

# Teacher Passion as a Spiritual Vocation in the Framework of Islamic Education Toward Holistic and Ethical Teaching Practice

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## Abstract

Research on teacher passion has grown significantly over the past decade, primarily framed within psychological constructs such as motivation, identity, and engagement. While this body of work has advanced understanding of emotional and professional dimensions of teaching, moral and spiritual perspectives remain underexplored, particularly within Islamic educational contexts. This study aims to map the global research landscape of teacher passion, identify its conceptual evolution and thematic orientations, and explore its integration with Islamic educational values. It also highlights epistemological gaps and proposes a broader conceptual reframing of teacher passion. A bibliometric analysis was conducted using 452 peer-reviewed articles retrieved from the Scopus database covering 2017–2026. Data were analyzed using VOSviewer and Bibliometrix/Biblioshiny (Biblioplot) to examine publication trends, influential authors, countries, institutions, citation impact, and thematic clusters through keyword co-occurrence and trend analysis. The findings reveal a significant increase in teacher-passion research, dominated by Western and East Asian scholars, with the United States, China, and Australia leading in output and citations. Four major clusters were identified: (1) teacher motivation and identity, (2) pedagogy and leadership, (3) self-efficacy and engagement, and (4) emotional development. Despite its maturity in psychological perspectives, moral and spiritual dimensions remain largely absent, indicating a clear epistemological gap. Integrating Islamic pedagogical values such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *amanah* (moral trust), *tarbiyah* (character cultivation), and *da'wah* (spiritual purpose) can expand teacher passion into a spiritual vocation that unites intellect, emotion, and faith, offering a more holistic framework for future research and teacher development.

## 1. Introduction

In modern educational discourse, teacher passion is increasingly acknowledged as a cornerstone of effective pedagogy. Passion encompasses emotional energy, intrinsic motivation, and a deep sense of purpose that drives teachers to engage students meaningfully (Celik, 2017). It bridges the cognitive and affective dimensions of teaching, turning routine instruction into transformative experiences that inspire learning (Levitt, Grubaugh, Maderick, & Deever, 2023). Despite this, passion remains an under-investigated construct in many cultural contexts, particularly within religious or value-based education systems such as Islamic Education (IE), where teaching is not merely a profession but a moral vocation.

Passionate teachers are distinguished by their enthusiasm, emotional engagement, and sustained motivation to nurture learning communities. Their passion generates classroom climates that enhance student participation, curiosity, and persistence (Stetler, 2020). The literature identifies harmonious passion a balanced, self-concordant form of passion as the most desirable, fostering resilience and lifelong teaching commitment (Kim & Connelly, 2019). Conversely, obsessive passion where work dominates identity can lead to burnout and emotional exhaustion. These distinctions are essential when considering teachers whose profession overlaps with spiritual duty, such as IE educators.

Multiple empirical studies have confirmed that teacher passion directly influences student passion and academic achievement. When students perceive their teachers as emotionally invested and enthusiastic, they develop parallel passion toward the subject and stronger academic persistence (Chichekian, Sverdlik, Vallerand, & Maheux, 2025). This reciprocal process is moderated by social support and teacher-student rapport, confirming that passion is relational, not merely individual. These findings are aligned with self-determination

theory, which emphasizes autonomy, competence, and relatedness as precursors of sustainable motivation (Serin, 2023).

Beyond student outcomes, passion profoundly shapes teacher identity and professional commitment. Passionate educators often describe teaching as an extension of their personal values and moral identity (Pires, 2023). Motivation and commitment reinforce this identity through continuous self-reflection, empathy, and service orientation. Such alignment is especially salient in Islamic education, where teaching integrates *iman* (faith) and *amal* (action), suggesting that passion could be conceptualized as spiritual vocation rather than mere occupational enthusiasm.

Recent studies reveal that teacher passion predicts job satisfaction and retention, mitigating attrition and enhancing emotional well-being. For instance, teachers with strong intrinsic motivation and passion report higher satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bi & Shafack, 2023). Similarly, cross-cultural comparisons show that passion and altruistic motives sustain teachers in diverse systems, from Jamaica to Turkey and Poland (Onyefulu, Madalinska-Michalak, & Bavli, 2023). These studies suggest that passion acts as a psychological buffer against external pressures such as low pay, administrative burden, and policy instability.

Motivation and job satisfaction also are not merely psychological variables but structural determinants of teacher performance (Rasto & Yulianti Maulani, 2019). Studies demonstrate that pedagogic competence, compensation, and work environment interact significantly to sustain teachers' intrinsic motivation and performance outcomes (Altje Salele, Henny N Tambingon, 2019). From a bibliometric standpoint, research trends on teacher performance and motivation show rising global interest, especially in correlating motivation with educational reform, job satisfaction, and digital transformation (Hidayat, Patras, Windiyani, & Gunawan, 2023). The use of bibliometric visualization tools such as VOSviewer and Biblioshiny has revealed seven emerging clusters: teacher retention, pedagogical competence, professional identity, digital literacy, emotional well-being, intrinsic passion, and leadership climate (Nashrullah, Fitrotul Choiriyah, Darto, Gaguk Tri Prasetyo, & Budi Purwoko, 2025). Collectively, these developments suggest that the state of the art in teacher-passion research has matured from descriptive analyses toward systemic and network-based mappings of educational psychology and institutional support.

