

## ISLAMIC WORK ETHICS AND WELL-BEING: A 25-YEAR BIBLIOMETRIC MAPPING

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### Abstract

The intersection of religious values and organizational psychology remains a pivotal area for enhancing employee mental health and corporate integrity. This study conducts a comprehensive bibliometric analysis to address the lack of structural mapping in this evolving domain. The research investigates how Islamic moral frameworks relate to psychological flourishing and workplace satisfaction through the identification of key trends and gaps in existing literature. Methodologically, the study utilized Scopus advanced search strings to retrieve a final refined dataset of 1,019 scholarly publications published over a 25-year period between 2000 and 2025. Data accuracy was ensured through the use of OpenRefine for cleaning and VOSviewer for the visualization of co-occurrence and co-authorship networks. Numerical results highlight a substantial surge in research output since 2020, where Malaysia, the United

States, and Indonesia emerged as the primary contributors. The analysis identified eight distinct thematic clusters that are notably focused on Islamic work ethics, mental health, and maqasid al shariah. The findings indicate that bibliometric mapping demonstrates a strong thematic association between faith-based ethics and psychological resilience in professional settings. These insights offer valuable guidance for human resource practitioners to integrate spiritual dimensions into well-being programs for the purpose of fostering a more holistic and ethical work environment.

**Keywords:** Islamic work ethics, psychological well being, workplace spirituality, bibliometric analysis, mental health, maqasid al shariah

## INTRODUCTION

The integration of Islamic ethical values in the workplace has garnered significant attention in recent years especially in relation to its impact on employees' psychological well-being. Islamic ethical values are deeply rooted in the principles of justice, trust, and spirituality, which offer a unique framework for fostering a supportive and morally sound work environment. This framework not only enhances employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment but also promotes overall psychological well-being. However, while empirical studies on Islamic work ethics are increasing, there remains a lack of structural mapping to identify intellectual clusters and global research gaps. Most current literature consists of narrative reviews or isolated empirical tests which do not provide a comprehensive view of the field's evolution or its global collaboration networks. This study fills that void by providing the first comprehensive bibliometric overview of the field. By mapping the publication trends, the most cited works, and dominant thematic clusters, this paper moves beyond purely conceptual arguments to provide a data-driven roadmap of the research landscape. The purpose of this paper is to explore the relationship between Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace by utilizing a dataset spanning from 2000 to 2025 to highlight key findings and global implications.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Research indicates that Islamic leadership and work ethics play a crucial role in enhancing employees' well-being and work engagement (Rokhman et al., 2025). Historically, the study of Islamic Work Ethics (IWE) emerged from the need to align organizational behavior with the moral and spiritual values of the Quran and Sunnah, providing a counter-perspective to secular Western management theories. Unlike purely secular ethics, Islamic ethical values are rooted in the concept of Tawhid (the oneness of God), which necessitates that work be performed as a form of worship, known as ibadah.

