysis as a powerful tool for mapping intellectual structures and identifying research fronts within a field (Gan et al., 2022; Pessin et al., 2022). In Islamic education studies, this approach has increasingly been used to examine trends, institutional contributions, and interdisciplinary linkages (Machali & Suhendro, 2022). However, its application to research on yellow book learning methodologies remains rare. By employing bibliometric techniques, this study moves beyond individual case analyses toward a macro-level understanding of how scholarly discourse on the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method has evolved over time.

The novelty of this study lies in its systematic mapping of the scientific landscape surrounding the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method using bibliometric analysis and scientific visualization. Unlike previous studies that emphasize instructional effectiveness or implementation strategies, this research examines the structure of knowledge production itself. By analyzing publication trends from 2012 to 2025, identifying dominant keywords, and visualizing collaboration networks through tools such as VOSviewer, this study provides an evidence-based overview of the field's intellectual development (Deng et al., 2025; Lv, 2025; Siri et al., 2024). This approach enables the identification of thematic concentrations and research blind spots, offering strategic insights for future investigations. Consequently, the study contributes not only to Islamic pedagogy but also to methodological innovation within Islamic education research, positioning bibliometric analysis as a valuable instrument for advancing data-driven scholarship.

Based on the preceding discussion, this study addresses a central research problem: how has scientific research on the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method developed over the last decade, and what are its dominant themes, contributors, and intellectual directions? The main argument advanced is that despite increasing scholarly attention, research on this method remains thematically concentrated and institutionally fragmented. Through bibliometric analysis, this study argues that mapping publication productivity, citation impact, and keyword co-occurrence will reveal both consolidation and gaps within the field. The findings

are expected to contribute theoretically by situating the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method within the broader discourse of Islamic educational innovation, and practically by providing a reference framework for researchers, educators, and policymakers. Ultimately, this study seeks to strengthen the empirical and analytical foundations of yellow book learning research in Indonesia through a comprehensive, data-driven perspective.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative descriptive research design employing bibliometric analysis to systematically examine the development, structure, and dynamics of scientific publications related to the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method in Indonesia. The quantitative descriptive approach was selected because it enables the objective measurement and visualization of bibliographic characteristics, including publication growth, author productivity, citation patterns, and thematic structures within a specific field of study. Bibliometric analysis is particularly appropriate for mapping scientific knowledge, as it allows researchers to identify research trends, collaboration networks, and conceptual relationships through the statistical processing of publication metadata (Gan et al., 2022; Ninkov et al., 2021; Pessin et al., 2022). In line with Al-Ilory, (2022), this design facilitates a comprehensive evaluation of how scholarly discourse on the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method has evolved over time, positioning the method within the broader landscape of Islamic education research.

The research setting of this study is Indonesia's national scientific publication ecosystem, represented by two major academic databases: Google Scholar and Garuda (Garda Rujukan Digital), managed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. These databases were deliberately chosen due to their strategic relevance and complementary coverage. Google Scholar provides extensive access to both national and international academic publications, including journal articles, conference proceedings, and theses, thereby ensuring comprehensive data retrieval. Meanwhile, Garuda serves as an authoritative national repository that indexes peer-reviewed and officially recognized Indonesian scientific publications, particularly in Islamic education. The selection of these databases ensures balanced representation, data credibility, and alignment with the national context in which the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method has been developed and implemented.

Data were collected through a systematic literature search using predefined keywords related to the research focus, including "Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method," "yellow book," "kitab kuning," "Sidogiri Islamic boarding school," and "yellow book learning method." The search was restricted to publications issued between 2012 and 2025 to capture the longitudinal development of scholarly attention to the method. The inclusion criteria covered journal articles, seminar proceedings, and other peer-reviewed scientific works that explicitly

discuss the application, effectiveness, or development of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method in pesantren education. Based on this process, 42 publications met the inclusion criteria. Bibliographic metadata, including article titles, authors' names, publication years, keywords, sources, and citation counts, were extracted using Publish or Perish version 8 and subsequently converted into CSV format for further analysis.

