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Bibliographic Analysis of Research on the Religious Identity of Muslim Women on Social Media

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Abstract

This study presents a bibliometric analysis of scholarly research on the religious identity of Muslim women on social media from 2005 to 2024. Drawing on 269 publications indexed in Scopus and organized using the PRISMA protocol, the study employs bibliometric and visualization tools, including VOSviewer and Bibliometrix in RStudio, to identify major thematic clusters, regional trends, and gaps in the existing research. The analysis revealed three dominant thematic clusters: platform-oriented digital self-presentation and Islamic feminism; politicized and critical interpretations of religious identity, including Islamophobia and post-colonial criticism; and methodological formalization with intersectional approaches in empirical studies. The results demonstrated a steady increase in the number of publications, a dominance of English-speaking countries, limited coverage of Central Asia and post-Soviet space, and a concentration of research on Instagram and YouTube, with comparatively limited attention to TikTok, Facebook, and Telegram. Thematic mapping highlighted three clusters, encompassing digital self-presentation and Islamic feminism, criticism of dominant discourses, and standardized empirical approaches. The findings systematize existing knowledge, identify gaps, and suggest directions for future research, including

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expansion of geographical and cross-platform coverage as well as integration of quantitative and mixed methods in the study of religious identity in a digital environment.

Keywords: bibliographic analysis, digital ethnography, digital religion, Muslim women, religious identity; social networks

Introduction

Over the past two decades, interest in religious identity in online environments has grown, particularly regarding Muslim women.¹ Social networks have enabled new forms of religious expression beyond traditional institutions, while Muslim women's digital self-representation reflects the intersection of gender, religion, and culture.² Social media is an ambivalent space: it can be a platform for self-expression and solidarity, but at the same time, it can become an arena for political and media interpretations, as demonstrated by visual practices of wearing hijab on platforms such as Instagram or TikTok.³ The relevance of the study is determined by the fact that the religious identity of Muslim women in the digital environment is at the intersection of several research areas: gender studies, sociology of religion, media communications and culturology.⁴ Research on the religious identity of Muslim women in social media is spread over various disciplines, published in journals with different thematic profiles and does not always have mutual links.⁵ Additional complexity is brought by a variety of approaches - from post-colonial criticism to visual culture studies and digital ethnography.⁶ In the absence of general reviews, it is not easy to assess the structure and dynamics

¹Maxot Janguzhiyev et al., "Confessional Religious Education Reforms and Its Impact on Muslim Identity in Kazakhstan, 1860–1917," *European Journal of Science and Theology* 19, no. 6 (2023): 29–41; Nazgul Baskynbayeva et al., "Trends in the Transformation of Gender Stereotypes: Representation of Women's Image in the Modern Media Space of Kazakhstan," *Changing Societies and Personalities* 8, no. 2 (2024): 443–464, <https://doi.org/10.15826/csp.2024.8.2.282>.

²Gary R. Bunt, *Hashtag Islam: How Cyber-Islamic Environments Are Transforming Religious Authority* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018); Liliya Gaisina et al., "The Transformation of Social Relations as a Drive toward the Integration of Value-Oriented Systems," *Veredas do Direito* 23, no. 5 (2026): e235638, <https://doi.org/10.18623/rvd.v23.5638>; Banu Gökarıksel and Anna Secor, "Islamic-ness in the Life of a Commodity: Veiling-Fashion in Turkey," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35, no. 3 (2010): 313–333, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2010.00384.x>.

³Lila Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674726338>.

⁴Lyazzat Zhubandykova, Isidor Borchashvili, and Zhazira Tuleugalieva, "Combating Domestic Violence: Developing Legislative and Socio-Organizational Measures to Protect Women in Kazakhstan," *Balkan Social Science Review* 23 (2024): 213–235, <https://doi.org/10.46763/BSSR242323213z>.

⁵Timothy Stacey, "Religious Repertoires of Sustainability: Why Religion Is Central to Sustainability Transitions, Whatever You Believe," *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions* 50 (2024): 100821, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eist.2024.100821>.

