The Development of Research on the Issue of Imam Shafi'i Muslim Scholars through Bibliometric Analysis in 2020-2025

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| Abstract | This research is motivated by the importance of the figure of Imam Syafi'i as an influential Muslim scholar in the development of Islamic law. The main objective of this study is to analyze the development, publication sources, main contributors, emerging issues, and potential for new problems related to research on Imam Syafi'i in the period 2020–2025. This study uses a quantitative approach with a bibliometric research method. The main data source was obtained from Google Scholar with the help of the Publish or Perish (PoP) application, resulting in 759 publications which were then filtered to 734. The research was conducted in June 2025. Data was analyzed descriptively and qualitatively using the VOSviewer and Microsoft Word applications. The results of the study show five main findings: first, an increase in the publication trend, especially in 2022, with as many as 171 publications; second, the repository is the dominant source of publication (51%); third, six active researchers were identified, including Rizki Fauzan, Lc. (8 publications), Abu Hasna (8 publications), Amrin Borotan (4 publications), Suaib Lubis (4 publications), Mitra Ramadhan (5 publications), Imam Syafi'i (3 publications); fourth, the main issues that are often discussed include Islamic law, effectiveness, and qualitative approach; fifth, the potential for renewable issues includes practice, child, poetry, Imam Maliki, and comparative study. The limitations of this study are the use of a database that is limited to Google Scholar, suboptimal spatial visualization, and the lack of specific data related to journals in the field of comparative schools of thought. Future recommendations are to expand the scope of the database to Scopus or WoS and increase the depth of visual and thematic analysis so that the results are more comprehensive. |

| Keywords | Bibliometric Analysis; Development; Muslim Scholar Imam Syafi'I; Research. |

INTRODUCTION

Islam is one of the many religions present in the world, where according to surveys it is ranked second with around 1.8 billion followers or the equivalent of 22% of the world's total population (Liswi, 2018). The success of Islam, which is shown by a large number of adherents, is because in it there is a living guidance for organizing human life, a spirit for developing knowledge, and teachings to advance self-benefit in various lines (Fahmi & Hamdiyah, 2020). Another aspect that makes it a religion that continues to develop is because it is brought by a central figure in Islam, even recognized by non-Muslims, namely the Prophet Muhammad Shalaullahu'alaihi Wassalam as God's messenger to the world (Hirsch, 2021; Oaks Takacs, 2023). As the messenger of the Divine in the world, Rasulullah always taught Islamic values to all residents of Mecca and outside the arabian peninsula, namely to establish the ultimate Almighty Allah Azza wa Jalla (Dakake, 2019; Hendricks et al., 2023). So, in his daily activities, he always reminds his followers to always worship and worship Allah Azza wa Jalla as the One/Single God (Huda et al., 2024) (Pilpel & Gindi, 2019). Apart from that, he educates his followers to become people who always connect themselves with God, and each other and guides them to become experts (intellectuals) in their respective fields (BinTaleb & Aseery, 2022; Roded, 2022). One of the many people who succeeded in being educated from Islamic teachings so that he could develop and advance science and religion is Imam Syafi'i Rahimahullah (Malik, 2023).