Data analysis was conducted in two complementary stages. First, descriptive statistical analysis was applied to examine publication distribution by year, author productivity, and institutional affiliations, providing an overview of research growth and contributor patterns. Second, bibliometric visualization analysis was performed using VOSviewer version 1.6.20 to map scientific networks. This stage included keyword co-occurrence analysis to identify dominant themes and research trends, co-authorship analysis to examine collaboration patterns among authors and institutions, and citation network analysis to assess scholarly influence and knowledge flow. These analytical procedures align with established bibliometric frameworks that emphasize publication productivity, thematic mapping, and collaboration structures as core components of scientific mapping (Gan et al., 2022; Pessin et al., 2022).

To ensure data accuracy and methodological rigor, several validation procedures were applied. All retrieved records were manually reviewed to eliminate duplicate entries and confirm their relevance to the research focus. Keyword consistency, author names, and publication details were cross-checked to avoid metadata errors. In addition, all available Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) were verified through Crossref and the official websites of the respective journals to ensure the authenticity and credibility of the sources. These procedures were implemented to strengthen the reliability and reproducibility of the bibliometric analysis, ensuring that the findings accurately represent the structure and development of research on the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dynamics of Publication Trends of *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method Research (2012–2025)

Based on a bibliometric analysis of 42 publications meeting the inclusion criteria, it can be concluded that scientific studies on the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method show a relatively steady progression from 2012 to 2025. This dynamic reflects how a learning method that initially developed in the local pedagogical space of pesantren gradually underwent academic institutionalization and gained wider attention in Indonesia's Islamic educational literature.

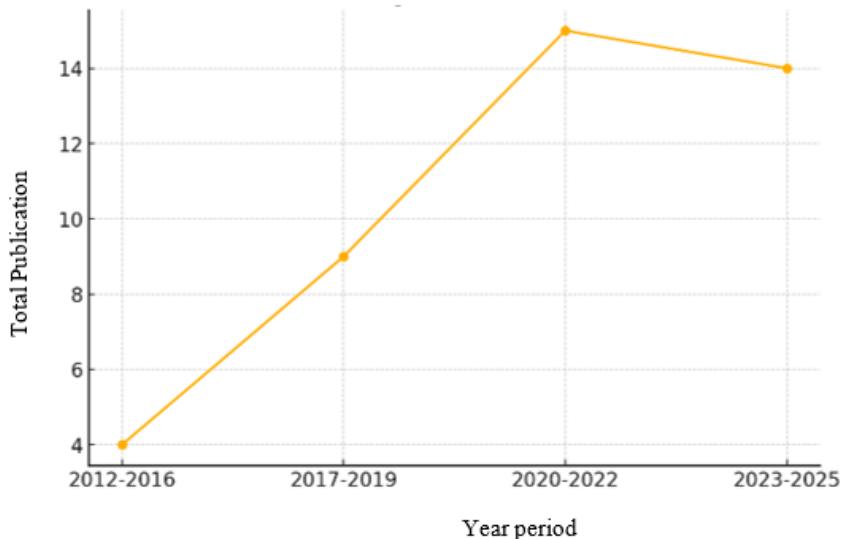


Figure 1. Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method Publication Trend (2012-2025)

The earliest publication related to the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* was recorded in 2012. Articles in this early phase generally have a descriptive and exploratory character with a relatively limited research scope. The study focuses on efforts to introduce this method as a standard pedagogical innovation at the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School in the teaching of the yellow book. At this stage, the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* is positioned as a response to the learning needs of beginner students in understanding the structure of the Arabic language in a more systematic and directed manner, as stated by Iwan, (2024) and Musyafa'ah et al., (2023). The research that emerged in this period tended to take the form of learning practice reports, reflections on teacher experiences, and descriptions of the stages of method application, without accompanying in-depth empirical testing.

During 2012–2016, the number of publications remained relatively small and did not show significant growth. This can be understood, given that the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* at that time was still in the stage of internal consolidation within the founding Islamic boarding school. More research is needed to document learning practices and provide initial evidence of the method's effectiveness through a descriptive qualitative approach. Thus, this phase can be seen as an embryonic stage in the development of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* research, with academic attention still limited to a local scope.

