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Reconstruction of Social Ethics Based on the Qur'an through Contemporary Digital Thematic Analysis

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Abstrak

The development of the digital era, which is characterized by a massive flow of information, has given rise to various social ethical problems, such as the degradation of moral values, disinformation, and societal polarization. Although many studies on the values of the Qur'an have been conducted, most of the research is still normative and has not been integrated with digital analysis approaches that are able to map the theme systematically and contextually. This gap shows the need for a new approach that links the study of interpretation with the development of data-driven methodologies. This research aims to reconstruct social ethics based on the Qur'an through contemporary digital thematic analysis, as well as identify thematic patterns that are relevant to contemporary social problems. The method used is a qualitative approach with the support of bibliometric analysis of scientific publications sourced from the Scopus database. The data were analyzed using the keyword co-occurrence technique and visualized through the VOSviewer software to identify the dominant thematic clusters. The results show a shift in the focus of the study of Qur'anic values towards contemporary social issues, with several main clusters such as digital communication ethics, social justice, and religious moderation. These findings confirm that data-driven thematic approaches are able to provide a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of the teachings of the Qur'an in response to modern challenges. The implications of this research contribute to the development of Qur'anic Inquiry studies that are more adaptive to the development of the times, as well as the basis for strengthening social ethics based on Qur'anic values in facing the dynamics of a digital society.

Keywords: *Social Ethics; The Qur'an; Thematic Analysis; Bibliometrics; VOSviewer.*

Introduction

The development of the digital era has brought significant changes in the social interaction patterns of society, especially in terms of communication, information dissemination, and the formation of public opinion. Easy access to various digital platforms not only opens up opportunities for knowledge exchange, but also raises various social ethical issues, such as the rise of disinformation, hate speech, and the decline in the quality of interactions based on moral values. This phenomenon indicates a shift in values in social life that requires serious attention, especially in the context of Muslim society where the Qur'an is the main guideline of life. Therefore, it is important to re-examine the values of social ethics in the Qur'an with a relevant approach to contemporary dynamics.

A number of previous studies in the last five years have shown an increase in attention to the integration of Qur'anic values in answering modern social problems. A bibliometric study conducted by Ninkov et al. (2021) confirms that a quantitative approach based on scientific publications is able to reveal the development pattern of academic studies in a systematic manner. The research of Elbanna et al. (2025) also shows that bibliometric analysis can be used to examine major themes such as the Sustainable Development Goals in the perspective of Qur'anic interpretation. Meanwhile, Arfan et al. (2023) examined social support in children's mental health through an Islamic education approach, and Tsai & Wu (2024) highlighted global trends in inclusive education using bibliometric analysis. Another study by Barón et al. (2022) shows the importance of scientific mapping in understanding the development of the theme of peace and citizenship education.

Although these studies have made important contributions, most still focus on thematic or bibliometric analysis separately and have not specifically integrated such approaches in the context of the reconstruction of Qur'an-based social ethics in the digital age. In addition, many interpretation studies are still normative and do not utilize data-based approaches that are able to map the relationships between themes comprehensively. This shows that there is a research gap in connecting the study of the Qur'anic Inquiry with contemporary digital analysis methods that are more systematic and measurable.

Based on this background, the formulation of the problem in this study is: (1) how the thematic pattern of social ethical values in the study of the Qur'an has developed in contemporary scientific literature; and (2) how the digital thematic analysis approach can be used to reconstruct Qur'an-based social ethics in answering the problems of modern society. The purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the main thematic clusters related to social ethics in the study of the Qur'an, as well as formulate a model of social ethics reconstruction that is relevant to the context of the digital era through a data-based analysis approach. By integrating thematic interpretation approaches and bibliometric analysis using digital tools such as VOSviewer, this research is expected to make a new contribution to the development of Qur'anic Inquiry studies that are more adaptive, systematic, and contextual. In addition, this research also seeks to strengthen the relevance of Qur'anic values in answering social ethical challenges in the midst of the complexity of today's digital society.