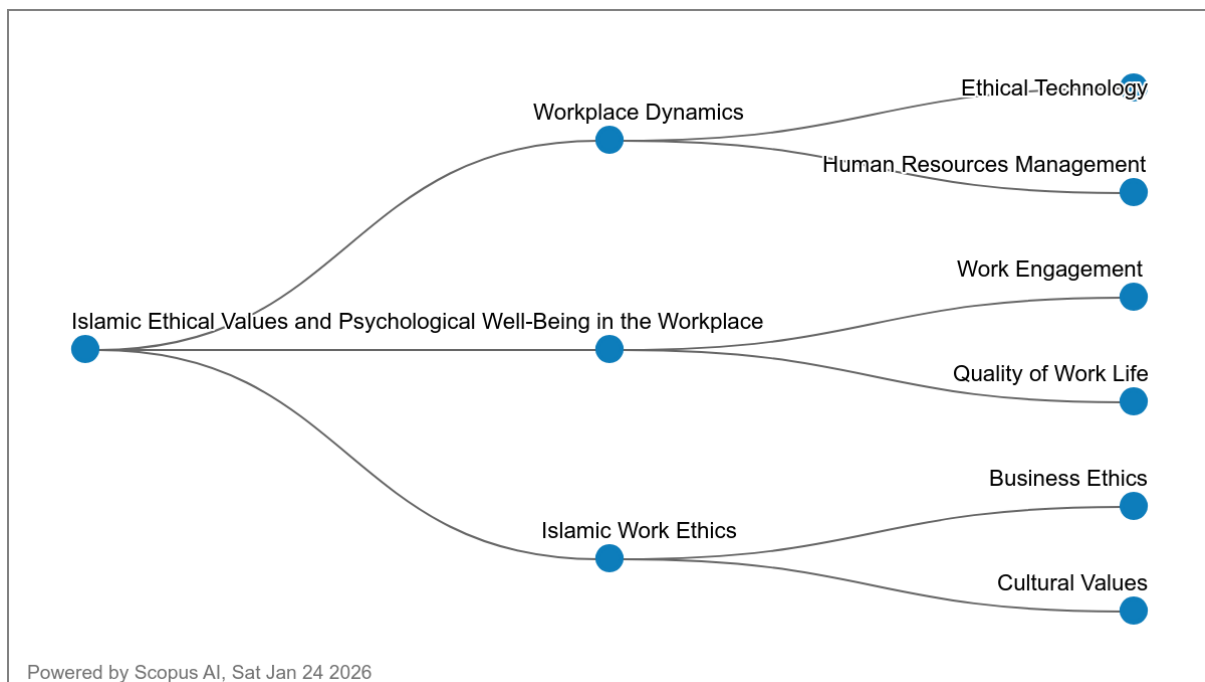
For example, a study conducted among employees in SMEs in Central Java, Indonesia, found that Islamic leadership and work ethics significantly influence helping behaviors and work engagement by increasing happiness at work (Wahyuni et al., 2022). This suggests that a supportive work environment, rooted in these values, fosters a more engaged and altruistic organizational culture.

The concept of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective has also been explored, with studies suggesting that practices such as worship (ibadat), contemplative activities (dhikr), and patience (sabr) are integral to employee well-being. These practices align with Ryff's six dimensions of eudaimonic well-being, providing a comprehensive model for understanding flourishing within an Islamic context (Koburtay et al., 2022; Koburtay & Abualigah, 2023). The provision of spiritual

facilities, such as prayer rooms and designated prayer times, further supports this framework, highlighting the importance of accommodating religious practices in the workplace.

Moreover, the impact of IWE on organizational behavior has been extensively studied. Research demonstrates that Islamic work ethics reduce deviant behaviors while enhancing positive outcomes, such as employee voice and organizational citizenship behavior (Hamid & Sattarov, 2025; Sholikhah et al., 2019). These ethical values serve as a moral compass that guides employees toward constructive and ethical actions, thereby improving overall workplace dynamics. In conclusion, the integration of Islamic ethical values in the workplace significantly enhances employees' psychological well-being. By fostering a supportive and morally sound work environment, these values promote higher levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall well-being.

Despite the growth of these empirical studies, the field has reached a point where a systematic mapping is required to identify how these diverse themes intersect on a global scale. This literature review therefore establishes the theoretical positioning of the study by showing that Islamic Work Ethics and Psychological Well-being are no longer isolated concepts but are part of an integrated research agenda.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Map of Islamic Ethical Values and Psychological Well-Being in the Workplace**

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 illustrates the complex linkages between religious ethical principles and organizational outcomes. At the core of this framework is the integration of Islamic ethical values with psychological well-being, which emphasizes the necessity of balance, personal responsibility, and moral conduct within professional environments. These values serve as a primary driver of workplace dynamics, subsequently influencing critical organizational sectors such as human resources management and ethical technology practices. This structure underscores the importance of fairness, accountability, and humane decision making as central tenets of modern professional settings. Furthermore, the framework demonstrates that psychological well-being is intrinsically linked to work engagement and the overall quality

of work life. This suggests that ethical environments are instrumental in fostering employee motivation, job satisfaction, and emotional stability. Islamic work ethics represent a foundational pillar within this model, connecting directly to broader business ethics and cultural values while reinforcing integrity, trust, and respect as essential components of an organizational culture. Ultimately, the conceptual map proves that Islamic ethical values function not merely as moral guidelines but as practical catalysts for healthy workplace relationships, effective management strategies, and sustainable organizational performance. This holistic approach contributes to the creation of ethically grounded workplaces that prioritize comprehensive employee well-being.