More noticeable changes began to be seen since 2018, when the number of publications showed a consistent year-on-year increase. This phenomenon cannot be separated from two main interrelated factors. First, there has been an expansion of the adoption of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* to various Islamic boarding schools outside Sidogiri, such as PP Miftahul Ulum Pandanwangi, PP Miftahul Khoir Dago Bandung, and PP Lubbul Labib Banat Kedungsari (Muhammad Ainur Roziqin & Hasbunallah, 2024; Muniro et al., 2023; Zidna

Zidan et al., 2024). This geographical expansion has necessitated evaluating methods across different social, cultural, and institutional contexts, thereby sparking new research.

Second, the increasing involvement of students and academics in Islamic education also contributes to the growth of publications. The *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* has come to be seen as a relevant and practical object of study for thesis research and journal articles. With the introduction of this method into the formal academic realm, research approaches have become more diverse, ranging from case studies to simple quantitative studies aimed at measuring learning effectiveness.

The peak in the publication trend occurred during 2021-2023. In this phase, the study of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* is no longer limited to implementation; it begins to develop analyses from various disciplinary perspectives, such as Arabic linguistics, educational psychology, and Islamic learning theory. The surge in publications during this period is also correlated with increased interest in innovations in Islamic boarding school education after the COVID-19 pandemic. Drastic changes in learning patterns have prompted the search for more adaptive, visual, and structured methods, making the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* relevant to addressing these challenges.

In a bibliometric context, this phase scientific acceleration, a period when a research topic experiences rapid growth as it begins to gain wider academic recognition (Jansen et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024). Therefore, the increase in publications in this period can be understood as an indicator that the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* has entered a more mature stage of scientific development.

In general, this publication trend reflects the transformation of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* from a local pedagogical practice to a national-scale scientific phenomenon. This process marks an important shift in the tradition of pesantren, where learning practices are not only practiced but also reflected on and studied systematically through scientific research.

Distribution Patterns of Authors and Academic Institutions

Bibliometric analysis of authorship shows that 33 researchers actively contributed to the publication of *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum*. The author's distribution shows the dominance of academics from Islamic educational institutions in East Java, an area that has historically been known as the center of Islamic boarding school development in Indonesia. This condition shows a close relationship between the socio-cultural background of the pesantren and the production of academic knowledge related to the yellow book learning method.

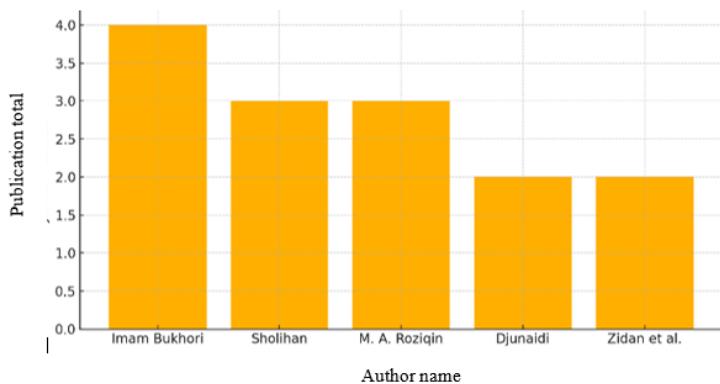


Figure 2. The Productive Author Distribution Chart

Some of the writers who are recorded to have a relatively high level of productivity include Imam Bukhori (UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang), Sholihan (UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya), and Muhammad Ainur Roziqin (IAIN Jember). Their role is not limited to writing scientific articles; they also serve as academic advisors to students who raise similar themes in their final research. Thus, their contribution is structural in building research continuity and expanding the available literature base.