⁶Amina Wadud, "review of *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*, by Saba Mahmood," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 74, no. 3 (2006): 813–816, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfi113>; Inaash Islam, "Redefining #YourAverageMuslim Woman: Muslim Female Digital Activism on Social Media," *Journal of Arab & Muslim Media Research* 12, no. 2 (2019): 213–233, https://doi.org/10.1386/jammr_00004_1; Elif Kavakci and Camille Kraepelin, "Religious Beings in Fashionable Bodies: The Online Identity Construction of Hijabi Social Media Personalities," *Media, Culture & Society* 39, no. 6 (2017): 850–868, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443716679031>; Dorothy Lee Goehring, "Muslim Women on the Internet: Social Media as Sites of Identity Formation," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern*

of the development of this scientific area. The complexity and multilayered problems of religious identity make it difficult to understand how the scientific discourse in this field is formed and developed. Bibliometric studies allow us to fill this gap, because they make it possible to map the scientific field, to identify its structure, to determine the main participants, to fix thematic nuclei and areas of insufficient study. The choice of the bibliometric method in this study is due to its ability to analyze comprehensively the relationships between authors, organizations and journals, as well as to track the evolution of topics. The PRISMA protocol provides transparency for the selection of publications, and VOSviewer and Bibliometrix tools allow for the visualization of networks of co-authorship, citation, and keywords, as well as the analysis of their dynamics. This set of methods has been successfully applied in related fields, confirming its relevance to the present work.

This study aims to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of scholarly publications on the topic of the religious identity of Muslim women in digital social media. The analysis aims to examine the dynamics of development in the research field, including key thematic areas, leading journals, authors, and research centers, as well as the methodological and thematic peculiarities of existing studies.

To achieve this goal, the following objectives have been formulated:

- To compile a sample of relevant publications from the Scopus database for 2005-2024;
- To analyze the dynamics of publication activity, author and institutional networks;
- To identify major thematic clusters and trace trends in their evolution;
- To identify research gaps and emerging areas for further research.

The study addresses the following research questions:

- How has the publication activity on this topic changed from 2005 to 2024?
- Which authors, journals, and countries play a key role in shaping this research field?
- Which thematic clusters have shown the highest growth over time?
- Are there any regional and media imbalances?

The answers to the above questions will help identify key structural characteristics and gaps of the research field, as well as assess thematic and methodological diversity and determine directions for future research.

The theoretical significance of the work consists in systematizing and critically thinking of the scientific discourse on the religious identity of Muslim women in digital media, identifying key directions and research gaps, as well as in the development of interdisciplinary approaches at the intersection of religion, sociology, media and gender studies. The practical importance lies in the possibility of applying the results obtained in educational programs on sociology of religion, medianalysis, gender studies and Islamic studies, as well as in expert and applied activities related to developing strategies for engagement with Muslim communities in the digital space and preventing cultural stereotyping and religious stigmatization.

2. Literature Review

Bibliometric analysis in recent years has become one of the key tools for mapping religious studies, identifying thematic nuclei, scientific centers and gaps. The quantitative bibliometric reviews

published in the journal *Religions*, covering 25 years, demonstrate the high effectiveness of keyword matching methods, analysis of citation and distribution of publications by countries and journals to reconstruct the structure of the research field.⁷ Analysis of this kind is particularly productive in interdisciplinary projects, allowing for the consideration of combinations of such parameters as religiosity, gender, age, and ethnicity. As an example, the retrospective review of the *Journal of Religion and Health*, which uses bibliometric methods to reconstruct the evolution of thematic focuses, networks of authors and citations, allows for identifying leading academic venues, detecting shifts in the research agenda and identifying key science centres.⁸ The inclusion of multi-indicator panels, co-authorship analysis, tracking thematic evolution and qualitative interpretation of clusters makes possible a deeper and more contextualized understanding of the development of the scientific field.

In the field of digital religion and online religiosity, a significant number of review studies have been published in recent years using VOSviewer and Bibliometrix tools. These studies demonstrate the complexity and diversification of the research field.⁹ Visualizing the commonality of terms and thematic evolution makes it possible to highlight both “motor” and niche topics, as well as to identify methodological gaps, such as differences in the representation of religious identity on different platforms.