Although existing studies have examined psychological and institutional determinants of teacher motivation, there remains a lack of synthesis regarding who the leading contributors are, where this knowledge is being produced, and how key conceptual trends have evolved over time. Bibliometric analysis offers a powerful means to identify influential authors, dominant countries, and recurring keywords that shape the trajectory of teacher-passion scholarship worldwide. Such an approach allows researchers to visualize thematic concentrations and collaboration networks, thereby providing a holistic understanding of the field's evolution, strengths, and limitations. More importantly, it reveals the absence of significant representation from religious education or Islamic pedagogical contexts, highlighting a critical gap where the emotional, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of passion intersect with faith-based teaching.

Therefore, this study formulates several core research questions to guide the investigation of teacher passion within the global scholarly landscape. The research questions are as follows: (1) Who are the most influential authors contributing to the global discourse on teacher passion? (2) Which countries and institutions have been most active and productive in developing this research domain? (3) What are the most frequent and emerging keywords representing the thematic evolution of passion-related studies in education? (4) How can these findings inform future research directions that bridge the theoretical frameworks of teacher passion with the moral and vocational identity of IE teachers? Addressing these questions will not only position Islamic Education within the global scholarly conversation but also offer new perspectives on how passion can be cultivated as both a pedagogical force and a spiritual vocation in shaping resilient, value-driven educators.

## 2. Method

This study adopts a quantitative bibliometric approach to systematically map and analyze the global research landscape on teacher passion in the field of education. The bibliometric method was chosen because it enables researchers to quantitatively evaluate publication patterns, influential authors, citation networks, and thematic developments across time. This approach provides an objective overview of how the academic community has developed, collaborated, and conceptualized the theme of teacher passion globally.

### 2.1. Research Methods

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## 2.2. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative bibliometric analysis to systematically map and evaluate global research trends on teacher passion within the field of education. Bibliometric analysis is an established method for identifying publication patterns, influential authors, citation networks, and emerging themes in a given research domain. The approach provides both descriptive and network-based insights, enabling the visualization of intellectual structures and knowledge evolution. The goal of this analysis was to uncover the global landscape of teacher-passion scholarship and identify potential intersections with IE as an emerging research focus.

## 2.3. Data Source and Search Strategy

Data were extracted from the Scopus database, chosen for its comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed journals and high citation reliability across disciplines. The search string was formulated to capture studies explicitly addressing teacher passion across educational contexts: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("teacher passion" OR "teaching passion" OR "teachers' motivation") documents between 2017-2026. The search was conducted on 31 December 2025, yielding a comprehensive dataset of scholarly publications. Only documents classified as articles were retained to ensure academic quality and citation consistency. Total 452 documents found include in this study.

## 2.4. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria were: (1) Publications explicitly addressing teacher passion, motivation, or vocation in educational contexts; (2) Peer-reviewed journal articles indexed in Scopus; (3) Studies providing bibliographic information suitable for citation and co-occurrence analyses. Exclusion criteria included: (1) Non-scholarly materials such as book reviews, editorials, or dissertations; (2) Publications unrelated to teacher passion (e.g., unrelated uses of "passion" in psychology or business contexts); (3) Duplicate records or incomplete bibliographic entries.

## 2.5. Data Extraction and Cleaning

Bibliographic data (including author names, titles, abstracts, keywords, affiliations, countries, citation counts, and references) were exported in CSV format from Scopus. Data cleaning and standardization were performed using Microsoft Excel to ensure consistency in author names, keywords, and country affiliations. Duplicate entries and typographical variations (e.g., "passion in teaching" vs. "teacher passion") were merged manually and using thesaurus.