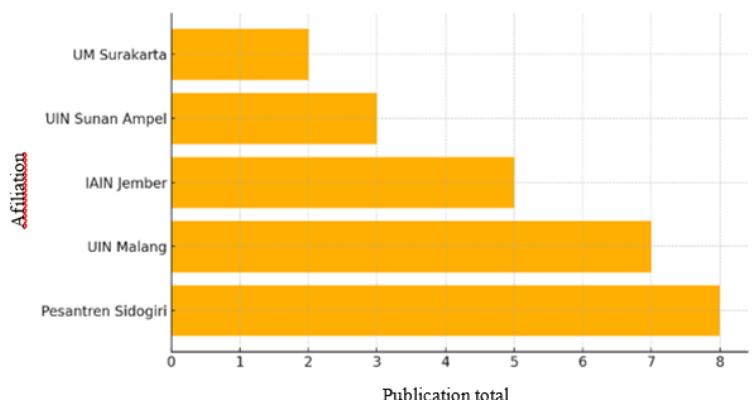


Figure 3. Institutional Publisher Distribution Chart

In terms of institutional affiliation, the Sidogiri Islamic Boarding School holds the most prominent position, with eight publications featuring lecturers, alumni, and external collaborators. This dominance shows that Sidogiri served not only as a locus of educational practice but also as a center for the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge. The next significant position was held by UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, with seven publications, followed by IAIN Jember with five publications, and several other institutions, including UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya and the University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta.

However, the level of collaboration between institutions is still relatively low. About 68% of publications are written by a single author, while only a small percentage involve more than two authors. This low level of collaboration indicates that the Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method research network remains local

and fragmented. Broadus stated that this pattern is commonly found in fields of study that are still in the early stages of growth, where academic networks across institutions have not yet fully consolidated (Lauer & Graves, 2025; Volpe et al., 2023).

Analysis of Keywords and Dominant Themes of Research

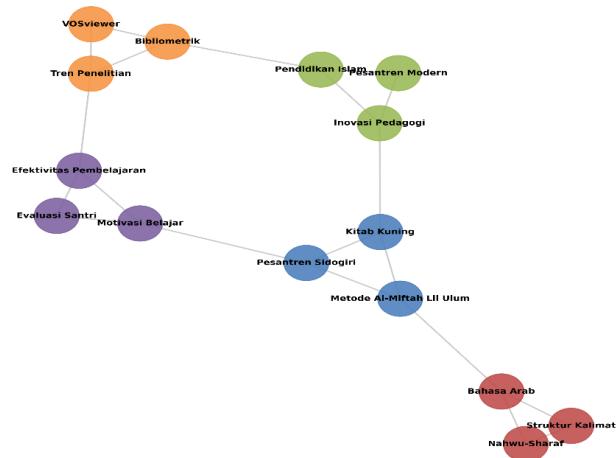


Figure 4. The Results Of Keyword Linkage Mapping

The results of keyword linkage mapping using VOSviewer revealed five main thematic clusters in the study of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method*. The first cluster centered on the keywords "*Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method*," "Sidogiri," and "yellow book." This cluster represents a study that places methods in the historical and pedagogical context of traditional Islamic boarding schools. The research in this group is generally qualitative and aims to describe the learning practices of novice students (Muniro et al., 2023).

The second cluster addresses linguistic aspects, including keywords such as "Arabic," "nahwu-sharaf," and "sentence structure." The focus of research in this cluster is the contribution of methods to the mastery of Arabic grammar. Ishari shows that the visual approach based on colors and sentence patterns in the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* is able to accelerate the understanding of the structure of the Arabic language compared to conventional methods (Hasyim, 2025; Syarifuddin, 2025).

The third cluster includes the themes of "Islamic education," "modern Islamic boarding schools," and "pedagogical innovation." The articles in this cluster analyze the adaptation of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* in formal educational institutions such as madrassas and pesantren-based schools (Muhammad Ainur Roziqin & Hasbunallah, 2024). The fourth cluster highlighted the issues of "learning motivation," "learning effectiveness," and "student evaluation," with findings showing the positive impact of the method on the motivation and learning engagement of novice students (Sultan & Yahya, 2020).