In parallel, research on Muslim women’s religious identity and the phenomenon of wearing a hijab has been rapidly developing. Extensive bibliometric mapping of knowledge spanning the 40 years and 20-year Scopus cross-sections shows that there are stable clusters uniting themes of identity, Islamophobia, gender, and migration.¹⁰ These studies document a shift of attention to visual platforms, infotainment, and new formats of religious communication, as well as significant regional imbalances in favor of English-speaking countries. Similarly, the bibliometric reviews on women’s rights in the Islamic perspective and gender equality in Islam, moreover, a bibliometric analysis of published literature on women’s rights from the Islamic point of view IJRIS, confirm the intersectional nature of the field of research and insufficient attention to Central Asia and the post-Soviet space. Broader reviews examining the intersection of Islam and digital technologies document the significant contribution of women’s authors to the development of digital Islamic discourse, which is particularly important for research, highlighting Muslim women as independent participants and creators of the media.

A variety of research approaches and interpretations distinguish thematic literature on the religious identity of Muslim women in digital media. The first relates to the reinterpretation of Islamic subjectivity as a dynamic, performative, and contextually conditioned practice embedded in media, cultural, and technological fields.¹¹ Within this approach, emphasis is placed on the deconstruction of the “monolithic” image of Muslims in Western discourse and criticism of colonial narratives of

⁷David Azancot-Chocrón et al., “Quantitative-Bibliometric Study on Religiosity in the Last 25 Years of Social Science Research,” *Religions* 13, no. 5 (2022): 386, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13050386>.

⁸Lindsay B. Carey et al., “A Bibliometric Analysis of the Journal of Religion and Health: Sixty Years of Publication (1961–2021),” *Journal of Religion and Health* 62 (2023): 8–38, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-022-01704-4>.

⁹Heidi A. Campbell, and Ruth Tsuria, eds., *Digital Religion: Understanding Religious Practice in Digital Media*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429295683>.

¹⁰Aruzhan Saimassayeva, Gulmira Abdiraïymova, and Dana Burkhanova, “Hijab Research Trends: A Bibliometric Analysis over 20 Years Using Scopus Database,” *Cogent Social Sciences* 11, no. 1 (2025): 2478324, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2025.2478324>.

¹¹Wadud, “review of *Politics of Piety*,” 813–816.

liberation, contrasting religiosity with progress and freedom.¹² Research highlights women's agency in interpreting religious norms and gender roles, including the role of corporeality and clothing, such as the hijab, as a visual language of self-presentation.¹³ The second direction of digital religion studies, in which religion is understood as a hybrid form integrating offline and online dimensions, while social networks are considered as a space for adaptation and transformation of religious practices.¹⁴ It explores the algorithmic and visual conditions that affect religious communities and ways of expressing themselves, including performative religiosity in Instagram and TikTok, where hashtags, sorries, and lashes take on ritual importance.¹⁵ At the same time, the early division into "online" religion and "online-representation of religion," is being revised, while modern works record the integration of digital space into everyday religious practices.¹⁶

The third direction focuses on the intersection of gender subjectivity and Islamic feminism. Researchers note that Muslim women in digital media not only reproduce norms, but also reassess them, using blogs, YouTube and Instagram to discuss gender, patriarchy and religious interpretation.¹⁷ The digital visibility of covered women as a form of authorship and cultural capital can be a mechanism of social control.¹⁸ In this context, the concept of "third spaces" is applied, describing intersection between doctrine and secularism, where new models of belonging and participation are formed.¹⁹ The fourth research direction is shaped by the methodological use of digital ethnography, which makes it possible to examine everyday online practices, particularly in relation to modest fashion and Islamic influencers.²⁰ This approach enables the study of embodiment, emotions, and aesthetics, while also treating comments, likes, and shares as markers of collective

¹²Abu-Lughod, *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?*

¹³Gökariksel and Secor, "Islamic-ness in the Life of a Commodity," 313–333.

¹⁴Mia Lövhelm and Heidi A. Campbell, "Considering Critical Methods and Theoretical Lenses in Digital Religion Studies," *New Media & Society* 19, no. 1 (2017): 5–14, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816649911>; Bunt, *Hashtag Islam: How Cyber-Islamic Environments Are Transforming Religious Authority*.

¹⁵Heidi A. Campbell, and Giulia Evolvi, "Contextualizing Current Digital Religion Research on Emerging Technologies," *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies* 2, no. 1 (2020): 5–17, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.149>.