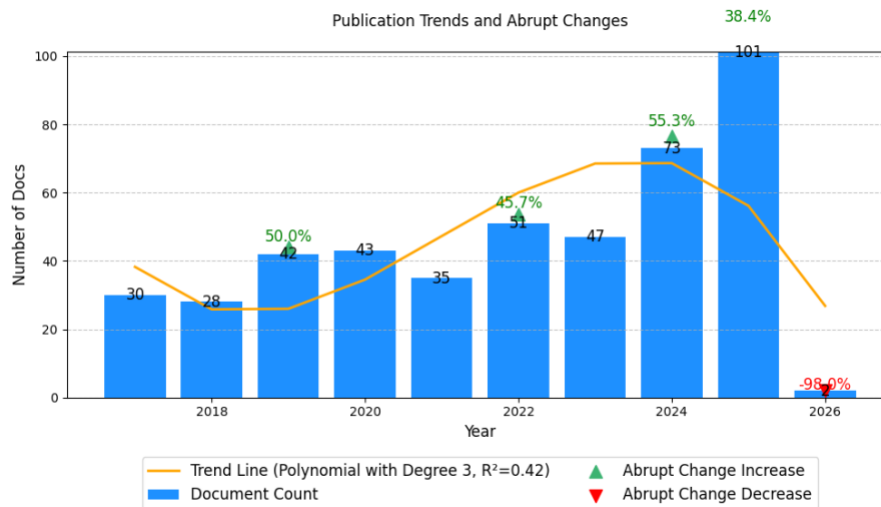
## 2.6. Data Analysis

This study uses the VosViewer software application for network visualization (van Eck & Waltman, 2010) and amplified using Enhanced Strategic Diagrams (Shafin et al., 2022; Wijaya & Hermawan, 2025) as an analysis tool. The analysis was carried out in three stages. The first stage is a descriptive analysis to identify the number of publications per year, the most productive authors, and the leading journals. The second stage involves a co-word and co-authorship analysis to identify collaboration networks and key themes that are frequently researched. The third an analysis of keyword trends to trace how the research theme has developed over the last decade. This process helps reveal emerging directions and identifies research gaps that future studies could address (Zupic & Čater, 2015). The methodological design was intentionally structured to be replicable, allowing other scholars to apply the same search queries across different indexing databases, utilize VOSviewer's bibliometric functions, and follow similar analytical procedures. Through this approach, subsequent researchers can reproduce comparable findings or extend the analysis toward more specialized subtopics. The credibility and reliability of this method are reinforced by its foundation in a well-established bibliometric framework that has been widely implemented in previous scholarly investigations (Donthu, Kumar, Mukherjee, Pandey, & Lim, 2021).

## 3. Results and Discussion

Understanding the evolution of research trends is a crucial component of bibliometric analysis, as it provides a dynamic overview of how a particular scientific field develops, matures, and transforms over time. By examining the temporal distribution of publications, researchers can identify periods of rapid growth, stagnation, or decline in scholarly attention toward specific topics. This trend analysis not only helps map the intellectual trajectory of a discipline but also allows scholars to anticipate emerging themes, shifting paradigms, and potential research frontiers (Donthu et al., 2021). Figure 1 the annual publication trend related to teacher passion research between 2017 and 2026. The blue bars represent the number of documents published each year, while the orange polynomial trend line ( $R^2 = 0.42$ ) indicates the overall pattern of growth and decline. From 2017 to 2024, the graph shows a steady increase in publications from 30 documents in 2017 to a peak of 101 in 2025, reflecting growing scholarly interest in teacher motivation and passion. Notably, there are significant percentage jumps in 2020 (50%), 2022 (45.7%), and 2024 (55.3%), suggesting periods of intensified

research activity. However, an abrupt decline of -98.9% in 2026 indicates either incomplete data indexing for the current year or a temporary reduction in related publications.



**Figure 1. Publication Trends and Abrupt Changes in Teacher Passion Research**

The increasing trend in teacher passion research corresponds with the global surge of interest in emotional and psychological dimensions of teaching, especially in the post-pandemic educational landscape. Scholars argue that emotional engagement, intrinsic motivation, and teacher well-being have become central to understanding educational quality (Hidayat et al., 2023). The sharp upward trajectory between 2021 and 2024 likely reflects an increased focus on teachers’ adaptability and emotional resilience during and after COVID-19 disruptions a theme increasingly visible in both Western and Asian contexts (Wang, Chen, Hu, & Mei, 2024). This surge indicates that passion has evolved from being treated as a personal attribute to a systemic factor linked to professional identity, retention, and institutional support.

### 3.1. Influential Authors, Countries, and Institutional Contributions

Understanding the distribution of influential authors, countries, and institutional affiliations is a fundamental component of bibliometric research. These dimensions provide insight into how knowledge is produced, shared, and institutionalized within a specific academic domain. By mapping the productivity and citation impact of leading contributors, researchers can identify intellectual hubs and centers of excellence that drive theoretical innovation and methodological advancement in the field (Panda, Kar, Kar, & Alhussam, 2025). Moreover, analyzing authorship and institutional patterns highlights the collaborative nature of scientific inquiry, revealing how interdisciplinary networks shape emerging paradigms. In the context of teacher-passion research, this analysis helps clarify which scholars and regions have most strongly influenced the evolution of discourse surrounding teacher motivation, identity, and emotional engagement.

At the national and institutional level, bibliometric evaluation serves as a mirror of global academic inequality and collaboration. Furthermore, identifying the most influential authors and institutions allows researchers to establish benchmarks for scholarly impact and guide future collaborations. Influential scholars often serve as thought leaders who shape research directions, define key terminologies, and mentor subsequent generations of academics (Sweileh, Al-Jabi, Zyoud, & Sawalha, 2018). Similarly, universities and research centers with high publication and citation rates often act as epistemic communities, fostering cross-regional exchanges that accelerate theoretical growth (Wang et al., 2024).

