

Evolution of Research on Religion–State Relations in Constitutional Law Using Biblioshiny Network Visualization Analysis

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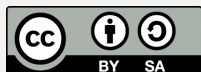
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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the evolution of scholarly literature concerning the relationship between religion and state within the context of constitutional law through a comprehensive bibliometric approach. The research data were collected from the Scopus database spanning the period from 2005 to 2025 and were analyzed using the Biblioshiny for R software. The analysis process involved various visualizations, such as annual scientific production, average citation per year, three-field plot, most relevant words, affiliations, treemap, and a thematic map. The findings indicate that publications on this topic have experienced a significant upward trend, although fluctuating, with a peak observed in 2023. Thematically, constitutional law, religion, and human rights emerged as motor themes that drive the direction of research development, while Islamic law, democracy, and legal pluralism served as basic themes forming the conceptual foundation. Furthermore, the affiliation analysis reveals that the primary contribution originates from international institutions, whereas the participation of researchers from Indonesia remains limited but shows a positive upward trend. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening local and contextual perspectives within the global discourse to enrich the understanding and development of constitutional law studies that are more inclusive and relevant to contemporary sociopolitical dynamics.

1. Introduction

The relationship between religion and the state from the perspective of constitutional law is one of the important topics that continues to attract the attention of scholars worldwide.¹ The debate surrounding the position of religion within the framework of a modern constitution uncovers various dynamics, ranging from the protection of human rights and freedom of religion to the challenges of legal pluralism in a multicultural society.^{2,3} The results of the thematic mapping show that issues such as constitutional law, religion, and human rights are 'motor themes' with high relevance and conceptual development.⁴ The thematic mapping results indicate that areas such as constitutional law, religion, and human rights function as 'motor themes' demonstrating both high relevance and significant conceptual development.⁵

On the other hand, themes such as Islamic law, legal pluralism, democracy, and international law are positioned as basic themes, indicating that these issues are fundamental yet still require further development within academic study.⁶ Meanwhile, the presence of themes such as religious exemptions and free exercise within the 'emerging or declining themes' quadrant reflects a new direction that is either potentially gaining traction or, conversely, experiencing a decrease in scholarly attention.⁷ This mapping indicates that research in the field of constitutional law and religion still presents ample scope for exploration, particularly concerning how the constitution can accommodate religious values without disregarding the principles of democracy, freedom of religion, and human rights.⁸ Therefore, this research is crucial to undertake as an effort to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between religion, the constitution, and legal pluralism within both global and local contexts.

2. Research Methods

This research employs a bibliometric methodology to analyze publication trends and thematic developments in the studies of constitutional law, religion, and human rights.⁹ Research data was sourced from the international Scopus database, covering a publication period from 2005 to 2025. The search was conducted using relevant keywords such as 'constitutional law,' 'religion,' 'human rights,' 'freedom of religion,' and 'Islamic law.' The retrieved articles were subsequently screened based on specific inclusion criteria: publication in a reputable journal, direct relevance to the legal, religious, and constitutional issues under study, and availability in either English or Indonesian.¹⁰ The collected data was subsequently subjected to data cleaning to eliminate duplication and

¹ Chagai Schlesinger, 'Religious Legal Pluralism in the Shadow of the Centralistic State', *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, published online 29 August 2025, doi:10.1093/ojls/gqaf010.

² Achmad Hariri and Basuki Babussalam, 'Legal Pluralism: Concept, Theoretical Dialectics, and Its Existence in Indonesia', *Walisono Law Review (Walrev)*, 6.2 (2024), pp. 146–70, doi:10.21580/walrev.2024.6.2.25566.

³ Muhammad Nur and others, *Negotiating Legal Pluralism: Sharia and Civil Law Integration in Brunei Darussalam*, September 2025 <<http://www.ejournal.umm.ac.id/index.php/legality>>.

⁴ Nurrohman Syarif, Zulbaidah, and Muhammad Andi Septiadi, 'Political Theology: How God's Law Is Applied in the Context of Indonesian Democracy Based on Pancasila', *Cogent Arts and Humanities*, 11.1 (2024), doi:10.1080/23311983.2024.2407104.

⁵ Ahmad Rofii, 'The Religiosity Of The Indonesian Constitution: Article 29(1) And Its Interpretation', *Constitutional Review*, 7.2 (2021), pp. 203–40, doi:10.31078/consrev722.