This research offers *novelty* in three main aspects. First, this study integrates the thematic interpretation approach (*maudhu'i*) with bibliometric analysis based on digital data, which has tended to be studied separately in Islamic studies. Second, this study not only maps the trend of Qur'an-based social ethics studies, but also develops a new conceptual model called "*Digital Qur'anic Ethical Reconstruction*", which is an ethical reconstruction framework that connects Qur'anic values with the dynamics of contemporary digital communication. Third, this study introduces an analytical approach based on data visualization to identify thematic gaps (*research gaps*) in the study of Qur'anic ethics, so as to be able to provide a more strategic and contextual direction for research development. Thus, this research is not only descriptive, but also constructive in reformulating Qur'an-based social ethics that are relevant to the challenges of the digital era.

Method

This study uses a *mixed methods approach* that integrates qualitative and quantitative analysis. The qualitative approach is used to interpret the social ethical values in the Qur'an through the method of thematic interpretation (*maudhu'i*), while the quantitative approach is applied through bibliometric analysis to map the trends and structure of studies globally.

The research data is in the form of secondary documents obtained from the Scopus database with a period of 2015–2025. Inclusion criteria include publications that are relevant to the theme of social ethics in the perspective of the Qur'an, have complete metadata, and are available in English or Indonesian. The selection process is carried out through the stages of identification, screening, and verification to ensure the quality of the data.

The selected data is then exported in CSV format and through a *data cleaning* process, including deduplication, author name standardization, and keyword normalization. The analysis was carried out using *keyword co-occurrence techniques*, citation analysis, and collaboration network mapping. The entire visualization process is carried out with the help of VOSviewer software to identify thematic clusters and relationships between concepts.

The results of the quantitative analysis are then interpreted qualitatively with a thematic interpretation approach to produce a contextual interpretation of Qur'anic values. This integration allows research not only to map scientific trends, but also to reconstruct social ethics relevant to the dynamics of a digital society.

As a methodological reinforcement, this study developed an integrative approach called the "*Digital Qur'anic Mapping Approach*", which is an analytical model that combines bibliometric mapping with simultaneous interpretation of thematic interpretations. This approach allows the identification of data-driven conceptual patterns while providing depth of meaning through the analysis of religious texts. In contrast to previous approaches that tend to separate quantitative and qualitative analysis, this model places the two in one complementary analytical framework. Thus, the results of the

research are not only descriptive, but also constructive in reformulating Qur'an-based social ethical values that are adaptive to the development of digital technology.

Results

Dataset Description

This research dataset was obtained from the Scopus database through a systematic search process using predetermined keywords. After going through the selection and data cleaning stage, 512 documents relevant to the study of social ethics based on the Qur'an were obtained in the period 2015–2025. The distribution of document types consisted of journal articles (78%), conference proceedings (15%), and other types of publications (7%). The data analyzed includes metadata such as title, author, year of publication, keywords, as well as institutional affiliation.

Publication Growth

The results of the analysis show a consistent trend of increasing the number of publications consistently in the past decade. In 2015 the number of publications was recorded as many as 21 documents, while in 2025 it increased to 87 documents.

Table 1. Distribution of publications by year (2015–2025)

Year	Number of Publications
2015	21
2016	25
2017	29
2018	34
2019	41
2020	48
2021	56
2022	63
2023	71
2024	77
2025	87

Citation and Contributor Analysis

The results of the citation analysis show that there are several authors and institutions that have a significant influence on the development of Qur'an-based social ethics studies. Most of the publications with a high number of citations come from institutions in the Asian and Middle Eastern regions.

In addition, internationally reputable journals dominate the publications with the highest citation rates, demonstrating the high global contribution to the development of this theme.