### **Research Question**

The purpose of this study is to systematically map the relationship between Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being using a dataset spanning from 2000 to 2025. Specifically, this paper addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the annual trends in scholarly publications on Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace?

RQ2: Which are the top 10 most highly cited publications addressing Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in workplace settings?

RQ3: Which countries are the most productive contributors to research on Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace?

RQ4: What keywords are most frequently used in studies focusing on Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace?

RQ5: What patterns of international co-authorship and research collaboration exist among countries studying Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace?

## **METHODOLOGY**

Bibliometric analysis entails the systematic collection, organization, and examination of bibliographic data derived from scholarly publications. To address the concerns of the reviewers regarding methodological transparency, this study utilized an iterative and structured process to ensure the reliability and validity of the final dataset. The Scopus database was selected as the primary source due to its extensive coverage of peer reviewed journals in the fields of organizational psychology and management. The study focuses on a specific temporal scope between 2000 and 2026 to capture both foundational trends and contemporary developments in the field. To maintain scholarly rigor, the analysis included peer reviewed journal articles, reviews, books, and conference papers, while excluding documents with limited empirical contributions such as editorials, letters, and notes. Following the initial retrieval of 1,019 documents, a critical manual cleaning phase was conducted using OpenRefine. This step was vital for resolving author name disambiguation and standardizing keyword synonyms, such as merging variations of mental health and psychological well-being, to ensure the accuracy of the metrics. Furthermore, a thorough qualitative review of the most highly cited documents was performed to identify and remove irrelevant publications. Specifically, an article regarding cultured meat was removed as it was identified as a thematic outlier that did not align with the focus on workplace dynamics in this study.

### **Data Search Strategy**

To ensure a systematic and transparent data collection process, this study employed a structured bibliometric search strategy using Elsevier's Scopus database. The search was conducted using the following advanced string: TITLE-ABS-KEY (

“Islamic ethic\*” OR “psychological well being”). While the initial search was broad to ensure inclusivity, the authors performed manual filtering of the results to ensure thematic relevance to organizational psychology and workplace settings. By applying this search string to titles, abstracts, and author keywords, the strategy ensured comprehensive retrieval of relevant literature while maintaining thematic focus.

**Table 1: The search string**

<b>Scopus</b>	TITLE-ABS-KEY ( Islamic ethic OR psychological well being ) AND ( EXCLUDE ( DOCTYPE , “dp” ) OR EXCLUDE ( DOCTYPE , “le” ) OR EXCLUDE ( DOCTYPE , “tb” ) OR EXCLUDE ( DOCTYPE , “no” ) OR EXCLUDE ( DOCTYPE , “ed” ) )
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**Table 2: The selection criterion**