⁶ Achmad Hariri and Basuki Babussalam, 'Legal Pluralism: Concept, Theoretical Dialectics, and Its Existence in Indonesia'.

⁷ Stephanie H Barclay and Mark L Rienzi, *Constitutional Anomalies or As-Applied Challenges? A Defense of Religious Exemptions* (2018) <<https://lawdigitalcommons.bc.edu/bclr>>.

⁸ Dennis P Petri and Jonathan Fox, *What Do Constitutions Say about Religious Freedom? More than You Would Think, and Less than You Would Like!*, published online 2025, doi:<https://doi.org/10.63058/des.v19i1.322>.

⁹ Amri Saputra, 'Analisis Scientometric Tren Riset Penelitian Hukum Keluarga Islam: Studi Bibliometrik Dengan Menggunakan R Biblioshiny 2015-2025', *Samarah*, 8.1 (2024), pp. 518–37, doi:10.22373/sjhk.v8i1.21890.

¹⁰ Amri Saputra and others, 'Trends and Developments in Gamification for Science Education: A Bibliometric Review from 2019 to 2023', *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, 11.1 (2025), pp. 30–44, doi:10.29303/jppipa.v11i1.10169.

inconsistencies in reporting/formatting.¹¹

The analysis was conducted quantitatively utilizing the Biblioshiny for R software, which generated a variety of visualizations such as co-occurrence networks, treemaps, thematic maps, and author affiliation distributions.¹² A descriptive analysis was conducted to ascertain the volume of publications and the distribution of the most relevant keywords, journals, and institutions.¹³ Meanwhile, thematic analysis was employed to map out the main issues and their evolution, allowing for the identification of driving themes, foundational themes, niche themes, and emerging or declining themes. With this design, the research is descriptive-exploratory, aiming to quantitatively explain publication trends while simultaneously exploring the developmental trajectory of the global literature in the field of law, religion, and human rights.

3. Result and Discussion

To comprehensively understand the evolution of research concerning the relationship between religion and the state from a constitutional law perspective, a bibliometric analysis is required. This analysis must be capable of mapping the development of publications, the involvement of authors, and academic citation trends.

This quantitative analysis provides an overview of how research in this field has developed over time, identifies the scientific actors involved, and illustrates the formation of international collaborations. By utilizing Biblioshiny, the bibliometric data can be visualized in the form of numerical indicators that demonstrate publication dynamics, author networks, and the resulting scientific impact. Prior to the Three-Field Plot and Network Visualization analysis, a general statistical summary related to publications on this topic will be presented first.



Figure 1. Main Information

Figure 1 presents a statistical summary of publications related to research on religion-state relations within constitutional law over the period 2005–2025. A total of 133 documents were recorded, originating from 64 sources, with an annual growth rate of 4.33%, indicating an increasing research trend on this topic.

Out of 186 authors, approximately 95 authors contributed single articles. The rate of international collaboration remained relatively moderate at 10.53%, with an average of 1.46 authors per document. The breadth of perspectives and themes addressed is evidenced by the 480 keywords utilized by the authors.

The average age of the documents is 7.22 years, with an average of 5.917 citations per document, which underscores that publications in this field possess a significant level of academic relevance

¹¹ Amri saputra, Dini cahyati, and Qonita Shabira, 'Tren Pemetaan Pendidikan Inklusif di Sekolah Menengah Atas Tinjauan Bibliometrik 2019 hingga 2023', *action research journal indonesia*, 7.1 (2025), doi:10.61227.

¹² Massimo Aria and Corrado Cuccurullo, 'Bibliometric: An R-Tool for Comprehensive Science Mapping Analysis', *Journal of Informetrics*, 11.4 (2017), pp. 959–75, doi:10.1016/j.joi.2017.08.007.

¹³ Muhammad Yahya Abdullah, *Scientometrics of Religious Moderation (2009-2023): A Biblioshiny R Application* (n.d.) <<https://journals.smartinsight.id/index.php/SL>>.

and impact. Notably, zero direct references were found in this dataset, which may suggest a limitation in the metadata or a difference in the indexing format of the utilized database.

Overall, these statistics provide a preliminary foundation for further analysis of the knowledge structure, citation patterns, and intellectual network that have formed within the discourse on religion and state in the realm of constitutional law.