Imam Syafi'i whose full name is Muhammad bin Idris asy-Syafi'i was born in Gaza-Palestine in 150 AH (767 AD) (K. Ali, 2011; Fardiansyah & Supriyatno, 2018). He comes from the Quraish family which still has a direct lineage to the Prophet Muhammad through Abd Manaf (Baugh, 2013; Stewart, 2014). Since childhood, Imam Syafi'i was raised in an environment that loved knowledge, especially after moving to Mecca to study religion. His early education began with memorizing the Qur'an at the age of seven, followed by studying hadith and fiqh (Alshaar, 2022; Sezer, 2025). In the course of his education, Imam Syafi'i studied with great scholars such as Imam Malik bin Anas in Medina, Sufyan bin Uyainah in Mecca, and Muhammad bin Hasan Asy-Syaibani and he was a student of Imam Abu Hanifah in Iraq (Jabeen, 2024; Murshidah et al., 2018). Thanks to his travels to various centers of knowledge, Imam Syafi'i is known as the first formulator of the science of Ushul Fiqh through his monumental work entitled "Ar-Risala" (Asy-Syafi'i, 2012; Intan, 2011). Apart from that, he also wrote "Kitab al-Umm" which is the main reference in the Shafi'i School (Hudaya, 2016). Imam Syafi'i had many famous students including Ahmad bin Hanbal, al-Buwaythi, and al-Muzani who later spread his teachings to various regions of the Islamic world (Mun'im & Tanzilulloh, 2021). As a great Islamic scholar, there are several values/teachings developed by Imam Syafi'i, including: first, the importance of lifelong learning as an effort to seek knowledge and develop early knowledge, second, teaching methodology in ijtihad, third, the value of moderation (tawasuth), fourth, manners and morals in scientific dialogue, and fifth, the importance of upholding sincerity of intention and closeness to Allah in various activities, especially in seeking knowledge (Hidayat et al., 2023; Hilman et al., 2023).

Known as the Shaykhul Islam who played a very important role in the advancement of Islam, he had several main ideas from a Muslim scholar, including the following ideas: (1) the basis of Islamic law comes from the Qur'an, hadith, ijma', and qiyas; (2) the importance of ushul fiqh as a legal methodology; (3) tolerance for differences in schools of thought; (4) manners in knowledge; and (5) balance between text and context (Ahyar, 2015; Arifin, 2018;

Fardani, 2024; Misbah, 2019). His thoughts then continued to develop and have an impact on various fields where he formulated the basics of the science of Usul Fiqh which has become a guideline for the methodology of determining Islamic law until now, through monumental works such as Ar-Risalah and Kitab al-Umm he provided systematic and applicable fiqh references, Imam Syafi'i is known as the guardian of the originality of the hadith which demands high accuracy in accepting and narrating sources of Islamic law, introducing a moderate and rational approach in understanding religious texts to encourage the flexibility of ijtihad according to the social context, and the influence of his teachings spread through his students such as Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal who then spread his thoughts to various parts of the Islamic world including Southeast Asia (Ashimi, 2020; WZW Hassan & Abdullah, 2024; WZWH Hassan et al., 2013; Mukhsin & Alfani, 2024; Rizal & Bahri, 2022).

The intellectual figure of Imam Syafi'i is one of the influential Muslim intellectual figures in the Islamic and global world in the digital era all his products, services, and innovations such as artificial intelligence (Artificial Intelligence) are currently facing a path full of challenges where the facts on the ground are various kinds of problems including: (1) the current generation has minimal literacy in Islamic history so they are less familiar with Muslim intellectual figures, one of whom is Imam Syafi'I (Miah, 2017; Tayyara, 2016), (2) the impact of globalization and the hegemony of Western civilization which has caused a shift in life values (Agnew, 2022; Ragab, 2019), (3) minimal integration of the stories of Muslim intellectual figures in the formal and national education system (Moslimany et al., 2024; Rufai, 2016), (4) the lack of scientific research that discusses in depth the contributions of Muslim scholars (Fakhruddin et al., 2025; Ulfat, 2020), (5) the proliferation of non-credible information and content so that it is easy to swallow it raw (Hameleers, 2024; Young, 2022). Reviewing the problems that arise, it is necessary to make real solution efforts, including integrating the stories of Muslim scholars into the education system, optimizing scientific research related to the figures of figures and their thoughts and contributions to life, disseminating positive materials in various media, holding activities around seminars and public discussions on the theme of Islamic figures, and developing historical literacy media based on sophisticated technology (Alexander et al., 2014; Holmes et al., 2020; Otte, 2019; Rees & Huf, 2020).

