

REVIEW ARTICLE

Bibliometric Analysis of Old Age and Aged Care from Islamic Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The increasingly ageing population worldwide, particularly in Islamic countries, underscores the importance of understanding old age and aged care based on Islamic principles. This study aimed to undertake a bibliometric analysis of old age and aged care studies from the Islamic perspective. The present study employed a qualitative and quantitative analysis by combining bibliometric and content analysis to examine old age and aged care trends from Islamic perspectives in the Scopus database. The results were analysed and visualised using Microsoft Excel, bibliometrix an R package, and VOSviewer (version 1.6.20). From a total of 1589 publications, 943 were selected for analysis. Content analysis revealed that the key research themes include Islamic-based interventions for disease management and health promotion, mental health and well-being of older Muslims, and immigrants, and minority groups. This bibliometric review article provides valuable insights for researchers, experts, and policymakers engaging with older Muslim individuals, particularly in multicultural contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, demographic shifts have been observed in many Islamic countries, with a notable increase in the proportion of older people. The average proportion of the older people population in 57 Islamic countries was 8.1% in 2005. The number rose to 9.5% in 2020 (1). The demographic shift in Islamic countries began in 2005, resulting in their populations to remain relatively young. Nonetheless, a significant demographic shift is anticipated in most Islamic countries, bringing them closer to the ageing population by 2050 (1). Old age is typically associated with health concerns such as cardiovascular disease, arthritis, and diabetes (2). These conditions present financial and societal challenges by contributing to elevated healthcare costs (3), increased caregiver burden (4), and a greater demand for long-term care, particularly among dependent individuals (5).

In facing ageing-related challenges, older people often turn to religious beliefs and activities to cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing older. Religion gains importance as a person ages, and people

tend to become more religiously involved as they grow older (6). Religion guides connectedness to God, and religious practices can be performed either alone or in groups. Islam outlines various religious and ethical guidelines to promote fairness and compassion and reflect fundamental principles and values such as dignity, honour, kindness, respect, appreciation, ease, and support (7). Islamic teachings encourage Muslims to exhibit acts of kindness and utmost gentleness towards older people (8), which arise from their faith's spiritual and theological foundations. It is believed that Muslims strive to embody divine attributes and qualities in their everyday conduct, translating them into tangible actions.

The growing global ageing population highlights the need for comprehensive research and understanding aged care practices grounded in Islamic principles. The number of studies addressing old age and aged care from Islamic perspectives has significantly risen in recent years. Although several studies focused on certain aspects of aged care within the Islamic context, bibliometric studies that critically analyse and synthesise existing literature on aged care from Islamic perspectives are currently limited. Only a few bibliometric studies on older people to date (9,10). These previous studies focused on geriatric nursing (10) and gerontology-related research (9). Nevertheless, none of these studies incorporate the Islamic perspective. This knowledge

gap hinders the development of evidence-based approaches to effectively address the unique needs of older people within Muslim communities. To the best of all the researchers' knowledge, the present study is the first bibliometric analysis specifically focused on the literature on older people and aged care from Islamic perspectives. In addressing this gap, this research aims to explore the key findings and the primary themes of existing bibliometric analysis related to aged care from Islamic perspectives. The research questions addressed in this study are as follows:

(1) What are the key findings of the bibliometric analysis related to old age and aged care from Islamic perspectives?

(2) What are the primary themes presented in the works of literature related to old age and aged care from the Islamic perspective?

The findings of this study are significant for geriatric and gerontology researchers and individuals working in management and policymaking related to older Muslims.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Data source

A bibliometric study was employed using the Scopus database. The Scopus database is suitable for bibliometric studies as it is the largest database that includes publishing comprising books, journals, proceedings, and data compilations (11). The database also supports various information required for bibliometric analysis, such as the publication title, abstract, keywords, author names, their linked affiliations, and comprehensive citation links (11).