**Table 1. Most Influential Authors and Productive Countries in Teacher-Passion Research**

No.	Author	TD	TC	No.	Country	TD	TC
1	González-calvo, Gustavo	4	95	1	United States	98	907
2	Gray, Christina C.	4	24	2	China	58	588
3	Binti Mohamad, Nurul Haerani	3	10	3	Australia	47	434
4	Derakhshan, Ali	3	28	4	United Kingdom	29	244
5	Ibrahim, Badaruddin Bin	3	10	5	Canada	19	222
6	Jefferson, Sarah	3	16	6	India	15	94
7	Kadir, Mahadi Bin	3	10	7	Iran	15	89
8	Lambert, Kirsten	3	9	8	Spain	15	325
9	Lowe, Geoffrey M.	3	16	9	Malaysia	13	67
10	Prout, Peter F.	3	16	10	Philippines	13	92

Table 1 summarizes the most influential authors and the most productive countries in teacher-passion research, measured by total documents (TD) and total citations (TC). It illustrates the distribution of scholarly output and citation impact at both individual and national levels, providing an overview of key contributors and geographic patterns in the field.

Table 1 presents the leading authors and countries contributing to the global research landscape on teacher passion between 2017 and 2025, based on TD and TC. Among individual contributors, González-Calvo, Gustavo emerges as the most influential scholar with four publications and 95 citations, followed by Gray, Christina C., Derakhshan, Ali, and several other authors who have made consistent contributions to the discourse on teacher motivation and identity. The presence of authors such as Nurul Haerani Binti Mohamad, Badaruddin Bin Ibrahim, and Mahadi Bin Kadir highlights growing participation from Southeast Asia.

In terms of country-level productivity, the United States leads with 98 publications and 907 citations, followed by China (58 publications; 588 citations) and Australia (47 publications; 434 citations). The United Kingdom and Canada also remain significant contributors, reflecting the continued dominance of Western academic systems in educational psychology and teacher development research. Notably, Malaysia and the Philippines appear among the top 10 most productive countries, suggesting a growing research interest in Southeast Asia concerning teacher well-being, motivation, and professional identity.

The pattern revealed in Table 1 aligns with global bibliometric findings showing that Western and East Asian countries dominate education-related research output due to robust research funding, access to high-impact journals, and established institutional collaborations (Doja, Horsley, & Sampson, 2014). Recent bibliometric analyses further emphasize that regional expansion in authorship diversity contributes to new theoretical insights and interdisciplinary cross-pollination. Studies in 2023-2025 have shown that cross-country collaborations, especially between Asian and Western institutions, enhance publication impact and thematic novelty (Lu, Sun, Liu, Jiang, & Yan, 2025). Therefore, future research should aim to strengthen academic collaboration between Western and Islamic institutions, enabling a more balanced and inclusive production of knowledge. Such efforts would not only diversify theoretical approaches to teacher passion but also embed the moral, ethical, and faith-driven motivations that are central to Islamic Education within global educational research frameworks.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of institutional affiliation, Figure 2 presents the universities that have made the most significant contributions to the global research landscape on teacher passion. The University of Newcastle, Australia, ranks as the leading institution with six publications, followed by the University of Auckland, University of Toronto, and Monash University, each contributing five documents. The next group including the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Nanyang Technological University, University of Limerick, Université du Québec à Montréal, Universidad de Valladolid, and Allameh Tabataba'i University produced four publications each, reflecting a balanced representation from Asia, Europe, and North America. In a broader sense, this institutional spread also opens the door for greater participation from universities in Muslim-majority countries, particularly in Southeast Asia, where Islamic educational philosophy is deeply embedded in teacher identity and practice. The growing engagement of Asian institutions indicates a shift toward recognizing not only the emotional and psychological aspects of teacher passion but also its spiritual and ethical foundations.