Efforts to promote Muslim intellectual figures to the nation's generation and the general public can be done one way by optimizing scientific-based studies on the figure of the intellectual, both his works, teachings, and thoughts. Various parties have attempted to do this, including the first, Mohamad Fauzan, et al. (2024) through his research entitled "Digital Literacy Trends in Islamic Perspective in Higher Education: A Bibliometric Review" where his findings found that there was an increasing development of publications with the topic of Islamic digital literacy in 2021 and the lack of integration of Islamic perspectives in Islamic digital literacy, his research used SLR with PRISMA and bibliometrics on 37 articles from the Scopus database which were visualized using the assistance of the VOSviewer application. Second, research conducted by Risa Nalwi, et al. (2024) with the title "A Bibliometric Analysis of Islamic Parenting Trend in Indonesia" where the findings reveals that the trend of Islamic parenting has increased especially in 2022, there is the use of qualitative methods and the latest topics around the issue are related to the sandwich generation and the digitalization era, the research curates 33 articles from journals indexed by Sinta during the period 2019-2024 using the VOSviewer application. Third, research conducted by Nola Fibriyani, et al. (2024) with the title "Bibliometric Analysis and Literature Review of Islamic Religious Education Curriculum Model" where the results of the study revealed an increasing trend in 2021 with the dominance

of countries that produce a lot, namely Indonesia and productive writers from UIN Ar-Raniry, the study analyzed 209 Scopus publications in the period 2004-2023 with the help of Excel, R Studio, and VOSViewer applications.

Based on the previous literature review, this study also attempts to analyze one of the Muslim scholars, namely Imam Syafi'i, by seeing how far his research has developed in the last 5 years (2020-2025) with the same analytical tool used as previous studies, namely bibliometric analysis. The difference (newness) of the research conducted is that the main data comes from the Google Scholar database through the assistance of the Publish or Perish (PoP) application as many as 759 publication data which are then visualized using the same VOSviewer application as previous studies and Microsoft Word. In addition, this research is guided by five main problem formulations, including (1) How is the development of research on Imam Syafi'i in the 2020-2025 period?, (2) What are the sources of scientific publications in research on Imam Syafi'i during the 2020-2025 period?, (3) Who are the researchers who contributed to publishing research on Imam Syafi'i during the 2020-2025 period?, (4) What are the issues that have developed from research on Imam Syafi'i during the 2020-2025 period?, and (5) What are the potential for new issues that can be developed in the future from the issue of Imam Syafi'i?

In general, the research conducted aims to examine and trace the development of research on the issue of the Muslim scholar Imam Syafi'i including the quantity of publications produced, contributing researchers, sources of publications, issues that have developed during the last 5 years (2020-2025), and potential issues that can be developed, researched and studied further from the topic of Imam Shafi'i.

METHODS

The research conducted uses a quantitative approach. The quantitative research approach is an approach that focuses on efforts to collect and analyze data in the form of numbers that are measured objectively (Bauer et al., 2021; Queirós et al., 2017). Where the aim is to identify, test, and describe the relationship between variables and draw general conclusions from research findings on a broad scale (Cortina, 2020; Rahman, 2016). Specifically, the method used in this research is bibliometric research. Judging from its root word, bibliometric is taken from the word "Biblio" which means book, and the word "metric" which means measurement (Haddow, 2018; Hamdi et al., 2025; Zupic & Čater, 2015), the meaning in terminology is that bibliometrics is a quantitative research method that aims to analyze scientific publications systematically using data (Gan et al., 2022; Huda & Anwar, 2024; Passas, 2024).

The research was conducted in June 2025 with the main data source (primary) coming from the Google Scholar database through the Publish or Perish (PoP) application with the first step being to enter the keyword "Imam Syafi'i" in the title column in the application then determine the publication period starting from 2020 to 2025 then continue, then the application automatically searches for publications with the keywords that have been entered and the results display 759 publications (Amrona et al., 2024).