Search strategy

The Scopus database was searched on 27 December 2023. In terms of search terms, the research team discussed and evaluated them to gather additional terms used in practice and finalise the terms. The search terms include "older people" OR "aged care" OR "older adults" OR "senior citizen" OR "elder" AND "Islam" OR "Muslim" in the title, abstract, keywords, or keywords. The first author reviewed the titles of all articles. This step resulted in the identification of 1589 publications as a primary sample. The inclusion criteria encompassed all types of studies, including books, book chapters, journal articles, conference papers, and letters to the editor. There were no restrictions on the year of publication, and studies published in any language, including Arabic, English, Spanish, and Turkish, were considered eligible. A set of exclusion criteria was incorporated into the primary sample to determine the reliability of the findings of the bibliometric review. Subsequently, the study excluded research with keywords such as 'adolescent', 'young adult', 'child', 'pregnancy', 'infant', 'preschool child' and 'child, preschool'. Studies were excluded if they did not focus on older people aged 60 years and above, or if they lacked emphasis on

Islamic involvement. Duplicate studies identified across databases were also removed. [A1.1]The final sample for bibliometric analysis comprised 943 publications. Fig. 1 illustrates the PRISMA flow diagram for study inclusion.

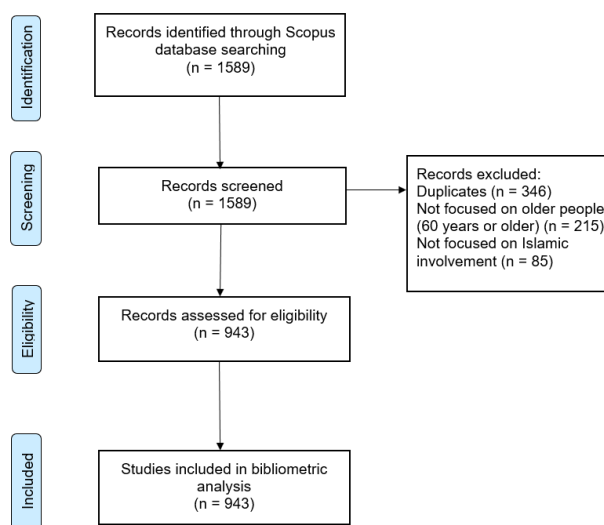


Fig. 1: The PRISMA flow diagram for study inclusion

Data collection

Article information, including publication title, journal, title, author, country, affiliation, keywords, document type, and citation counts were recorded and exported to CSV format. Authorship was categorised as primary and co-authorship, and authors' countries and affiliations for each article were documented. If more than one author of an article shares the same country or affiliation, only one author was recorded.

Bibliometric analysis

The present study employed bibliometric performance analysis (BPA) and bibliometric network analysis (BNA) by utilising the software application VOSviewer (version 1.6.20) (12), bibliometrix an R package, and Microsoft Excel. The software was utilised to create and visualise bibliometric networks and evaluate keyword frequency to shed light on the research trends concerning older people and aged care from Islamic viewpoints. Content analysis was performed to identify the key research themes from relevant previous studies.

Ethical approval

Ethics approval was not required for this study because it did not involve human subjects or participants' consent.

RESULTS

Description and Trend

A total of 943 publications were selected for the bibliometric analysis in the present study. The majority of the publications were articles, accounting for 84.7% (799 out of 943). Other publication types were significantly less frequent: book chapters made up 6.4% (60 publications), while reviews accounted for

4.6% (43 publications). Conference papers represented 1.5% (14 publications), and books only 1.2% (11 publications). Less common types included letters (0.6%, 6 publications), editorials (0.3%, 3 publications), notes (0.3%, 3 publications), short surveys (0.2%, 2 publications), and errata (0.2%, 2 publications).

Bibliometric Performance Analysis (BPA)

Most Influential Countries and Institutions

The top ten most influential countries in old age and aged care from Islamic perspectives research based on the number of publications and citations are depicted in Figure 2. A total of 71 countries contributed to publications related to old age and aged care from the Islamic perspective literature. The United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), India, Saudi Arabia and Malaysia occupy the top five places for publications and citations. The USA published 95 of the publications (1999 citations), followed by the UK (54 articles; 1030 citations), India (35 articles; 564 citations), Saudi Arabia (34 articles; 560 citations) and Malaysia (32 articles; 380 citations). Fig. 2 reveals the most influential institutions based on the number of citations. The top five institutions are based in the USA. In summary, the primary research centres for studies on old age and aged care from the Islamic perspective are in the USA, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.