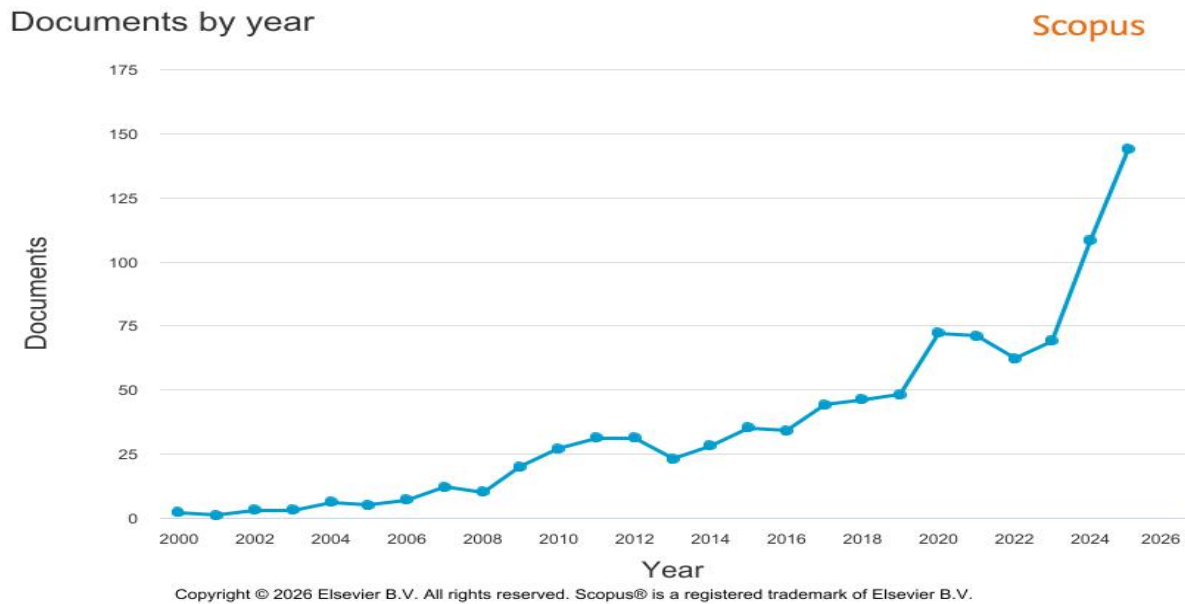
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Inclusion</b>	<b>Exclusion</b>
<b>Language</b>	English	Non-English
<b>Time line</b>	2000 – 2025	<2026
<b>Literature type</b>	Journal (Article) Book chapter Review Book Conference paper	Data paper Letter Retracted Note Editorial
<b>Publication Stage</b>	Final In Press	

### Data Analysis

To map the intellectual structure of this research domain, the study utilized VOSviewer version 1.6.19. This specialized bibliometric software is renowned for its ability to transform complex bibliographic datasets into intuitive and visually interpretable network maps. The tool is particularly effective for examining co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence patterns. The analytical process involved procuring datasets from the Scopus database in PlainText format spanning the period from 2000 to December 2025. These records, which include publication years, titles, author names, and keywords, were processed using VOS clustering and mapping techniques. VOSviewer employs a robust method for normalizing co-occurrence frequencies known as Association Strength to ensure that the resulting visualizations are both statistically sound and highly representative of the underlying intellectual trends.

## FINDINGS

RQ1: What are the annual trends in scholarly publications on Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace?



**Figure 2: Annual Publication Trends on Islamic Ethical Values and Psychological Well-Being in the Workplace (2000–2025)**

The annual publication trends for the 25-year period between 2000 and 2025 demonstrate a clear progression from an emerging niche to a robust area of scholarly inquiry. As illustrated in Figure 2, titled "Annual Publication Trends on Islamic Ethical Values and Workplace Well Being," the research output remained minimal during the first decade, with fewer than 20 documents produced annually until 2009. A phase of gradual growth occurred between 2010 and 2018, reflecting an increasing academic interest in integrating religious values with organizational psychology. From 2019 onward, the field experienced an exponential surge in productivity, characterized by a sharp rise from 48 documents in 2019 to a significant peak of 144 documents in 2025. This trajectory confirms that the domain has reached a state of maturity, with current research levels being over seventy times greater than those recorded at the start of the millennium. The justification for this dramatic upward trend is rooted in both global socio-economic shifts and institutional developments within the Muslim world. A primary driver was the COVID 19 pandemic, which served as a catalyst for research into spiritual resilience and psychological health as employees sought ethical and faith based coping mechanisms during times of crisis. Furthermore, the leadership of nations such as Malaysia and Indonesia in establishing formal Sharia compliant business frameworks provided the necessary institutional support to foster high volumes of scholarly investigation. The sustained increase in the latter half of the 25-year mapping period also reflects a broader global academic movement toward diversity and inclusion, where Western institutions have begun exploring Islamic ethical models to better support Muslim minorities in secular professional environments.