In addition to primary data, namely 759 scientific publications originating from the Google Scholar database through the PoP application, this study also uses supporting data (secondary) for in-depth analysis, including data originating from articles in the form of journals, proceedings, papers, books, and valid internet sources. The data analysis used in this

study is qualitative, meaning processing, processing, interpretation, and understanding of data in a non-numerical manner such as parsing, reviewing, and document tracing. (Richards & Hemphill, 2018; Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024) where the aim is to explore the meaning, patterns, themes, and relationships between the phenomena being studied (Lester et al., 2020; Li & Zhang, 2022). Specifically, research using the bibliometric research method is carried out through the stages depicted in Figure 2 below:
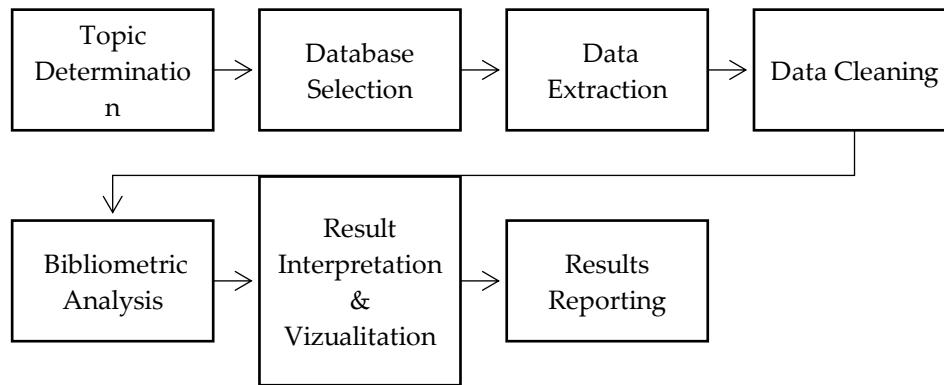

Figure 1. Research Flow (Stages) with Bibliometric Research Methods
(AASH Ali et al., 2024; Huda et al., 2024)

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Developments on Imam Syafi'i in the Time Frame 2020-2025

The first research finding is regarding the development of research publications on the topic "Imam Syafi'i" as an influential Muslim scholar from 2020 to 2025. The investigation into this development was carried out by analyzing 759 published articles obtained from the Google Scholar database through the Publish or Perish application which was extracted using the APA Reference storage format in the application so that the data was stored in the form of a Microsoft Word soft file which was then carefully analyzed by the researcher himself and found the following results:

The data generated from the Google Scholar database through the publish or perish application as many as 759 article publications produced in the next stage is filtering (data screening) carried out with full accuracy independently by researchers with a manual model where the Microsoft Word soft file containing 759 publications is examined one by one where the results are filtered to only 734 publications. The filtering was reviewed again by matching the year of publication, namely from 2020 to 2025 so that several publications did not match the year range, then no publication had a year, then several publication articles did not match the topic being studied, and other things that happened during the analysis process were not by the type of publication and were less credible.

Based on the graph in Figure 3 above, it is known that the development of research on Imam Syafi'i above is known that publications produced in 2020 were 104 publications, in 2021 there were 133 publications, then increased in 2022 to 171, and decreased again in 2023 to almost same position as in 2021 with a difference of 1 point so that 132 publications were produced, then increased again in 2024 to 154 and in 2025 currently only 40 publications have been produced. Judging from the graph which has experienced ups and downs, it indicates that research on the topic of Imam Syafi'i has been produced and studied a lot due to the enthusiasm of various parties towards academic studies of classical Islamic law considering

that he is a figure of the Islamic religious school, secondly because his ideas are still relevant in the context of modern law, another reason is that with the increasingly developing information technology, it is easier to access studies related to Imam Syafi'i(Abdullah, 2017; Munirom, 2023; Yilmaz, 2020). The number of publications in 2025 is only 40 articles produced, providing opportunities for the future, one of which is through this research to support the strengthening of scientific research on the history of Muslim intellectual figures.