¹⁶Christopher Helland, "Online Religion as Lived Religion: Methodological Issues in the Study of Religious Participation on the Internet," *Online – Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet* 1, no. 1 (2005): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.11588/rel.2005.1.380>; Piotr Siuda, "Mapping Digital Religion: Exploring the Need for New Typologies," *Religions* 12, no. 6 (2021): Article e373, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12060373>.

¹⁷Faegheh Shirazi, and Smeeta Mishra, "Young Muslim Women on the Face Veil (Niqab): A Tool of Resistance in Europe but Rejected in the United States," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 13, no. 1 (2010): 43–62, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367877909348538>; Nabil Echchaibi, "Muslimah Media Watch: Media Activism and Muslim Choreographies of Social Change," *Journalism* 14, no. 7 (2013): 852–867, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884913478360>.

¹⁸Kavakci and Kraepelin, "Religious Beings in Fashionable Bodies," 850–868.

¹⁹Stewart M. Hoover, and Nabil Echchaibi, *Media Theory and the "Third Spaces" of Digital Religion* (Boulder, CO: Center for Media, Religion, and Culture, University of Colorado Boulder, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.3315.4641>.

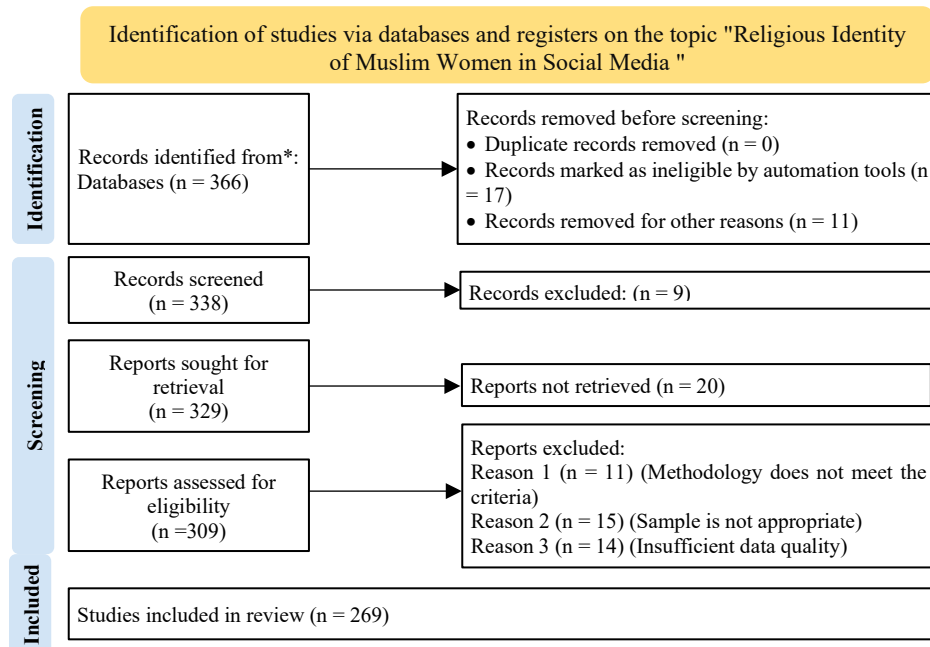
²⁰Sarah Pink et al., *Digital Ethnography: Principles and Practice* (London: SAGE, 2016), <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/digital-ethnography/book243111>; Campbell and Tsuria (Eds.), *Digital Religion*; Farhanah Murniasih, Abdul Hamid Cebba, and Namira Daffani Sabina, "Exploring Religious Identity and Well-being of Generation Z: Mediating Role of Digital Engagement," *Jurnal Diversita* 10, no. 2 (2024): 271–280, <https://doi.org/10.31289/diversita.v10i2.13043>.

identity and moral support.²¹ At the same time, important gaps remain in the literature. Most studies focus on cases from the US, Britain, Turkey, Indonesia, and the Gulf states, whereas Central Asia, the South Caucasus, and post-Soviet Muslim Diasporas remain largely overlooked. Methodologically, there is an imbalance between conceptual and empirical work, limited use of quantitative and mixed methods, rare adaptation of religious measurement tools to the conditions of the digital environment, and a lack of attention to gender specificity. The platform analysis, which takes into account differences in the representation of identity on Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Telegram and YouTube, is not sufficiently developed. However, each of the platforms sets unique conditions for visualization, algorithmic distribution, and involvement. Gaps point to the need to broaden regional and methodological horizons in order to build a more comprehensive understanding of the digital religiosity of Muslim women.