The fifth cluster pertains to the keywords "bibliometrics," "research trends," and "VOSviewer." This cluster is relatively new and reflects the growing interest in quantitative approaches in the study of Islamic education (Machali & Suhendro, 2022). Overall, the dominance of the descriptive approach suggests that this field is still in an exploratory phase towards consolidation.

Citation Analysis and Scientific Influence

The citation analysis indicates that the scientific influence of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method remains moderate. The average number of citations per article, about three, indicates that the topic has begun to gain recognition in the academic community but has not yet reached the citation intensity established in the field. This condition reflects the methodological and epistemological position of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* research which is still in the early phase of strengthening scientific discourse.

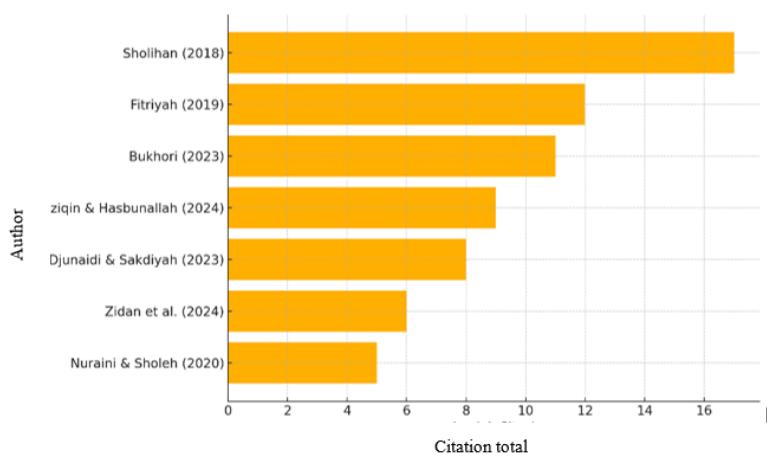


Figure 5. Article Citation Analysis Chart

The dominance of citations in certain publications, especially the article Sholihan with 17 citations, and the works of (Muniro et al., 2023), which each received more than 10 citations, shows the concentration of scientific influence on works that play a significant conceptual role. These articles serve as the main references that underpin the research discourse on this method. This phenomenon is common in developing fields of study, where only a small number of works act as intellectual anchors for further research.

However, the low density of inter-publication citation networks suggests that academic interaction among researchers is still limited. Existing articles often cite the same sources without fostering an ongoing theoretical dialogue across publications. In a bibliometric framework, this pattern indicates the characteristics of an emerging research front: a field in the early consolidation stage that does not yet have a solid citation structure (Jansen et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024). Thus, these findings reinforce the results of previous analyses, which indicate low collaboration among authors and fragmented research networks.

These findings need to be understood in the context of the research methodological characteristics that dominate this field. Most of the articles

analyzed are still descriptive and oriented towards reporting learning practices, so their contribution to the development of theory tends to be limited. As a result, the articles have a relatively narrow citation range because they are relevant only to a specific academic community. In contrast, publications with higher citation rates generally make explicit attempts to relate the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method to broader theoretical frameworks, such as Islamic educational theory, Arabic linguistics, and psycho-pedagogical approaches.

This trend indicates that integrative approaches have a strategic role in increasing the visibility and scientific influence of research. When pesantren learning methods are placed in dialogue with established theories, research not only contributes to the development of local practices but also becomes relevant to cross-disciplinary academic discourse. This is in line with the view of Donthu that conceptual and methodological integration is a key factor in accelerating the consolidation of a developing field of research (Jansen et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024).

The implications of these findings indicate that strengthening the theoretical and methodological dimensions is an important step toward increasing the scientific impact of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method research. Future research needs to move beyond implementive descriptions towards more comparative, experimental, or theory-based analysis of modern learning. Thus, this field of study will not only produce effective pedagogical practice, but also build a strong theoretical foundation as a long-term academic reference.

The analysis of this citation confirms that the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method has great potential to become a subdiscipline within Islamic education. However, this potential can be fully realized only if further research strengthens citation networks, expands academic collaboration, and places this method within a broader, more sustainable theoretical framework.