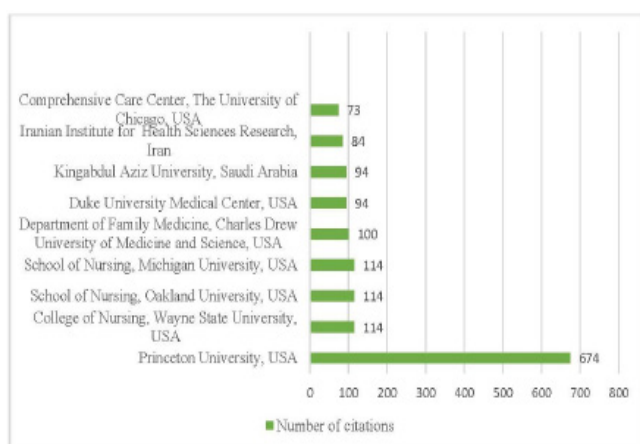


Fig. 2: Most influential institutions based on the number of citations. Note: 68 out of 2408 institutions met the threshold of at least two publications

Most Influential Journals

Of the 649 sources, 18 journals are considered to achieve the authors' minimum criteria of five publications. The combination of all the articles represents 148 of the 943 articles. The Bradford Law was utilised to identify current journals related to old age and aged care with Islamic perspectives. As per Fig. 3, Bradford's Law underlines that the core sources for publication in the field comprise 77 journals.

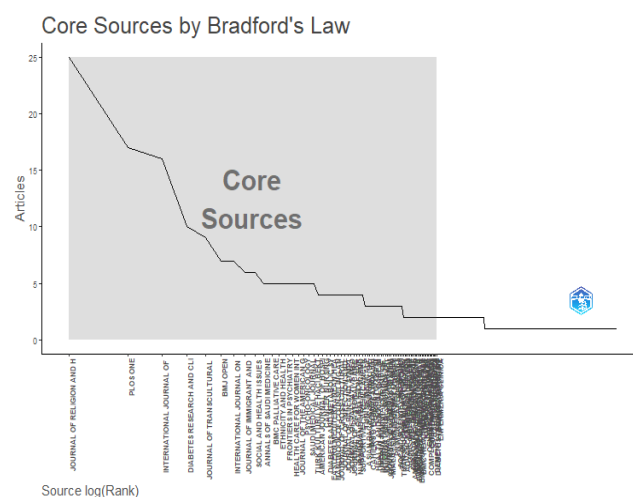


Fig. 3 : Bradford's law

Bibliometric Network Map Analysis (BNA)

Title and Abstract Map Analysis

The minimum number of term occurrences was set at ten, and the researchers decided to utilise the complete count analysis method. These parameters generated 388 out of 5888 terms meeting the threshold. The keyword clusters depicted in the network map (Refer to Fig. 4) illustrate potential combinations of keywords for developing relevant research topics.

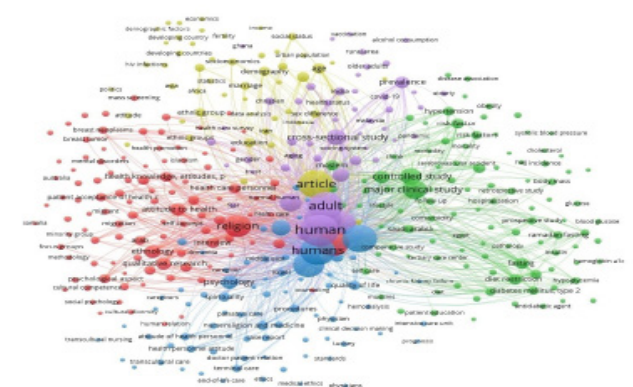


Fig. 4: Network visualisation map of most frequent terms in authors' keywords of the retrieved literature on old age and aged care from the Islamic perspectives