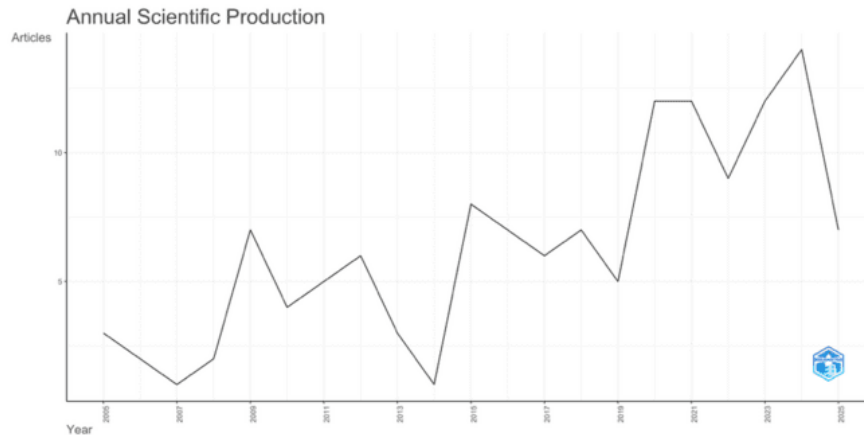


Figure 2. Annual Scientific Production

The Annual Trend of Scholarly Production Related to Research on the Relationship Between Religion and State in Constitutional Law Across the Period 2005–2025. Overall, the number of publications experienced fluctuation with an increasing trend from year to year. In the initial phase (2005–2012), productivity was relatively low, averaging under seven articles per year. However, after 2013, publications began to demonstrate a more consistent development, despite continuing to experience variability. The peak of scholarly production occurred in 2023, when the number of publications reached its highest point in the last two decades, before experiencing a subsequent decline in 2025. This dynamic may reflect the influence of socio-political factors, changes in regulation, or increasing academic attention to the issue of the relationship between religion and state. Consequently, this chart indicates that despite the fluctuations, the subject has increasingly gained a significant position within the constitutional law academic discourse, commensurate with the growing urgency of the discourse at both the national and global levels.

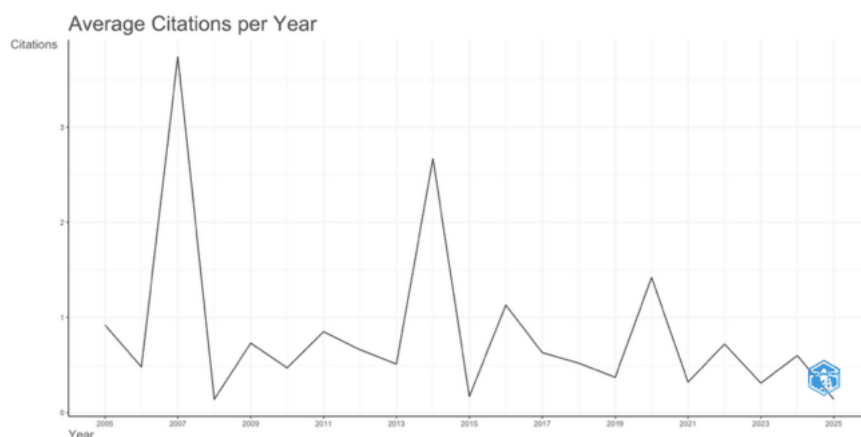


Figure 3. Average Citations per Year

Figure 3 illustrates the trend of average citations per year for publications on the relationship between religion and state in constitutional law over the period of 2005–2025. It is evident that

the citation pattern exhibits sharp fluctuations, with significant peaks in 2007 and 2015 which recorded the highest average citation rates compared to other years. Following this period, the citation trend generally declines and stabilizes at a relatively consistent level, averaging less than two citations per year. This fluctuation indicates that despite an increase in the number of publications in recent years, the citation rate does not always correspond with productivity. This disparity may be attributable to factors such as publication age older articles generally have a greater chance of being cited as well as the contextual relevance of the issues at specific times which influences academic attention. Thus, this graph confirms that while research on religion and state is quantitatively expanding, the ensuing challenge is to enhance the quality and scholarly impact of the publications so that their academic contribution is increasingly acknowledged in the global discourse.



Figure 4. Three-Field Plot

The Three-Field Plot visualization connects the main research keywords (KW_Merged), authors (AU), and publication sources (SO). From the keyword perspective, topics such as constitutional law, religion, human rights, law and religion, and Islamic law emerge as the dominant focal points in research concerning the relationship between religion and the state within the framework of constitutional law. The robustness of these keywords indicates that the research extends beyond merely normative legal aspects to encompass the dimensions of human rights, freedom of religion, and the dynamics of state-religion interaction within the constitutional legal framework.