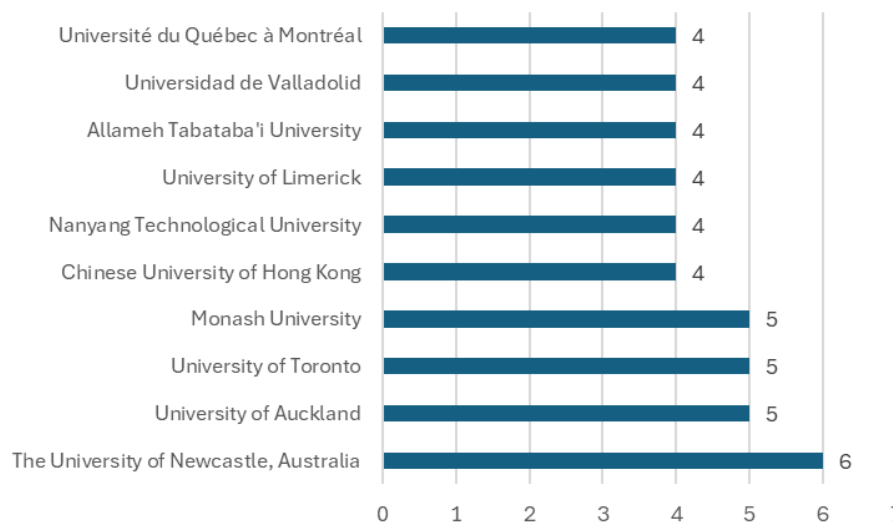


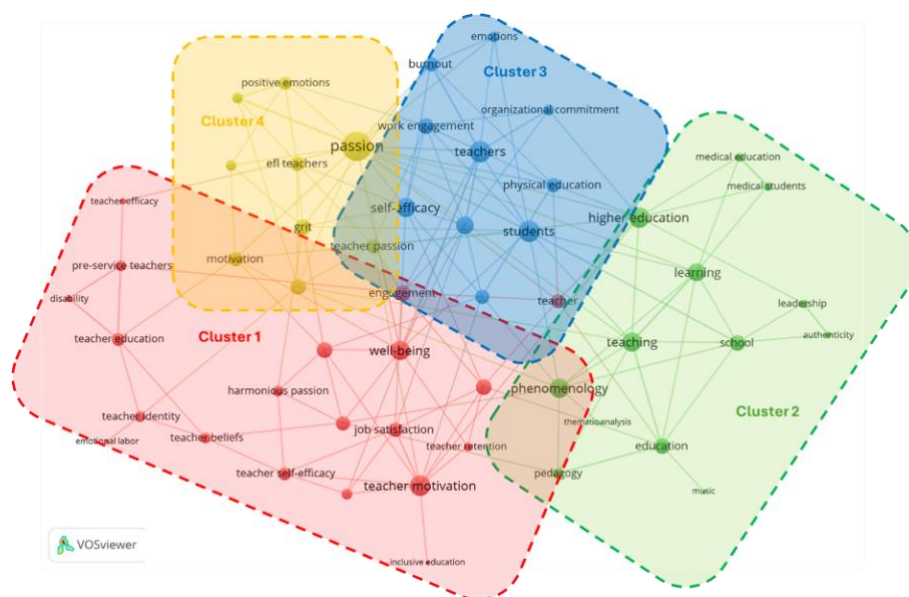
Figure 2. Top Contributing Institutions in Teacher-Passion Research

### 3.2. Keyword Co-occurrence and Thematic Evolution of Teacher-Passion

In bibliometric research, keyword co-occurrence analysis serves as a powerful approach to reveal the intellectual structure and conceptual dynamics of a scholarly field. Keywords function as concise representations of research content, and by mapping their relationships, scholars can trace how central concepts emerge, interact, and evolve across time. This method allows the identification of dominant themes, research clusters, and paradigm shifts, offering a macroscopic understanding of the field’s development (Narong & Hallinger, 2023). In the context of teacher-passion research, such analysis is instrumental in visualizing how constructs like motivation, emotional engagement, teacher well-being, and professional identity have co-evolved, reflecting broader pedagogical and psychological transformations in education studies.

Thematic evolution analysis extends this approach by tracking longitudinal changes in research focus and terminology. Over the past decade, thematic mapping in education-related bibliometric studies has shown a shift from individual-level constructs toward more systemic and digitalized perspectives (Ardiana, Rum, Syatriana, & Khodjiewa, 2025). This evolution demonstrates the field’s responsiveness to global educational transformations particularly in the post-pandemic era, where teacher emotional sustainability and technological adaptability have become core concerns (Zhang, Li, Pan, Zhai, & Li, 2023). Consequently, keyword co-occurrence not only quantifies conceptual trends but also captures the narrative shifts that characterize the growth of teacher-passion research as a dynamic and interdisciplinary domain.

Figure 3 illustrates the keyword co-occurrence map of teacher-passion research, revealing four main thematic clusters that capture the intellectual structure of the field. Cluster 1 (Red) focuses on teacher motivation, well-being, and teacher identity, showing how emotional engagement and intrinsic motivation influence professional satisfaction and retention. Cluster 2 (Green) centers on teaching, learning, and higher education, emphasizing pedagogical practices, leadership, and the integration of passion into teacher training. Cluster 3 (Blue) connects self-efficacy, work engagement, and students, reflecting a relational approach that views passion as a dynamic interaction between teachers and learners. Finally, Cluster 4 (Yellow) includes grit, motivation, positive emotions, and EFL teachers, representing an emerging focus on resilience and emotional positivity within language education contexts. However, it is noteworthy that keywords related to moral or spiritual dimensions such as faith, religious education, or Islamic teaching are absent from this network, indicating an underexplored area that warrants further attention in future studies.