The totality of all the above observations points to the need for a systematic research approach that would not only record the current state of the scientific field, but also reflect its internal structure, dynamics and key thematic areas. To solve this problem, the work uses bibliometric analysis based on the principles of reproducibility and transparency of source selection, using specialized data processing and visualization tools. The procedures are described in detail in the following section.

3. Materials and Methods

The search strategy was implemented using the international multidisciplinary database Scopus, which offers extensive coverage across academic disciplines. The study looks at the period from 2005 to 2024, covering two decades of theoretical and methodological research. The following keyword combinations were used: “muslim women,” “social media,” “religious identity.”



²¹Stefan Huber, and Odilo W. Huber, “The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS),” *Religions* 3, no. 3 (2012): 710–724, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel3030710>.

Figure 1. PRISMA-based flow diagram of publication selection for the bibliometric analysis of studies on the religious identity of Muslim women in social media (2005–2024). Source: Page et al.²²

At the first stage, 366 publications were identified. Subsequently, a PRISMA-based screening procedure was applied. Duplicate records, studies with incomplete bibliographic data, and publications in which religious identity, Muslim women, or the digital context were not central analytical categories were excluded. As a result, the final dataset comprised 269 publications. All stages of the systematic selection process are presented in Figure 1.

The inclusion criteria were as follows: indexing in the Scopus database; publication between 2005 and 2024; explicit focus on Muslim women; discussion of religious identity; and analysis of digital media or social media as a relevant context of identity formation.

The exclusion criteria were as follows: absence of a gender focus; absence of religious identity as a central analytical category; absence of a digital or social media context; duplicate records; incomplete bibliographic data; and publications in which Muslim women were mentioned only marginally.

Data analysis was conducted using multiple software tools. VOSviewer was employed to perform analyses of keyword distribution and co-occurrence, co-authorship structures, co-citation networks, and thematic clusters within the publication corpus. This enabled a clear visualization of the concepts and research approaches constituting the core of the scholarly discourse on the religious identity of Muslim women in the digital sphere. In addition to the RStudio environment the Bibliometrix package designed for bibliometric and scientometric analysis was used. Using this tool we calculated annual publication trends, identified the most productive authors, and determined the institutional and national affiliations of the research. It also enabled us to thematically map the corpus using automated clustering methods. The key inclusion criteria for publications in the final dataset were as follows:

- indexing in the Scopus database;
- an empirical or theoretical focus on the religious identity of Muslim women;
- emphasis on the digital or media environment as a context for religious practice.

Particular attention during analysis was devoted to platform diversity. Various widely used social networks were included (Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter) along with less frequently studied channels, including Telegram. The absence of studies systematically comparing the visualization features, algorithmic logics, and user audiences of different platforms complicates the development of a comprehensive understanding of how Muslim women represent religious identity in diverse and multi-format digital environments.

4. Results and Discussion

The main trends of research on Muslim women's religious identity in digital spaces began in 2000s and slowly developed from there. By the mid-2010s, the field expanded to include gender perspectives and Islamic case studies. Since 2016 publication and citation rates have also increased sharply, reflecting the consolidation of a research community and the adoption of approaches from digital religion studies, Islamic feminism, and digital ethnography. After 2020, scholarly activity reached its highest level, with annual publication output and citation indicators showing the growing

²²Matthew J. Page et al., "The PRISMA 2020 Statement: An Updated Guideline for Reporting Systematic Reviews," *BMJ* 372 (2021): Article en71, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>.

relevance and influence of the field. These trends are shown in Figure 2.