Concurrently, the author and journal fields show that several scholars, including Neo Jaclyn Ling Chien, Perry Michael John, Doomen Jasper, and Ahmad Salihab, play a significant role in reinforcing this discourse through their publications. These articles are disseminated across various reputable journals, notably the German Law Journal, Constitutional Review, Critical Research on Religion, and the Muslim World Journal of Human Rights. This pattern demonstrates a strong interconnectedness between the research topics, academic actors, and diverse publication venues, which collectively enriches the developing literature in the field of constitutional law with perspectives on the state-religion relationship.

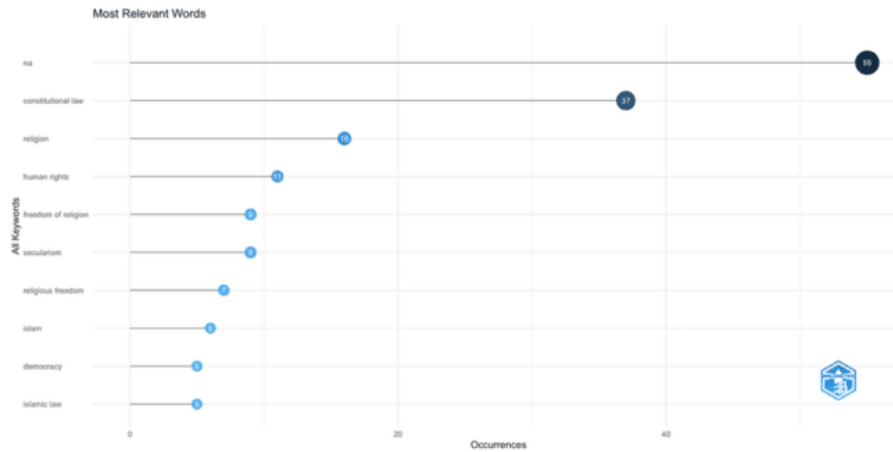


Figure 5. Most Relevant Words

The distribution of the most relevant keywords in publications concerning the relationship between religion and the state in constitutional law is as follows. The visualization results clearly indicate that "constitutional law" (37 occurrences) and "religion" (18 occurrences) are the dominant keywords most frequently utilized by researchers.

Furthermore, keywords such as "human rights" (11), "freedom of religion" (9), "secularism" (9), and "religious freedom" (7) also hold significant positions. This underscores that issues of freedom of religion, human rights, and secularism constitute the main discourse within this academic sphere. The presence of other keywords like "Islam," "democracy," and "Islamic law" suggests that research is also directed toward specific contexts concerning Islamic law, democracy, and their interaction within the framework of constitutional law.

Therefore, this keyword map confirms that research in this field does not solely focus on constitutional legal norms alone, but also on the interconnected social, political, and religious dimensions. This signifies a comprehensive academic endeavor to understand the relationship between religion and the state from a legal perspective, encompassing both national and international contexts.

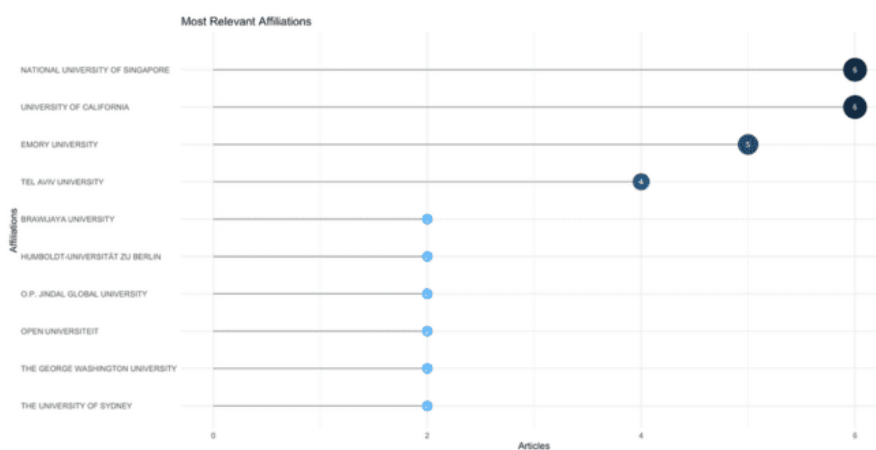


Figure 6. Most Relevant Affiliations

Institutional Affiliations in Publications on Religion and State Relations in Constitutional Law. The most relevant institutional affiliations in publications concerning the relationship between religion and the state in constitutional law show that National University of Singapore and University of California lead with six articles each, followed by Emory University with five articles

and Tel Aviv University with four articles. The dominance of these universities signifies a significant contribution from international institutions of higher education, particularly those located in the Americas, Asia, and the Middle East, to the construction of the global academic discourse on religion and state relations.