Academic and Practical Implications

The bibliometric findings in this study have several significant academic and practical implications for the development of Islamic education, particularly in Islamic boarding schools. The increase in the number of publications identified not only reflects rising research interest but also signals an epistemological shift within the scientific tradition of Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools, which have long been educational institutions grounded in the transmission of knowledge through oral tradition and religious practice, are increasingly producing documented and published scientific knowledge. This transformation is in line with the view of (Jansen et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024), who affirms that the intensification of scientific publications is an important indicator of the process of modernization and institutionalization of knowledge in religious educational institutions.

From a pedagogical perspective, the results of this analysis show that the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method serves not only as a practical learning technique, but

also as a bridge between Arabic linguistic theory and traditional learning practices of the Yellow Book. The method's visual, systematic, and sentence-structure-based approach helps students understand the rules of the Arabic language more quickly and more effectively. These findings strengthen Tamim and Ishari's argument that pedagogical innovation in pesantren can be pursued without sacrificing the substance of classical science. Thus, the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* can be seen as an adaptive pedagogical model that answers the demands of contemporary learning efficiency while maintaining the continuity of the intellectual tradition of Islamic boarding schools.

Another equally important implication concerns the development of research in Islamic education. The dominance of descriptive research identified in the bibliometric analysis indicates that the study of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* remains at the exploratory stage. This condition opens up a wide space for the development of advanced research with a more diverse and in-depth methodological approach. The mixed-method approach, which combines quantitative and qualitative analysis, has the potential to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of these methods. Further research, for example, can examine the relationship between the application of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* and psychopedagogical variables such as learning motivation, student independence, or digital literacy skills in the context of learning the yellow book.

In addition, the findings of this study affirm the importance of strengthening collaboration between Islamic boarding schools and state Islamic universities to build a sustainable thematic research network. The low level of collaboration between institutions identified earlier indicates that the potential for research and development remains underutilized. Collaboration between pesantrens, as centers of educational practice, and universities, as centers for developing research theories and methodologies, can produce stronger, more credible research-based educational innovations. This kind of synergy not only improves the quality and visibility of pesantren research but also strengthens the religious education research ecosystem in Indonesia more broadly.

The academic and practical implications of these findings confirm that the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* has a strategic position in the development of contemporary Islamic education. However, to maximize this potential, systematic efforts are needed to strengthen the theoretical, methodological, and collaborative dimensions of research in this field. With this step, the study of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum Method* will not only make a practical contribution to Islamic boarding school learning, but also enrich the scientific treasures of Islamic education in a sustainable manner.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this study is that research on the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method has undergone a clear trajectory of scientific maturation between 2012 and 2025, marked by a steady increase in publications and an acceleration after 2018. This development reflects a broader epistemological shift in pesantren education, in which traditional learning practices are increasingly examined, documented, and legitimized through scientific inquiry. The *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method emerges not merely as a technical approach to learning the yellow book but as a pedagogical model that successfully bridges classical Islamic scholarship with contemporary demands for efficiency, structure, and learner accessibility. The key lesson drawn from this research is that pedagogical innovation in pesantren can occur without diminishing the substance of classical knowledge, and that systematic reflection through research plays a crucial role in sustaining the relevance of Islamic education in modern contexts.

From a scholarly perspective, this study contributes to Islamic education research by providing the first comprehensive bibliometric mapping of the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method, thereby extending existing literature beyond descriptive and institution-specific analyses. By revealing patterns in publication growth, thematic concentration, collaboration networks, and citation influence, this research provides an empirical foundation for understanding the current state and future direction of this emerging field. However, this study is limited by its reliance on two databases and the dominance of descriptive research within the existing literature. Future research is therefore encouraged to expand data sources, employ mixed and experimental methodologies, and integrate stronger theoretical frameworks from Arabic linguistics, psychopedagogy, and educational technology. Strengthening inter-institutional collaboration between pesantren and universities will be essential to deepen academic impact and advance the *Al-Miftah Lil Ulum* Method as a sustainable, theoretically grounded contribution to contemporary Islamic pedagogy.

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