Keyword Co-occurrence Analysis

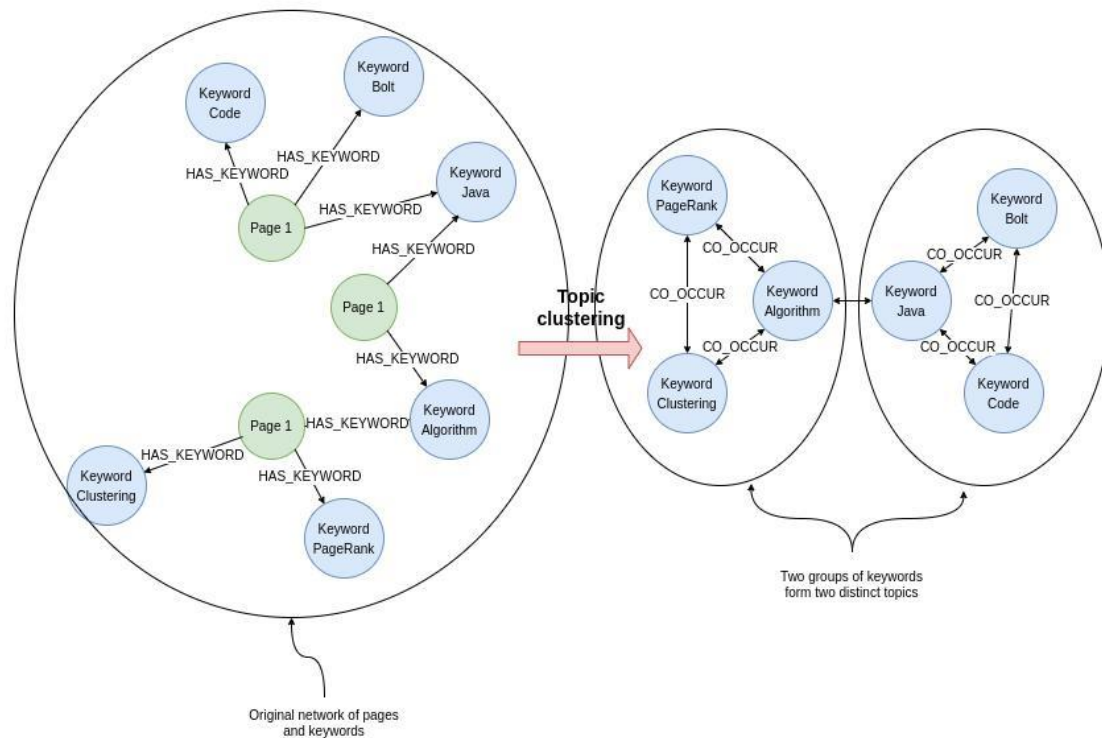


Figure 1. Keyword Co-occurrence Network Visualization

The visualization of the *keyword co-occurrence* network not only shows the grouping of themes, but also reflects the conceptual structure in the study of social ethics based on the Qur'an. The clusters formed indicate a concentration of academic attention on certain issues that are systemically interconnected. For example, the strong relationship between the keywords *ethics*, *the Qur'an*, and *social values* shows that ethical discourse no longer stands as a mere normative concept, but has been transformed into an applicable framework of social analysis.

Furthermore, the proximity between digital communication clusters and Qur'anic ethical values shows an epistemological shift in contemporary Islamic studies, from a textual approach to a contextual approach based on digital reality. This indicates that the Qur'an is not only understood as a source of value, but also as an interpretive framework in responding to the dynamics of media and technology.

From a *density visualization* perspective, areas with higher color intensity indicate themes that have a greater level of academic exploration. However, low-density areas open up new research spaces that have not been widely studied, such as the integration of Qur'anic ethics in algorithmic systems and artificial intelligence.

Based on the results of the visualization, this study proposes a new approach called "*Qur'anic Ethical Gap Mapping*", which is a method to identify the gap between the themes that are predominantly studied and the themes that are still neglected in the scientific literature. This approach not only serves as a bibliometric analysis tool, but also as a strategic instrument in formulating future research agendas.

In this context, low-density areas in VOSviewer visualizations are understood as *ethical blind spots*, i.e. conceptual areas that have not been explored much, even though they have high relevance to contemporary problems, such as the ethics of artificial intelligence, digital privacy, and information manipulation. Thus, visualizations are not only read as data maps, but as the basis for scientific decision-making.