Sources of Scientific Publications in Research on Imam Syafi'i during the Time Frame 2020-2025

The second finding of this research is the exploration of publication sources that resulted in studies on the topic of Imam Syaf'i during the period 2020-2025 with the same steps as the discovery of the development of the first research publication where the steps were to re-analyze 734 scientific publication data sourced from the Google Scholar database, then the researcher reviewed the publications one by one by adhering to objectivity (meaning what the data is) and produced several publication sources as follows:
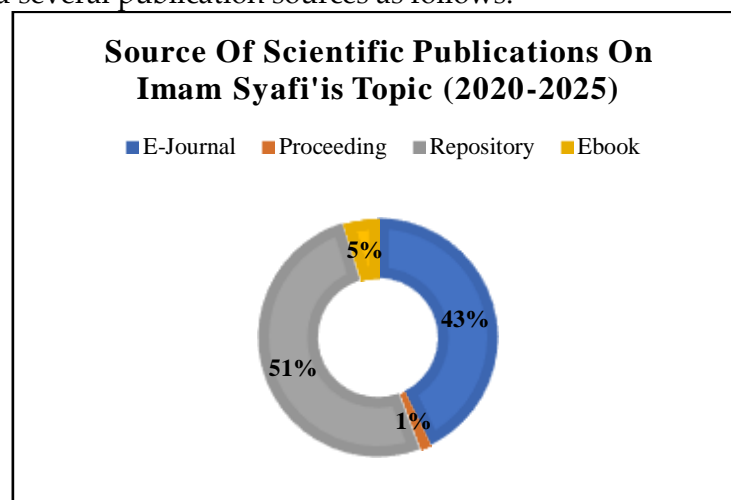

Figure 2. Trends in the Development of Research Publications on the Topic of Imam Syafi'i over the Last 5 Years (2020-2025)

Investigation of scientific publication sources about Imam Syafi'i during the period 2020-2025 was carried out by reviewing publication data of 734 publications from Google Scholar where the results based on Figure 4 above show 4 main publication sources, including in the form of Electronic Journals (E-Journals) of which there are 314 sources or 43%, then secondly, publication sources in the form of Proceeding Articles with a total of 11 sources or 1%, thirdly, Repositories with 374 sources or 51%, and fourthly, Ebooks with 35 sources or 5%.

The several publication sources, Repository occupies the first position as the most source among the other three types of sources, namely 374 sources (51%) followed by E-Journal which occupies the second position, namely 314 sources (43%). The dominance of publication sources in the form of repositories is due to several advantages that they have, including accommodating open access so that anyone can download the results for free without paying, the repository acts as a medium in accommodating student final assignments such as theses, theses, and dissertations so that the general public can follow the development of factual issues being studied, the upload process is faster, and it is a prerequisite for universities to direct students to upload their work through repository media (Jr, 2018; Otto & Ralston, 2012; Park

et al., 2016; Zhu et al., 2017).

Contributing Researchers Published Research on Imam Syafi'i during the 2020-2025 Timeframe

The third finding of this study is an effort to trace researchers who contributed to producing and publishing their work with studies on Imam Syafi'i during the period 2020-2025. The search effort was carried out by collaborating using the assistance of the Vos (Ni'am et al., 2023). Viewer application version 1.6.20 to display and map the researchers in question. The process of searching for these researchers by entering as many as 374 data that had previously been stored from the publish or perish application in the Google Scholar database by saving it in RIS format, then in the next stage it was ready to be mapped using the Vos Viewer application through the following stages.