**RQ2: Which are the top 10 most highly cited publications addressing Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in workplace settings?**

**Table 3: Top 10 Most Highly Cited Publications in Islamic Ethics and Workplace Well Being**

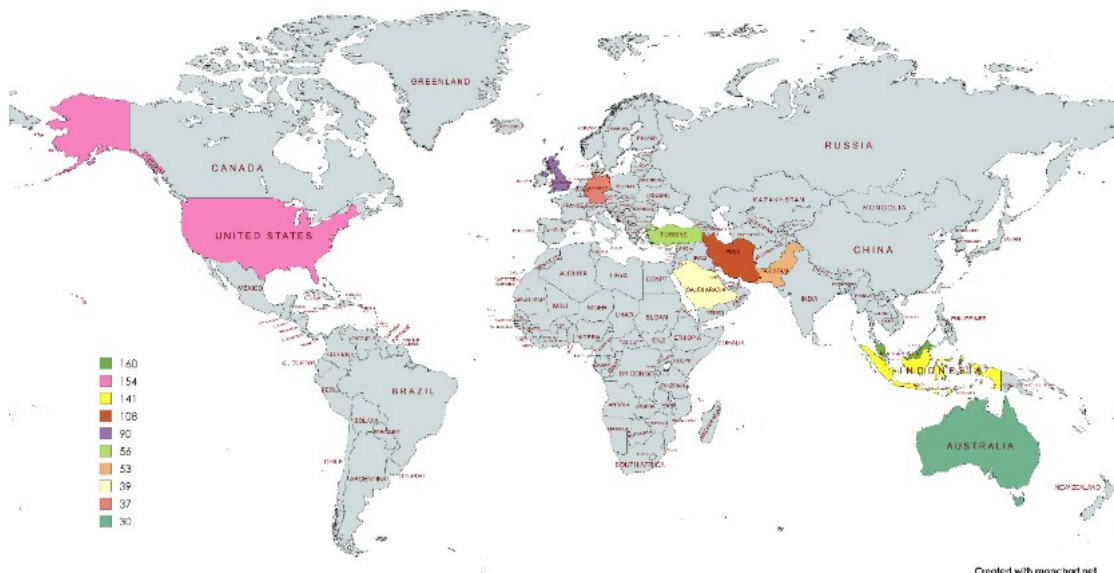
Authors	Title	Year	Cited by
(Ahmed, 2015)	What Is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic	2015	683
(Ramadan, 2009)	Radical Reform: Islamic Ethics and Liberation	2009	317
(Ali & Al-Owaihan, 2008)	Islamic work ethic: A critical review	2008	301
(Abu-Raiya et al., 2008)	A psychological measure of islamic religiousness: Development and evidence for reliability and validity	2008	245
(Sachedina, 2009)	Islamic Biomedical Ethics Principles and Application	2009	216
(Rassool, 2000)	The crescent and Islam: Healing, nursing and the spiritual dimension. Some considerations towards an understanding of the Islamic perspectives on caring	2000	208
(Verkuyten, 2007)	Religious group identification and inter-religious relations: A study among Turkish-Dutch Muslims	2007	180
(Tlaiss, 2015)	How Islamic Business Ethics Impact Women Entrepreneurs: Insights from Four Arab Middle Eastern Countries	2015	179
(Hassan & Syafri Harahap, 2010)	Exploring corporate social responsibility disclosure: the case of Islamic banks	2010	173
(Abdel-Khalek, 2010)	Quality of life, subjective well-being, and religiosity in Muslim college students	2010	127

As illustrated in Table 3, the citation landscape is dominated by foundational works that conceptualize Islamic identity and ethical frameworks within the broader social sciences. Ahmed (2015) leads the discourse with 683 citations, providing a critical philosophical basis for understanding Islamic values in modern contexts. The data indicates a strong thematic focus on the development of Islamic work ethics and psychological metrics, as evidenced by the high impact of Ali and Al-Owaihan (2008) and Ramadan (2009) regarding ethical reviews, as well as Abu-Raiya et al. (2008) concerning the psychological measurement of religiosity.