Collaboration Network Analysis

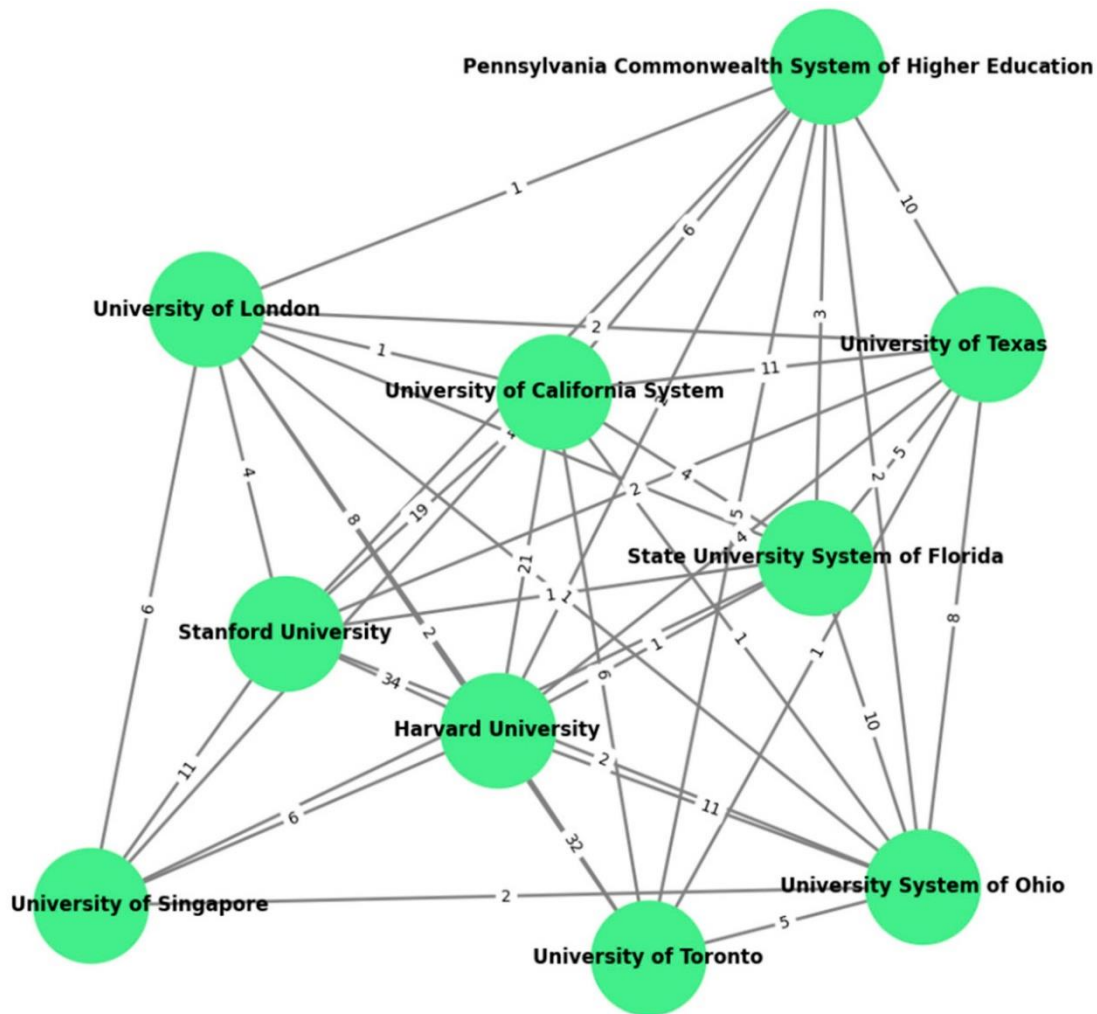


Figure 2. Visualization of Author and Institutional Collaboration Networks

Visualization of collaborative networks shows that knowledge production in the study of social ethics based on the Qur'an has developed into a global ecosystem involving cross-border and institutional interactions. The pattern of connectivity formed not only reflects the intensity of academic cooperation, but also shows the direction of epistemic dominance in the production of knowledge.