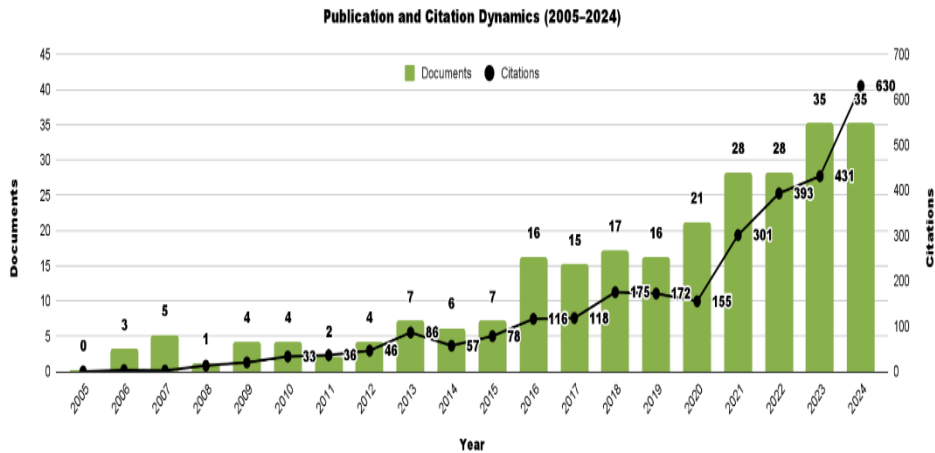


Figure 2. Dynamics of Publication Activity and Citation Trends in Studies on the Religious Identity of Muslim Women on Social Media (2005–2024)

This growth is linked to rising global interest in Islamic identity, migration, religious self-presentation on social media, and the development of digital methods in the humanities and social sciences. Among the twenty most-cited publications, Zine’s article on *Equity and Excellence in Education* has the highest citation count, examining gendered Islamophobia and hijab-wearing among Muslim girls in a Canadian Islamic school.²³ Brown’s work similarly explores the Islamic identity of British Muslim women through religion, gender, and rights realization.

Digital Islamophobia is another major theme within the literature. Awan’s article on *Policy and Internet*, which has received 173 citations, analyzes online hate on Twitter, while Awan and Zempi examine the relationship between online and offline forms of Islamophobia.²⁴ Another important strand of research focuses on visibility and self-representation. Hopkins and Greenwood, along with Kavakci and Kraepelin, study the performative meanings of the hijab and mediated identity.²⁵ Kavakci and Kraepelin’s discussion of the “hijabi influencer” is especially significant, while Baulch and

²³Jasmin Zine, “Unveiled Sentiments: Gendered Islamophobia and Experiences of Veiling among Muslim Girls in a Canadian Islamic School,” *Equity and Excellence in Education* 39, no. 3 (2006): 239–252, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680600788503>.

²⁴Katherine Brown, “Realising Muslim Women’s Rights: The Role of Islamic Identity among British Muslim Women,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 29, no. 4 (2006): 417–430, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2006.05.002>; Imran Awan, “Islamophobia and Twitter: A Typology of Online Hate against Muslims on Social Media,” *Policy & Internet* 6, no. 2 (2014): 133–150, <https://doi.org/10.1002/1944-2866.POI364>; Imran Awan and Irene Zempi, “The Affinity between Online and Offline Anti-Muslim Hate Crime: Dynamics and Impacts,” *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 27 (2016): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2016.02.001>.

²⁵Nick Hopkins, and Ronni Michelle Greenwood, “Hijab, Visibility and the Performance of Identity,” *European Journal of Social Psychology* 43, no. 5 (2013): 438–447, <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.1955>; Kavakci and Kraepelin, “Religious Beings in Fashionable Bodies,” 850–868.

Pramiyanti analyze Instagram and the visual construction of the “ideal Muslim woman.”²⁶ Political participation and spatiality are addressed by Abdelgadir and Fouka, who examine the French hijab ban, and by Bhatia and Gajjala, who study the Shaheen Bagh protests as feminist resistance.²⁷

Nearly half of the twenty most-cited works were published before 2015, showing the importance of earlier canonical studies. More recent works, although less cited, expand the field by addressing Instagram, TikTok, new visual practices, and algorithmic influences on digital religiosity. Geographical distribution was reflected in Figure 3. The Muslim world, Africa, the Caucasus, and the Middle East remain less represented, partly because of political and language barriers, while the research field is dominated by western studies on the topic, which is to be expected due to less developed academic infrastructures in non-anglophone world.