Based on Figure 5 above, the first step is selecting the type of data where the researcher visualizes it with a map of data sources from the bibliography, then in the menu section of the Vos Viewer application, the data type menu is selected, namely the RIS type, the next step in selecting the counting method is to select the full counting menu section and the maximum number of authorship documents is 25. The results show that out of 1015 researchers, 4 researchers were identified and then automatically filtered again by the application by looking at the relationship between researchers, whether they are connected or not so that out of 4 researchers, 6 researchers were found as the results that appear from the Vos Viewer application can be seen as follows:
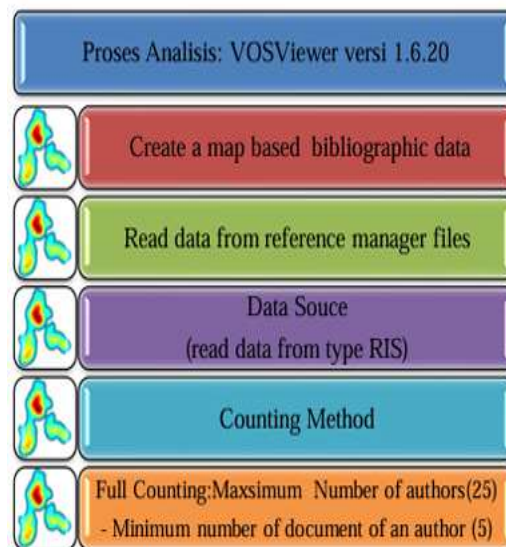

Figure 3. Researchers of Research Topics on Imam Syafi'i in 2020-2025 using the Vos Viewer application

Referring to the display of Figure 6 above, it was found that there were several researchers who contributed to publishing their research, mainly studying Imam Syafi'i during the period from 2020-2025, consisting of 6 researchers, including the first is Rizki Fauzan, Lc. who is a translator of book works at the Hikam Pustaka book publisher with 8 publications, second is Abu Hasna who is a book editor at the same institution as the first researcher, namely Hikam Pustaka where both the first and second researchers are connected and collaborate in publishing their works also resulting in 8 publications, third is Amrin

Borotan who is an academic from UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau with a concentration of knowledge in the field of Family Law (Akhwal Syahsiyyah) with a total of 4 publications, fourth is Suaib Lubis who is an academic from STAI Jami'yah Mahmudiyah Tanjung Pura with a concentration of knowledge in the field of Islamic Law with a total of 4 publications, fifth is Mitra Ramadhan who is a member of UIN North Sumatra Medan with a total of 5 publications, and finally sixth is Imam Syafi'i who is an academic from the Islamic University of Zainul Hasan Genggong Probolinggo with his field of expertise is Islamic Family Law and Comparison of Madzhabs with a total of 3 publications.

Emerging Issues from Research on Imam Syafi'i during the period 2020-2025

The fourth finding of this research focuses on an in-depth exploration of emerging topics in publications on Imam Syafi'i during the period 2020-2025 (the last 5 years). The analysis process follows a systematic flow similar to the active researcher's search guided by the Vos Viewer application version 1.6.20. The initial stage involves selecting a creating a map based on the text data model, with data sources coming from RIS-formatted reference manager files. In the calculation method, the researcher uses Binary Counting, with a minimum limit for term occurrences set at 3. From a total of 3 terms, the software displays the results of 184 main terms from a total of 3951 terms which are then filtered back into 110 terms (60%) automatically from the selected application. The researcher conducted manual verification to ensure the relevance of each term to the context of the study on Imam Syafi'i until finally 48 final terms were obtained (as seen in Figure 7). The results of this filtering are visualized using network visualization mode, showing the interconnectedness between terms as the basis for further analysis presented in Figure 8.