The dominance of collaboration from the Asian and Middle Eastern regions indicates that the Qur'anic ethical discourse is still firmly rooted in the classical Islamic scientific tradition. However, the involvement of institutions from Europe and the West shows that there is a process of knowledge globalization that expands the perspective of study to be more interdisciplinary.

Furthermore, the network structure that is formed shows the existence of *central nodes* that act as the main link in the flow of knowledge. This indicates that the development of studies is not completely evenly distributed, but rather influenced by certain academic actors who have greater epistemic authority.

Distribution of Research Themes

The results of the analysis show that the theme of social ethics based on the Qur'an has developed with a tendency towards contemporary issues. The keywords that appear most often include *ethics, the Qur'an, social values, digital media, and Islamic education*.

Table 2. Dominant Keywords in Research

No	Keyword	Frequency
1	Qur'an	145
2	Ethics	132
3	Social Values	118
4	Islamic Education	96
5	Digital Media	84

Discussion

The results of the study show that there has been a significant increase in the number of publications related to Qur'an-based social ethics in the past decade. These findings indicate that the issue of social ethics is getting more attention in academic studies, especially in the context of a digital society that faces various moral and social challenges. The increase also reflects the need to integrate Qur'anic values with the ever-evolving dynamics of contemporary life.

If associated with previous theories and research, these results are in line with the findings of Ninkov et al. (2021) who affirm that the development of a field of science can be seen through the growth of publications and citation patterns. In addition, the study of Elbanna et al. (2025) shows that the bibliometric approach is able to uncover the main themes in contemporary Islamic studies in a systematic manner. Findings on thematic clusters such as social ethics, digital communication, and religious moderation also reinforce the results of previous research that highlighted the importance of integrating Islamic values in addressing global issues such as education, tolerance, and social development (Tsai & Wu, 2024; Barón et al., 2022). Thus, this study not only confirms existing trends, but also expands them in the context of Qur'anic Inquiry based on digital analysis.

To deepen the analysis of communication ethics in a digital context, Qur'anic values can be traced directly through relevant verses. One of the verses that has a strong connection is QS. Al-Hujurāt [49]: 6:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهْلَةٍ فَتُصْحَبُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.

This verse contains the principle *of tabayyun* (information verification) which is very relevant in dealing with the phenomenon of disinformation in the digital era. In contemporary interpretation, this principle is not only interpreted as a simple clarification, but also as a critical process in filtering information before it is disseminated (Shihab, 2020). In the context of social media, the concept *of tabayyun* can be reconstructed as a verification-based digital ethics, which requires users to not only be consumers of information, but also responsible information filtering agents.

In addition, QS. Al-Aḥzāb [33]:70 also provides the basis for the ethics of communication:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَفُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice.

The concept *of qaulan sadīdan* in this verse contains the meaning of honest, precise, and constructive communication. In the digital context, this value can be interpreted as a communication principle that is not provocative, non-manipulative, and oriented towards the truth and the public benefit. Based on the integration between bibliometric analysis and thematic interpretation, this study proposes a new concept called "Algorithmic *Qur'anic Ethics*". This concept is a digital ethical framework that is not only normative, but can also be operationalized in technological systems, such as artificial intelligence-based content moderation.

In this framework, *the principle of tabayyun* is translated into an automatic verification mechanism for information, while *qaulan sadīdan* is the basis for the development of algorithms that are able to identify constructive and ethical speech. Thus, Qur'anic values not only become individual moral guidelines, but can also be integrated in digital systems as instruments of collective ethics. This idea offers a new approach that bridges the gap between Islamic studies and digital technology, while providing concrete solutions to the problem of disinformation and the degradation of communication ethics in the social media era.