**Figure 3. Keyword Co-Occurrence Network and Thematic Clusters of Teacher-Passion**

To strengthen the analysis, figure 4 illustrates the temporal distribution and frequency of core keywords in teacher-passion research from 2017 to 2025, showing how thematic interests have evolved over time. The most frequent keywords include passion (22 occurrences), teacher (20), grit (13), higher education (13), and professional development (13), followed by terms such as motivation, self-efficacy, teacher education, and emotional labor. The temporal mapping indicates that early studies (2017–2019) focused predominantly on teacher education and motivation, while later years (2021–2025) show an expansion toward work passion, professional identity, and grit. This evolution demonstrates the field’s transition from foundational psychological constructs toward more integrated discussions of teacher resilience and professional growth.

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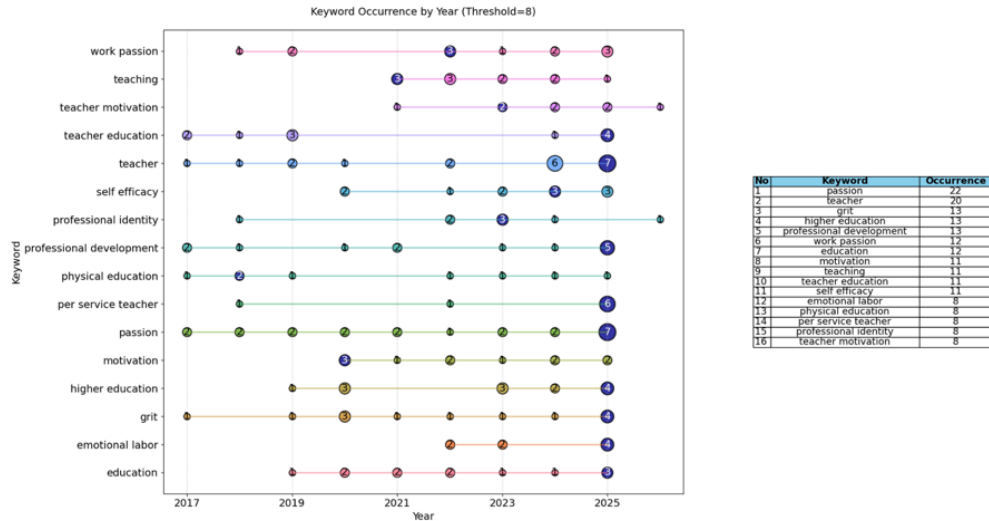


Figure 4. Keyword Occurrence and Temporal Evolution in Teacher-Passion Research

The increasing prominence of grit and emotional labor after 2021 suggests a paradigmatic shift in understanding teacher passion not only as an intrinsic emotional state but as a sustainable professional trait shaped by perseverance and emotional regulation. This trend aligns with the broader educational psychology literature emphasizing resilience, adaptability, and teacher well-being in response to post-pandemic challenges (Ardiana et al., 2025). Moreover, the sustained appearance of higher education and professional development underscores the institutional recognition of passion as a strategic component of teacher training and lifelong learning. The overlap between teacher motivation, self-efficacy, and professional identity across multiple years highlights an ongoing theoretical consolidation around the emotional and identity-based dimensions of teaching (Narong & Hallinger, 2023).

When viewed alongside the clusters in Figure 3, Figure 4 reinforces the notion that teacher-passion research has matured into an interdisciplinary field, connecting emotional psychology, pedagogy, and professional studies. However, both figures reveal a persistent absence of terms related to spiritual or moral vocation, particularly in contexts such as Islamic Education. The lack of such keywords indicates that while passion is widely studied in cognitive and emotional dimensions, its spiritual-motivational essence integral to faith-based teaching is largely overlooked. Addressing this gap could enrich the global literature by framing teacher passion not only as emotional engagement but also as an act of moral devotion and spiritual fulfillment. Integrating Islamic perspectives on *ikhlas* (sincerity), *amanah* (trust), and *ta'dib* (moral cultivation) could thus expand future thematic trajectories, offering a more holistic and culturally grounded model of passionate teaching.