Referring to Figure 8 above with the network visualization display mode with as many as 48 term items divided into 8 clusters connected to 105 networks with as many as 154 network threads, the items have a close and strong level of relationship with each other. The 8 clusters are: (1) the first cluster consists of 8 items, namely argument, comparative study, Hanbali, Hanafi, Imam Hanafi and Imam Syafii, Imam Syafii and Imam Hanbali, city, and Maliki, (2) the second cluster consists of 8 items, namely al-imam, book, Imam ibn Hazm, Imam ibn Hazmin, library research, scholar, thesis, and zakat, (3) the third cluster consists of 8 items, namely analysis, case study, effectiveness, female student, qualitative approach, school, student, and Tulungagung, (4) the fourth cluster consists of 7 items, namely hadith, Islamic law, mujtahid, person, practice, relevance, and thought, (5) the fifth cluster consists of 7 items, namely Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Abu Hanifah and Imam Syafii, Imam Syafii and Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Syafii and Imam Ahmad bin Hambal, selling, criteria, and comparative studies, (6) the sixth cluster consists of 4 items, namely child, poem, poetry, and research method, (7) the seventh cluster consists of 4 items, namely development, implementation, pekanbaru, and smp, and (8) the eighth cluster consists of 2 items, namely Imam Maliki and Imam Syafii and Imam Maliki.

Furthermore, referring to Figure 9 with the Overlay Visualization mode display, it is clear that several topics related to Imam Syafi'i are dominantly discussed and produced research, which can be seen in the net threads and yellow and light green item circles that indicate the intensity of the increasingly lively studies produced. Several main issues that are often studied include poems, poetry, effectiveness, female students, students, qualitative approaches, analysis, Pekanbaru, implementation, development, thought, person, and Islamic law, where all of these dominant issues have begun to be actively studied and produced

research in 2023 to 2025 at present.

Potential renewable issues that can be developed in the future from the issue regarding Imam Syafi'i

The fifth final finding in this study focuses on the exploration of potential new issues related to Imam Syafi'i which are great opportunities to be developed more deeply in the future. The identification process was carried out through bibliometric analysis assisted by the Vos Viewer application. The results of the visual mapping are displayed in Density Visualization mode as seen in Figure 10 which shows several relevant topics and is worthy of being the main reference for further studies in this field as follows.

Based on the results of the display of Figure 10 above, several renewable topics that can be developed from the issue regarding Imam Syafi'i in the future can be seen from the issue items that are dim yellow and less bright or even tend to be dark, including practice, Islamic law, child, poetry, Imam Maliki, and comparative study, meaning that not much research has been produced or is still minimal and is an opportunity for further development, in contrast to items that are very bright yellow, meaning that the topics of these issues have been widely studied and research has been published.

CONCLUSION

The research that has been conducted has achieved successful findings based on the formulation of the problem, including first, the development of research publications on the topic of Imam Syafi'i during the period 2020-2025 against data of 734 publications (data cleaning) from the Google Scholar database and manual analysis by researchers, it is known that the highest number of publications occurred in 2022 with 171 publications and in its initial journey in 2020, 104 publications were produced and tended to be less produced in 2025, which was only 40 publications. Second, the sources of publications on the topic of Imam Syafi'i consist of 4 main sources, including e-journals (314 sources or 43%), proceedings (11 sources or 1%), repositories (374 sources or 51%), and ebooks (35 sources or 5%). Third, the researchers who contributed were identified as many as 6 researchers, including Rizki Fauzan, Lc. (8 publications), Abu Hasna (8 publications), Amrin Borotan (4 publications), Suaib Lubis (4 publications), Mitra Ramadhan (5 publications), and Imam Syafi'i (3 publications). Fourth, the issues that developed from research on Imam Syafi'i in the 2020-2025 period include a poem, poetry, effectiveness, female student, student, qualitative approach, analysis, Pekanbaru, implementation, development, thought, person, and Islamic law. Finally, the fifth recommendation for potential issues that can be developed in the future from the topic of Imam Syafi'i includes practice, Islamic law, child, poetry, Imam Maliki, and comparative study.

In addition to its success, this study also has several limitations, including the lack of use of international databases such as Scopus, the limited visualization that describes which countries have published a lot of research on Imam Syafi'i, the third limitation that there are no specific publication sources that specifically publish it in detail, such as comparative journals of schools of thought, for example, and the fourth limitation of the researcher himself who needs to improve data processing up to comprehensive bibliometric visualization.

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