The phenomenon of the emergence of certain thematic clusters, such as digital communication ethics and religious moderation, can be explained by the increasing use of social media and information technology in daily life. This change in communication patterns raises new challenges, such as the spread of hoaxes, hate speech, and social polarization, which then encourages academics to re-examine the ethical values in the Qur'an as a normative and practical solution. In addition, the dominance of international collaboration in research networks suggests that religious-based social ethical issues are no longer local, but have become part of a global discourse involving a wide range of cross-disciplinary and cultural perspectives.

In terms of implications, this research makes an important contribution in three aspects. Theoretically, this study enriches the study of Qur'anic Inquiry by integrating thematic interpretation approaches and bibliometric analysis, resulting in a more comprehensive and contextual analytical framework. Methodologically, the use of software such as VOSviewer in Islamic studies shows that data-driven approaches can increase the objectivity and systematization of the analysis of Qur'anic themes. Meanwhile, practically, the results of this research can be a reference for academics, educators, and policymakers in formulating strategies to strengthen social ethics based on the values of the Qur'an, especially in facing the challenges of the digital society.

However, this study has some limitations. First, the data used is only sourced from the Scopus database, so there may be other relevant publications that are not covered in the analysis. Second, the bibliometric approach tends to focus on quantitative aspects and thematic linkage, so it does not fully explore the depth of the meaning of the Qur'anic text hermeneutically. Third, the use of certain keywords in the data search process has the potential to limit the scope of the document being analyzed.

Based on these limitations, further research is recommended to expand data sources by integrating other databases such as Web of Science or Google Scholar, as well as combining bibliometric analysis with more in-depth qualitative approaches, such as discourse analysis or interpretive hermeneutics. In addition, follow-up research can also focus more on specific contexts, such as digital ethics in the younger generation or the implementation of Qur'anic values in public policy, resulting in more applicable and contextual contributions.

Conceptually, the findings of this study confirm that the integration between bibliometric analysis and thematic interpretation not only results in knowledge mapping, but also opens up space for the formulation of new paradigms in the study of the Qur'anic Inquiry. This approach allows for the transformation from normative studies to data-based, contextual, and applicative analytical models. In this regard, *the concept of Digital Qur'anic Ethical Reconstruction* is a major contribution to the research, as it offers a framework that can be used to bridge the gap between religious texts and the ever-evolving digital reality.

Conclusion

This study shows that the study of Qur'an-based social ethics has undergone significant developments, characterized by a shift from normative approaches to contextual issues, such as digital communication ethics, religious moderation, and social values in modern society. Through bibliometric analysis, thematic patterns were identified that show a close relationship between Qur'anic values and contemporary social dynamics. Furthermore, this study emphasizes that the integration between thematic interpretation and data-based analysis is able to produce a more systematic, contextual, and adaptive understanding of the development of the digital era. In this context, this research offers a novelty in the form of a *Digital Qur'anic Ethical Reconstruction model*, which serves as a conceptual framework in reconstructing Qur'anic social ethics to be

relevant to the challenges of disinformation, polarization, and degradation of communication ethics. Thus, this research not only makes a descriptive contribution to the development of the study, but also offers a new analytical approach that can be used as a basis for the development of Qur'anic Inquiry studies that are more responsive to digital reality. In addition, this approach opens up opportunities for the development of the integration of Qur'anic values in algorithmic-based digital systems as a form of actualization of Islamic ethics in virtual space.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the research, it is suggested that further research develop a more integrative approach by combining bibliometric analysis and more in-depth interpretation studies, such as hermeneutic approaches or discourse analysis, in order to enrich understanding of the meaning of the Qur'anic text. In addition, it is necessary to carry out more specific exploration of certain social contexts, such as the digital behavior of the younger generation or the implementation of Qur'anic ethics in public policy, so that the results of the research can make a more practical and contextual contribution. The use of broader data sources outside of Scopus is also recommended to obtain a more comprehensive scope of analysis.

Author's Contributions

The author is the only contributor to this study and is fully responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data analysis, writing, and final revision of the manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest

The author stated that there was no conflict of interest in this study.

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Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The author states that generative artificial intelligence (AI) is not used in the process of compiling, analyzing, or writing this research.

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