The analysis resulted in the development of five clusters. These clusters were utilised to categorise and assign labels to the keywords. The keywords were analysed based on the researcher's interpretation of old age and aged care from Islamic perspectives. The five clusters were merged into three themes by analysing the conceptual overlap and shared keywords. Initially, each cluster represented distinct but related areas of study. However, upon closer examination of the keywords, it

became apparent that several clusters shared common concepts and focus areas. For example, Clusters 1 and 5 both addressed health interventions and nursing care. Analyzing the overlapping concepts and keywords, the clusters were merged into three themes, which enhanced the understanding of the key issues presented in the literature. Theme 1: Islamic-based interventions for disease management and health promotion was primarily derived from the merging of Clusters 1 and 5, encompassing keywords related to Islamic perspectives on health and nursing care, fasting, and religious-based interventions. Theme 2: Mental health and well-being of older Muslims emerged from the integration of Clusters 2 and 4, including keywords associated with mental health, aging, dementia, and caregiving. Theme 3: Immigrants and minority groups was primarily drawn from Cluster 3, focusing on keywords related to aging, quality of life, and the experiences of older individuals, particularly within minority or immigrant populations. These three themes were further explored in the content analysis of the publications.

Content analysis

The three key themes were further explored through a detailed content analysis of 943 publications. This in-depth analysis examined how these themes are represented across various research, identifying key trends, interventions, and gaps in the previous studies. [A2.1]

Islamic-based interventions for disease management and health promotion

Islamic-based intervention-related topics were discovered to be a significant research area in this field. The findings revealed that the studies on this theme focused on the planning and execution of Islamic-based interventions that are employed to enhance the quality of life for older people. Previous studies have studied Islamic-based interventions for older Muslim patients, such as dhikr therapy (13), listening to Quran recitation and physical training on dialysis (14), Ramadhan fasting during stroke (15), pre-Ramadhan education (16), the impact of Ramadhan fasting on lean body mass (17) and during COVID-19 pandemic (18), salat prayer and exercise on cognitive levels (19), modification of salat for osteoarthritis (20), and new physical exercises taken from salat (21). These interventions were designed to support older people with stroke, diabetes, renal issues, osteoarthritis, and dementia. The research in this field recognises the potential benefits of incorporating Islamic-based practices into healthcare strategies for older people, acknowledging the cultural and religious dimensions that can significantly impact their overall well-being.

Mental health and well-being of older Muslims

This theme focuses on the management of older people experiencing mental health issues in the Muslim community. It involves understanding and addressing

the unique challenges arising in providing support to older Muslims dealing with mental health issues. For example, a study assessed the appropriateness of older people with dementia to engage in Islamic practices, specifically Solat (22). The study studied their cognitive condition by developing a dementia Solat Score (22). The most common mental health-related issues studied are cognitive impairment and dementia (22,23), depression (24), loneliness (25), and suicide (26).

In terms of the well-being of older people, previous studies have explored the spiritual needs of older Muslims, specifically emphasising the role of religiosity, particularly Islam, in contributing to the overall well-being of older Muslims. A previous study has identified that hospitalised older Muslims expressed spiritual needs such as prayer, reading religious texts, attending religious services, and being with family (27). Positive relationships have been discovered between religious beliefs and the general state of well-being among older Muslims (28–30). Older Muslims with chronic medical conditions and a high level of religiosity reported significantly higher levels of psychological well-being compared to their counterparts with a low level of religiosity (31). Religiosity also positively influences nursing students' attitudes towards older people and their perceptions of elderly care (32). The positive impact on nursing students' attitudes highlights the value of integrating religious considerations into healthcare training for better religious-sensitive care within the Muslim community.

Immigrants and minority groups

This theme explains the unique dynamics and challenges faced by immigrants, minority groups, and Muslim communities in developing countries. Previous studies have demonstrated that prior research has concentrated on the health experiences of older Muslim women as immigrants living in non-Muslim countries (33–38). A potential explanation for the increased emphasis on studies involving older Muslim women is the scarcity of research on healthcare decisions among these women, as they may be more reliant on men for decision-making (34). Other relevant topics related to older immigrants include healthcare experiences (34), the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (39), and placing older people in long-term care institutions (40,41). Older Muslims, as a minority group, such as in Thailand and China, face increased vulnerability to numerous health issues arising from cultural disparities and limited access to culturally sensitive healthcare services. Notably, culturally sensitive nursing care may be required to maintain the healthy living of older Muslim people to promote healthy ageing and independent living (42,43).