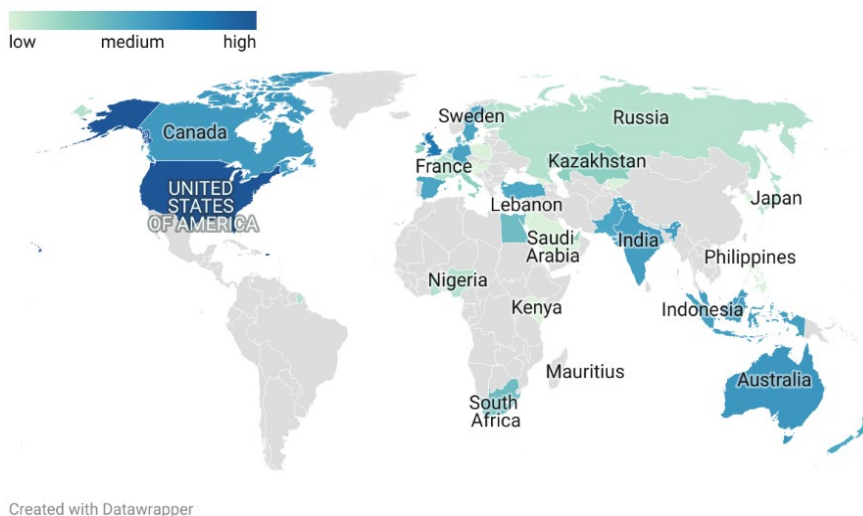


Figure 3. Geographical Distribution of Publication Activity by country in the Studied Field (2005–2024)

Figure 4 demonstrated most frequently publishing journals and total citation counts in the examined dataset. The results indicate interest in Islamic fashion, halal branding, and influencer culture, while lower-cited titles indicate uneven visibility across the field.

²⁶Kavakci and Kraepin, “Religious Beings in Fashionable Bodies,” 850–868.

²⁷Aala Abdelgadir, and Vasiliki Fouka, “Political Secularism and Muslim Integration in the West: Assessing the Effects of the French Headscarf Ban,” *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 3 (2020): 707–723, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055420000106>; Kiran Vinod Bhatia, and Radhika Gajjala, “Examining Anti-CAA Protests at Shaheen Bagh: Muslim Women and Politics of the Hindu India,” *International Journal of Communication* 14 (2020): 6286–6303; Annisa R. Beta, “Commerce, Piety and Politics: Indonesian Young Muslim Women’s Groups as Religious Influencers,” *New Media & Society* 21, no. 10 (2019): 2140–2159, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819838774>; Annisa R. Beta, “Hijabers: How Young Urban Muslim Women Redefine Themselves in Indonesia,” *International Communication Gazette* 76, nos. 4–5 (2014): 377–389, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048514524103>; Bhatia and Gajjala, “Examining Anti-CAA Protests,” 6286–6303.

political/critical studies of Islamic identity, and methodological approaches to empirical research. Thematic mapping was then employed to evaluate the maturity and thematic centrality of these domains (Figure 6).

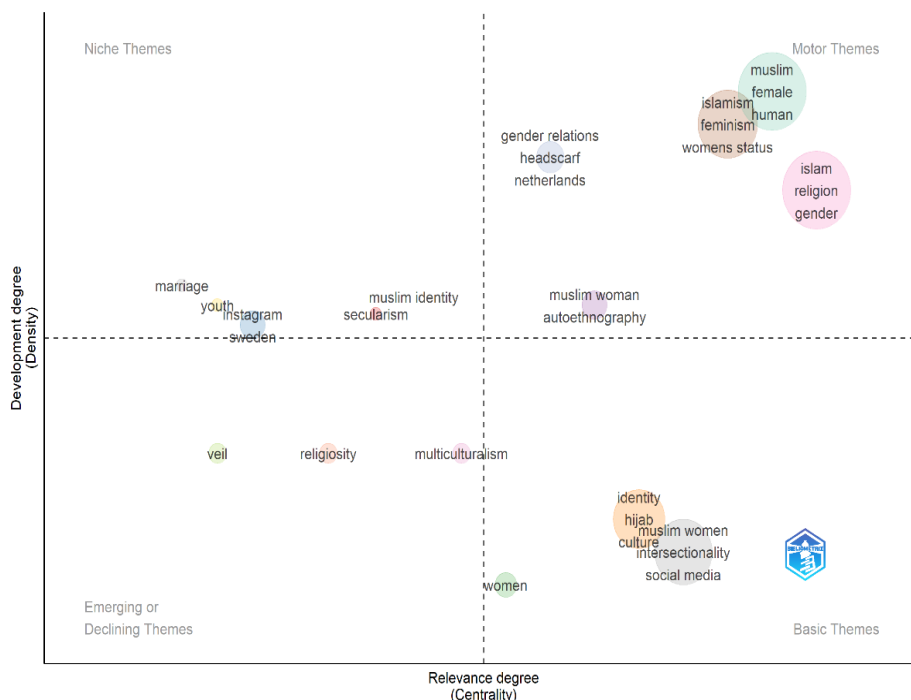


Figure 6. Thematic map of key research directions on the religious identity of Muslim women in social media