### 3.3. Future Directions and Implications for Islamic Education

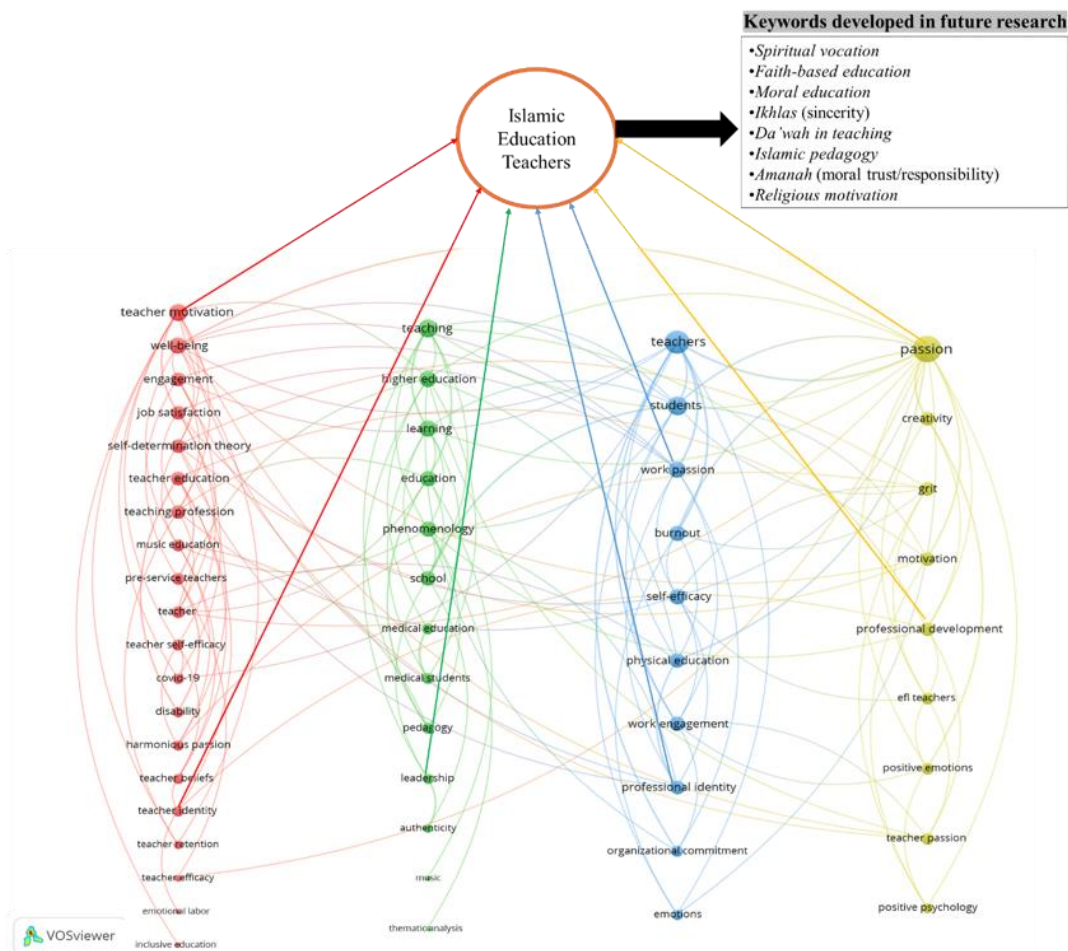
The future of teacher-passion research lies in its potential to bridge psychological, pedagogical, and spiritual dimensions of teaching within the broader framework of Islamic Education (IE). Current studies have predominantly conceptualized teacher passion through emotional and motivational constructs such as self-efficacy, well-being, and job satisfaction, yet have rarely explored its moral and faith-based roots. Integrating the spiritual perspective of Islam offers a transformative lens, positioning passion not merely as enthusiasm or engagement but as an act of devotion (*ibadah*) a reflection of sincerity (*ikhlas*), responsibility (*amanah*), and purpose-driven service. In this sense, teacher passion becomes a sacred vocation that unites intellectual pursuit with spiritual duty and moral responsibility (A. Samad, Gade, Basri, & Ariani, 2023).

Future research directions should, therefore, expand the scope of teacher-passion studies to include faith-based and moral education paradigms that resonate with the values of Islamic pedagogy. This integration aligns with global educational trends emphasizing character formation, emotional balance, and ethical teaching. Within Islamic Education, passion can be reinterpreted as a form of spiritual vocation a calling that harmonizes professional competence with moral excellence. Scholars have highlighted that spiritual competence and

religious motivation play a crucial role in shaping teachers' resilience, authenticity, and lifelong commitment to their students and communities (Ernawati, Kholis, & Zainiyati, 2025).

At the same time, the integration of spiritual passion within professional frameworks can enhance the holistic development of teachers, aligning emotional engagement with ethical intentionality. By grounding teacher identity in both pedagogical expertise and spiritual awareness, Islamic Education can provide a model of teaching that promotes balance between emotional labor, professional dedication, and divine accountability (Suryati & Sukandar, 2025). In this context, passion evolves beyond psychological energy it becomes a faith-infused force that sustains teachers' moral resilience and inspires educational transformation. Future studies should thus aim to conceptualize this synthesis systematically, developing a framework that integrates Islamic values, spiritual motivation, and professional passion into a unified, holistic model of teacher development (Sultan, Thaha, & Sanusi, 2025).

Figure 6 illustrates a proposed conceptual integration of teacher-passion research with the emerging domain of Islamic Education, highlighting potential areas for theoretical and practical development. The diagram builds upon the existing bibliometric map of teacher-passion studies, showing established thematic clusters such as teacher motivation (red), pedagogy and leadership (green), teacher-student engagement and self-efficacy (blue), and emotional and professional development (yellow). Positioned above these clusters, Islamic Education is conceptualized as an integrative domain that can connect, enrich, and expand each cluster through the infusion of spiritual and moral dimensions of teaching.