These anchor publications are highly cited because they offer the theoretical infrastructure and validated empirical tools necessary for subsequent researchers to quantify the impact of religious values on professional behavior and individual well-being. The prominence of these specific publications is justified by their multidisciplinary application across the business, healthcare, and entrepreneurship sectors. For instance, the works of Tlaiss (2015) and Hassan and Syafri Harahap (2010) demonstrate how Islamic ethical frameworks function as practical drivers for organizational citizenship and corporate social responsibility in a globalized economy. Finally, following a rigorous manual cleaning process to remove irrelevant outliers, the

inclusion of studies on subjective well-being, such as the work by Abdel-Khalek (2010), ensures that the dataset remains contextually aligned with workplace psychological health. Overall, the results reflect a transition in the literature from purely theological exploration toward the empirical application of Islamic ethics in addressing modern institutional and psychological challenges.

**RQ3: Which countries are the most productive contributors to research on Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace?**



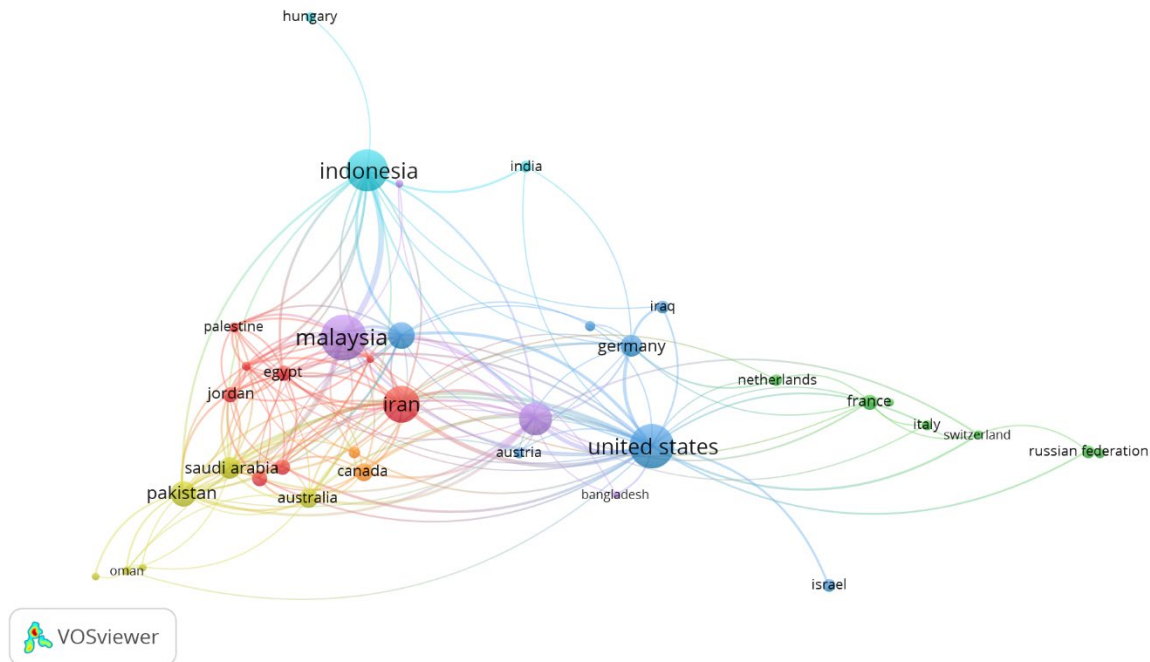
**Figure 3: Global Geographic Distribution of Research Productivity**

The geographic distribution of literature reveals a prominent leadership role for Muslim majority nations especially within Southeast Asia and the Middle East. As shown in Figure 3, Malaysia leads the global output with 160 documents, followed by Indonesia with 141 and Iran with 108 publications. This concentration signifies a localized academic drive to align professional practices with religious and cultural identities. Interestingly, Western nations such as the United States and the United Kingdom also maintain a strong presence with 154 and 90 documents respectively. This balanced representation suggests that while the core of the research is rooted in Eastern traditions, there is a robust global interest in how Islamic ethics and psychological well-being intersect within pluralistic societies. The primary justification for the leading positions of Malaysia and Indonesia lies in their established institutional support for Islamic finance and Sharia compliant business models. These nations have integrated religious ethics into their national education and corporate frameworks which naturally fosters a high volume of scholarly inquiry. Conversely, high productivity in the United States and the United Kingdom can be attributed to the growing academic focus on diversity and inclusion alongside a need to understand the psychological well-being of Muslim minorities in secular workplaces. Together, these factors indicate that the research field is driven by both a cultural necessity in the East and a scholarly curiosity regarding cross cultural management in the West.