As shown in Figure 6, the field is structured around mature motor themes such as Islam, gender, feminism, and women's status, while basic themes including Muslim women, hijab, social media, identity, and intersectionality serve as central but still developing research anchors.

Several gaps were revealed in the existing literature on Muslim women's religious identity on social media. The majority of research focuses on Western contexts, with comparatively limited attention to regions such as Central Asia, North Africa, and Eastern Europe, where such research would be more significant. At the same time, new platforms receive little to no attention from researchers, although these platforms may provide important spaces for underrepresented voices of Muslim women and those interested in the topic would have a bigger chance of resonating. Theoretical approaches, including digital religion and Islamic feminism, are applied inconsistently, and research remains dominated by qualitative case studies with limited use of quantitative or mixed methods. Few longitudinal studies exist, and the intersections of religion, gender, ethnicity, and migration status are rarely analyzed in depth, hindering a holistic understanding of Muslim women's online religious identity.

Future research should therefore expand beyond Anglophone contexts, and give greater attention to emerging and regionally important platforms such as TikTok and Telegram, and more focus on multimodal forms of digital self-presentation. Overall, the main idea that should be presented to the scientific community is that the number of papers is too small and this topic would

benefit from some fresh perspectives and young voices. The Western reception of Muslim identities and ideas has become better, which brings us hope that more and more researchers would become interested in expressing their findings on this topic.

5. Conclusion

This study presents a bibliometric systematic review of the research trajectory of Muslim women's religious identity on social media from 2005 to 2024 through Scopus data, PRISMA-based literature search, VOSviewer analysis, and Bibliometrix. This research trajectory shows an overall pattern of steady growth globally, with a sharp increase after 2020, covering the fields of Islamic studies, gender studies, sociology of religion, and media studies.

The three main research areas are digital self-representation, Islamic feminism and visual expressions of religious identity, and theoretical-methodological formalization in quantitative, mixed methods, and intersectional research. The second research area also focuses on Islamophobia, postcolonial critique, the politicization of Muslim women's visibility, and the representation of their bodies in the public eye. Thus, Muslim women's religious identity in the social web is not just a matter of self-representation but about authority, agency, piety and participating in Islamic discourses in the present time.

The study also identified research gaps. These included the focus on English-language studies, insufficient coverage of Central Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and post-Soviet Muslim contexts; and an uneven distribution of studies across different platforms, with a focus on Instagram and YouTube and areas including TikTok, Telegram, Facebook, and other local platforms receiving considerably less attention. Furthermore, the field is heavily weighted to qualitative case studies, with few longitudinal, comparative, or mixed-method studies.

The project contributes organizationally to what is, so far, a fragmented field of research, and conceptually to Islamic studies and the scholarship on Muslim women's modesty, visibility and religious belonging inside and outside religious institutions in a digital world. In that regard, social media do not replace religious authorities, but change the venues in which religious identity is discussed, practiced, and negotiated.

The main limitations of this study are the use of the Scopus database and the predominance of the English language. Future research should in particular integrate more regional and non-English academic production, compare between the different platforms and explore those Muslim societies that still remain marginal in bibliometric maps. It will continue to expand our knowledge of Muslim women's religious identity in the context of the internet.

Author Contribution

Raushan Umbet: conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data curation, formal analysis, visualization, writing – original draft, project administration. **Sholpan Jamanbalayeva:** conceptualization, methodology, supervision, validation, writing – review & editing. **Elena Burova:** formal analysis, resources, validation, writing – review & editing. **Moldir Akmati:** data curation, software, visualization, writing – review & editing.

Conflict of Interest

The authors of the manuscript have no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings of this study will be made available by the corresponding author upon request.

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