**Figure 6. Integrative Conceptual Direction of Teacher-Passion and its Linkage to Islamic Education**

The added conceptual elements spiritual vocation, faith-based education, moral education, *ikhlas* (sincerity), *da'wah* in teaching, Islamic pedagogy, *amanah* (moral trust/responsibility), and religious motivation represent theoretical bridges that align teacher passion with Islamic epistemology. These concepts suggest that within Islamic Education, passion is not merely psychological energy but a spiritually inspired force that unites emotional engagement with divine intention (*niyyah*). For instance, teacher motivation (red cluster) in Islamic contexts can be reinterpreted through the lens of religious motivation and spiritual vocation, where teaching is an act of worship (*ibadah*). Similarly, pedagogy and leadership (green cluster) gain moral depth when informed

by *amanah* and *ikhlas*, while the teacher-student relationship (blue cluster) evolves into a bond of *tarbiyah*, educational nurturing rooted in compassion and moral guidance.

The integration of Islamic Education into teacher-passion research redefines passion as more than emotional engagement it becomes a form of spiritual devotion that harmonizes moral integrity (*amanah*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and divine purpose in teaching. This perspective aligns with the argument by Azme (Azme, 2024), that embedding Islamic spirituality in teacher training strengthens educators' ethical responsibility and reflective teaching. Similarly, research emphasized that Islamic teacher education must cultivate *tarbiyah* (soul-making) to balance academic rigor with spiritual formation. Within this framework, teacher passion transforms into a faith-driven vocation, where teaching is perceived as both an act of service and an expression of worship (*ibadah*) (Memon, Abdalla, & Chown, 2024). This model highlights the need for a spiritually grounded teacher identity that aligns professional excellence with moral authenticity.

At the pedagogical level, Islamic Education offers a distinctive contribution by merging cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of teaching. Studies show that teachers' morality and pedagogy significantly affect students' motivation and learning in Islamic contexts (., 2018), while prophetic pedagogy integrates moral and intellectual instruction to foster holistic education (Mansoor, Muhibbin, Khan, & Riaz, 2025). In the 21st century, teachers must balance technological literacy with spiritual leadership to cultivate *akhlaqul karimah* (noble character) (Ikhwan, 2025). Leadership and professional development rooted in moral-spiritual values enhance teacher motivation and competence (Effendi et al., 2025), while integrating self-directed learning with values such as *ikhlas* and *istiqamah* nurtures intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy (Rayani, 2025). Collectively, these insights affirm that future teacher-passion research should embrace Islamic pedagogy as a framework that unites emotional engagement, moral excellence, and spiritual vocation.

### 3.4. Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the data were exclusively drawn from the Scopus database, which means that relevant publications indexed in other databases such as Web of Science, Dimensions, or Google Scholar were not included, potentially limiting the global representativeness of teacher-passion research. Second, the analysis was confined to the 2017–2026 period, thereby excluding earlier foundational studies that may have contributed to the conceptual development of the field. Third, the bibliometric approach primarily emphasizes quantitative indicators such as publication counts, citation metrics, and keyword co-occurrence networks, without conducting an in-depth qualitative content analysis of individual articles. As a result, the proposed integration of Islamic educational values remains conceptual and interpretative rather than empirically validated. Fourth, the specific search terms used (e.g., “teacher passion,” “teaching passion,” and “teachers’ motivation”) may have excluded relevant studies employing alternative terminology. Finally, the integrative framework that reconceptualizes teacher passion as a spiritual vocation within Islamic Education is theoretical in nature and has not yet been empirically tested, indicating the need for future research employing field-based studies or mixed-method approaches to validate and refine the proposed model.

## 4. Conclusion

Teacher passion has become an increasingly significant focus in educational scholarship, revealing how emotional engagement, intrinsic motivation, and professional identity shape both teaching quality and educational outcomes. The present bibliometric findings indicate that while research on teacher passion has expanded globally led by contributions from Western and East Asian scholars and institutions it still lacks representation from moral and faith-based educational paradigms. Thematic analyses identified four dominant clusters: motivation and teacher identity, pedagogy and leadership, self-efficacy and engagement, and emotional development, each illustrating an evolving but incomplete understanding of passion that remains primarily psychological. To advance this field, Islamic Education (IE) offers a distinct contribution by grounding passion in values such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *amanah* (moral trust), *tarbiyah* (character cultivation), and *da'wah* (spiritual purpose). Integrating these principles reframes teacher passion as not only a form of emotional and professional engagement but also as a spiritual vocation a calling that harmonizes intellect, emotion, and faith. Future research should thus pursue this integrative direction, positioning Islamic pedagogy as a vital framework for developing passionate, ethical, and spiritually resilient educators.

## Author Contributions

Zalik Nuryana: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software. Much. Machfud Arif: Data curation, Writing - Original draft preparation. Muhammad Iqbal: Visualization, Investigation.

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## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Data Availability

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

## Declaration on AI Use

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

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