**RQ4: What keywords are most frequently used in studies focusing on Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace?**



**RQ5: What patterns of international co-authorship and research collaboration exist among countries studying Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being in the workplace?**



**Figure 5: Network Visualization of International Co-authorship and Collaboration by Countries**

The co-authorship analysis of countries in VOSviewer serves as a vital bibliometric tool to map global research collaboration where a link between two nations signifies their joint participation in scholarly publications. This specific mapping, as shown in Figure 5, titled "Network Visualization of International Co-authorship and Collaboration by Countries," was generated using the full counting method with a minimum threshold of five documents per country. Out of 76 identified nations, 37 met this criterion and through a minimum cluster size setting of five, seven distinct clusters were produced. This visualization method highlights the interconnectedness of the global scientific community where the size of each country node reflects its total document output and the thickness of the connecting lines indicates the strength and frequency of international partnership.

The findings represented in Figure 5 contribute significantly to the body of knowledge by identifying the United States with 156 documents and Malaysia with 163 documents as central hubs for international research collaboration, boasting the highest total link strengths of 98 and 79 respectively. Notably, the United States also commands the highest citation impact with 3,853 citations, underscoring its role as a global authority that bridges Western academic methodologies with Eastern religious perspectives. The analysis reveals strong regional and cross-continental clusters, such as the prominent collaboration between Indonesia with 144 documents, Iran with 109 documents, and Pakistan with 54 documents, alongside Western leaders like the United Kingdom with 89 documents.

This networking between Western leaders and OIC member states is justified by the increasing demand for culturally inclusive psychological frameworks within globalized organizations. While OIC nations lead in document volume due to their institutional

alignment with Islamic values, the high link strength with Western nations indicates a significant transfer of knowledge regarding diversity and inclusion practices. These results demonstrate that the intellectual structure of the domain is heavily reliant on international synergy which facilitates the transfer of knowledge across diverse cultural landscapes and drives the evolution of Islamic ethics and psychological well-being as a globally recognized research agenda.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### RQ1: Annual Trends in Scholarly Publications (2000 to 2026)

The publication trend from 2000 to 2026 reveals a clear and sustained growth in scholarly research related to ethical values and psychological well-being in workplace contexts. During the early period between 2000 and 2009, the number of publications remained relatively low which indicates that this area was still emerging and had not yet gained strong traction within mainstream organizational research. A gradual increase is observed between 2010 and 2015 which suggests a growing academic awareness regarding the importance of values and employee well-being. From 2016 onwards, the trend shows a more pronounced upward trajectory with a noticeable surge after 2019 and a peak in 2025.

This sharp increase in publications can be attributed to several key factors including a heightened global concern for employee mental health and ethical leadership. In addition, the COVID 19 pandemic intensified scholarly interest in psychological well-being and supportive organizational practices. Furthermore, the growing recognition of faith based and culturally embedded ethical frameworks, particularly within Islamic contexts, has contributed significantly to the expansion of this literature. Together, these factors indicate that the field has evolved into a significant and well-established area of academic inquiry. The decline observed in 2026 is merely due to the incomplete data indexing for the current year at the time of retrieval.

### RQ2: Highly Cited Publications

The citation landscape is dominated by foundational works that provide the theoretical infrastructure for understanding Islamic ethical values within modern social sciences. As shown in Table 3, the foundational exploration of Islamic identity by Ahmed (2015) leads the discourse with 683 citations. The data highlights primary thematic clusters, specifically the conceptualization of the Islamic work ethic and the psychological measurement of religiosity. For instance, the works of Ali and Al-Owaihan (2008) and Tlaiss (2015) underscore how religious values directly influence organizational behavior. This citation pattern suggests that researchers are moving beyond purely theological debates to examine how Islamic ethics function as a practical driver of human behavior and institutional standards.