Furthermore, several other institutions such as Brawijaya University, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, O.P. Jindal Global University, Open Universiteit, The George Washington University, and The University of Sydney are also recorded as having contributed, albeit with a smaller number of publications (two articles each). This pattern confirms the involvement of academic actors from diverse parts of the world, encompassing both Western and non-Western countries, which enriches the perspectives within the field of constitutional law studies. The presence of Brawijaya University also highlights Indonesia's role in the international scholarly conversation on religion and state relations, though its scale remains relatively limited compared to other international universities.

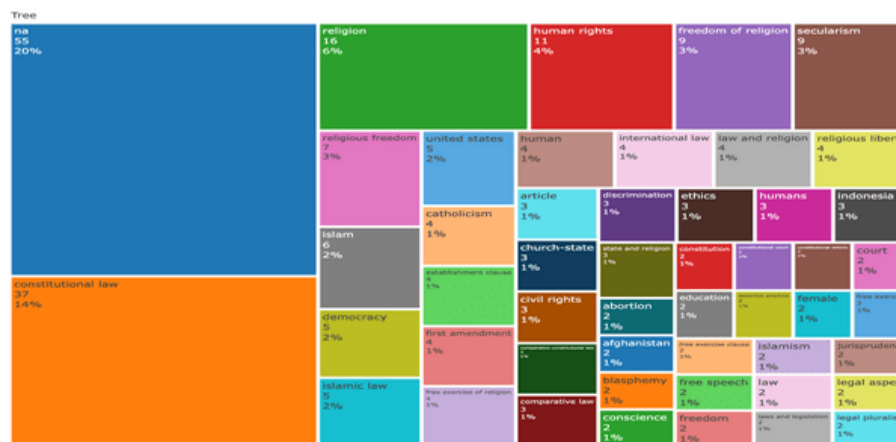


Figure 7. Treemap

A treemap visualization of the most frequently used keywords in publications concerning the relationship between religion and state in constitutional law reveals distinct thematic dominance. The keywords "constitutional law" (14%) and "religion" (6%) clearly dominate the research discourse. They are closely followed by other significant themes, notably "human rights" (4%), "freedom of religion" (3%), "secularism" (3%), and "religious freedom" (3%).

The substantial proportion of these keywords underscores that the academic debate in this field is heavily concentrated on constitutional law issues, religious liberty, secularism, and human rights as the principal frameworks for analyzing the religion-state nexus. Furthermore, the emergence of additional keywords such as "islam," "islamic law," "democracy," "catholicism," and contextual issues like "abortion," "blasphemy," and "free speech" suggests that research extends beyond the purely normative aspects of law. It also encompasses broader socio-political and religious dimensions.

The presence of specific jurisdictional or procedural keywords such as "Indonesia," "court," or "jurisprudence" indicates the significant contribution of local and regional contexts in enriching the global discourse. Consequently, this treemap illustrates the intricate link between universal themes and specific contexts, which together form a comprehensive spectrum of research on the relationship between religion and state in constitutional law.



Figure 8. keyword co-occurrence network

The keyword network visualization presented above demonstrates that constitutional law emerges as the central node, exhibiting the strongest degree of connectivity compared to other keywords. This underscores the premise that the constitution serves as the critical foundation for the discourse surrounding human rights and religion. The strong linkage between constitutional law and human rights and religion illustrates a close interaction among constitutional law, religious freedom, and the protection of fundamental rights.

Furthermore, keywords such as legal pluralism, Islamic law, religious freedom, and state and religion indicate a shifting research focus toward the integration of Islamic perspectives with international law, particularly concerning the issues of religious freedom and the state-religion nexus. Several thematic clusters can be identified:

1. The green cluster emphasizes issues of legal pluralism, religious freedom, and state-religion relations.
2. The orange cluster pertains to civil rights, discrimination, as well as gender and individual liberty issues.
3. The purple cluster relates to modern constitutionalism, reform, and liberty.
4. The red cluster connects comparative constitutional law with the role of international law.