DISCUSSION

This bibliometric review encompasses a quantitative and qualitative review based on bibliometric performance

analysis (BPA), bibliometric network analysis (BNA), and content analysis. The findings indicate that the primary research centres focusing on studies related to old age and aged care from Islamic perspectives are predominantly located in the USA, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. This conclusion is drawn based on the frequency of published articles and the presence of influential institutions in these three countries. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia and Iran are able to produce significant publications in this field despite being categorised as developing countries. These countries' Islamic identities could contribute to the high publication rate in this field. The Journal of Religion and Health has the most contributions in this area. The reason could be attributed to the journal's specific focus on the area of interest, namely old age and Islam (as one of the religions), distinguishing it from other top-listed journals. The presence of articles in numerous journals supports the idea that the topic of ageing is multidisciplinary (10). Thus, addressing the challenges older people face with a multidisciplinary approach will result in successful solutions.

The synthesis of the five clusters into three themes highlights the complex relationship between Islamic perspectives, aging, and healthcare. It also underscored how interconnected health practices and Islamic perspectives are in shaping the health outcomes of older Muslims. This connection reflects the broader discourse on how religious beliefs influence health practices and the overall well-being of older Muslim individuals. In this context, the process of merging these clusters revealed that Islamic teachings are not merely one aspect of health practices but a fundamental and guiding force in shaping how older Muslims approach health. These themes underscore significant areas of research that address not only disease management but also the broader social and emotional well-being of Muslim populations, particularly older people and minority groups. [A3.1]The final three themes are Islamic-based interventions for disease management and health promotion, mental health and well-being of older Muslims, and immigrants and minority groups. While numerous Islamic-based interventions have been studied for health management and promotion, interventions that integrate with technology remain scarce. Previous studies suggested that one of the possible factors could be that older people may lack proficiency in utilising technology-based applications (44). Addressing this gap by developing technology-integrated Islamic-based interventions for older people holds the potential for comprehensive Islamic-based interventions tailored to the needs of older Muslim populations.

Most studies under the theme of mental health and well-being of older Muslims have been conducted in recent years, with a notable rise in publications from 2019 onwards. This trend implies a promising interest in the topic, emphasising the increasing recognition of

the importance of mental health within the context of older Muslim populations. Although numerous studies have thoroughly examined the role of religiosity and its association with mental well-being, further exploration into nuanced aspects and potentially undiscovered dimensions within this crucial intersection of mental health and religious practices is necessary. Numerous studies have concentrated on the challenges faced by older Muslims living as immigrants or minorities. Nonetheless, further exploration in this field is required to address various health challenges stemming from religious disparities and a lack of religious-sensitive healthcare.

The identification of these three themes provides a valuable foundation for future research and policy development in the field of Islamic-based health interventions, mental health, and minority aging experiences. The study highlights the importance of training healthcare providers and caregivers to understand the role of religion in health management for older Muslim patients. It also suggests the need to integrate Islamic principles into caregiving approaches, particularly in mental health support for older patients and healthcare services for immigrants and minority groups. Providing culturally and religiously appropriate support can improve the quality of life of older patients and improve adherence to treatment plans.

The present study exhibits strengths and limitations. The strengths of the present study are the fundamental evidence offered on the explored topic and the identification of articles focused on older people or aged care from the Islamic perspective. This study included all types of studies and languages to guarantee the inclusiveness of data relevant to the field. The limitation of the study is the utilisation of a single database, Scopus, for searching publications. Nevertheless, as the Scopus database is the largest, extensive data was available for bibliometric analysis. Future research could benefit from utilising Google Scholar or the Web of Science (WoS) database, as the present study exclusively relied on the Scopus database.

CONCLUSION

Old age and aged care from the Islamic perspective have gained a growing interest among scholars globally. This global interest underscores the importance of continued research and collaboration to enhance the understanding and address the unique needs associated with old age and aged care within the context of Islamic principles.

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