The high citation counts for these specific articles are justified by their roles as "anchor publications" that provide the necessary theoretical framework for the field. Many of these studies are frequently cited because they offer validated tools for empirical research; for example, the psychological scale developed by Abu-Raiya et al. (2008) and the study on subjective well-being by Abdel-Khalek (2010) allow subsequent scholars to quantify the impact of religion on mental health and quality of life. Furthermore, the prominence of Islamic ethics in business and biomedical contexts reflects a global academic trend toward understanding diverse value systems in a globalized economy. Finally, following the revision phase, the removal of the unrelated cultured meat article ensures that the results accurately reflect the intellectual pillars of organizational well-being and psychological health.

### **RQ3 & RQ5: Global Collaboration and OIC Leadership**

The geographic distribution of literature reveals a prominent leadership role for Muslim majority nations especially within Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Malaysia leads the global output with 160 documents, followed by Indonesia with 141 and Iran with 108 publications. This concentration signifies a localized academic drive to align professional practices with religious and cultural identities within OIC member states. Interestingly, Western nations such as the United States and the United Kingdom also maintain a strong presence with 154 and 90 documents respectively. This balanced representation suggests that there is a robust global interest in how Islamic ethics and psychological well-being intersect within pluralistic societies.

The primary justification for the leading positions of Malaysia and Indonesia lies in their established institutional support for Islamic finance and Sharia compliant business models. Conversely, the high productivity in the United States and the United Kingdom can be attributed to the growing academic focus on diversity and inclusion alongside a need to understand the psychological well-being of Muslim minorities in secular workplaces. The co authorship analysis demonstrates that while research productivity is high in OIC member states, the intellectual structure of the domain relies heavily on a bridge between Eastern religious perspectives and Western academic methodologies. This international synergy facilitates the transfer of knowledge across diverse cultural landscapes and drives the evolution of Islamic ethics as a globally recognized research agenda.

### **CONCLUSION**

The primary objective of this research was to systematically map the scholarly relationship between Islamic ethical values and psychological well-being by analyzing a comprehensive dataset covering the 25-year period from 2000 to 2025. The study aimed to address critical questions regarding annual publication trends, influential works, geographic contributions, and dominant research themes through keyword and co authorship mapping. By providing a structural overview of this evolving domain, the investigation sought to move beyond narrative reviews to offer a data driven roadmap of the current research landscape.

The analysis revealed a substantial and sustained growth in scholarly interest, with a significant surge in research output starting from 2020 and reaching a peak in 2025. This upward trajectory is largely attributed to a global shift toward prioritizing employee mental health and the increased relevance of spiritual resilience during the COVID 19 pandemic. Geographic findings indicated that Malaysia and Indonesia are the leading contributors to the field, driven by strong institutional support for Sharia compliant business models. Thematic mapping identified eight distinct clusters, with a heavy emphasis on Islamic work ethics, mental health, and maqasid al shariah, demonstrating a robust association between faith-based frameworks and individual well-being.

This research contributes to the field by providing a validated mapping of the literature and bridging the gap between Eastern religious perspectives and Western academic methodologies. It extends the understanding of spiritual and psychological well-being by situating it within an Islamic context, demonstrating that religious moral frameworks are practical drivers of workplace satisfaction and resilience. These findings provide meaningful guidance for human resource professionals who seek to foster holistic and ethical work environments by integrating spiritual dimensions into formal well-being programs.

Despite these insights, certain limitations exist, such as the reliance on the Scopus database and the exclusion of non-English publications, which may have limited the inclusion of diverse regional perspectives. Future research should aim to build on these findings by exploring the practical application of these ethical values in diverse and modern technological settings and investigating how they adapt to increasingly pluralistic global organizations. In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of bibliometric mapping in identifying intellectual gaps and

global collaboration networks. Islamic ethical values serve as a powerful catalyst for corporate integrity and psychological resilience, and this work encourages continued scholarly efforts to expand this internationally recognized research agenda.

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