This pattern confirms that contemporary research on human rights is not solely focused on the normative dimension but also on the interdisciplinary dynamics involving the constitution, religion, and international law. Consequently, this network map reveals significant opportunities to reinforce the dialogue between Islamic perspectives and international law in formulating a more inclusive and contextual legal framework.

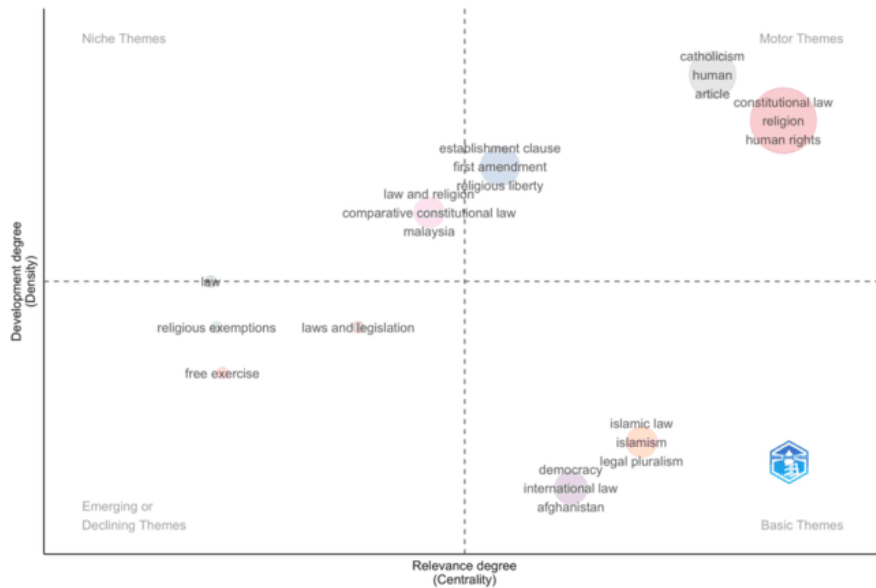


Figure 9. Thematic map

The image above presents a thematic map which charts the research focus on the relationship between religion and the state in constitutional law, based on their level of relevance (centrality) and degree of conceptual development (density). It is evident that themes such as constitutional law, religion, and human rights are situated in the Motor Themes quadrant, signifying that these topics possess both a high level of relevance and a strong degree of conceptual development. This affirms that these three themes form the primary center of gravity within the literature, concurrently functioning as the driving force of academic discourse in this field.

Meanwhile, themes such as Islamic law, democracy, legal pluralism, and international law fall into the Basic Themes quadrant, indicating that despite their high relevance, the development of scholarship in these areas remains relatively foundational. Themes like religious exemptions, laws and legislation, and free exercise are located in the Emerging or Declining Themes quadrant, suggesting that these topics are either on the rise or are beginning to lose academic attention. Conversely, themes such as the establishment clause, religious liberty, and comparative constitutional law are in the Niche Themes quadrant, demonstrating high specialization but with a more limited scope. Thus, this thematic map illustrates that research on the religion-state relationship is rooted in constitutional and human rights issues, yet continually seeks to broaden its scope to encompass legal pluralism, democracy, and the Islamic context within the domain of constitutional law.

4. Conclusion

This research indicates that the study of the relationship between religion and the state within the field of constitutional law has undergone significant development over the last two decades, albeit with fluctuating publication patterns. A bibliometric analysis conducted using Biblioshiny for R reveals that core themes such as constitutional law, religion, and human rights dominate the academic discourse. Meanwhile, other issues like Islamic law, democracy, and legal pluralism emerge as foundational themes that require further in-depth exploration.

Thematic mapping further confirms that this discourse is not only rooted in the normative issues of the constitution but also extends to the dimensions of human rights, freedom of religion or belief, and legal pluralism. Moreover, the involvement of various global academic institutions demonstrates that the religion-state nexus in constitutional law is a transnational issue with universal relevance.

Despite the recent emergence of publications from Indonesian institutions, their contribution remains relatively limited compared to major universities in Asia, Europe, and America. Consequently, this study underscores the critical importance of strengthening local research to enrich the global discourse with distinct Indonesian perspectives. Overall, the findings of this research not only provide a quantitative overview of publication trends but also open avenues for further exploration into how the constitution can accommodate religious values without compromising the principles of democracy and human rights.

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