

## Bibliometric Mapping of Civic Education and Democratic Literacy: Identifying Research Gaps in Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

Civic Education is a crucial institutional foundation for cultivating critical and responsible citizens, particularly amidst contemporary challenges such as disinformation and ideological polarization. This study aims to map the intellectual structure and evolutionary trends in research concerning Civic Education and Democratic Literacy, specifically identifying research gaps in studies conducted within the Indonesian context. A bibliometric analysis was employed on 86 Scopus-indexed documents comprising 74 journal articles and 12 conference proceedings published between 2021 and 2025, using Biblioshiny and VOSviewer software. Results indicate the field is in an accelerated growth phase with a 25.74% annual growth rate, reflecting the growing academic urgency to address democratic crises and digital disinformation challenges in Indonesia. Scientific production is highly centralized in Indonesian institutions (UPI and UNJ) and characterized by collaboration fragmentation, with international co-authorship at 12.79%. Major thematic clusters reveal digital citizenship and blended learning as key emerging trends. The study recommends increasing inter-cluster collaboration and implementing large-scale empirical studies to test the effectiveness of new learning models in enhancing democratic competence.

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### ABSTRAK

*Pemetaan Bibliometrik Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan dan Literasi Demokrasi: Identifikasi Kesenjangan Penelitian di Indonesia.* Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan (Civic Education) adalah fondasi krusial dalam membentuk warga negara yang kritis dan bertanggung jawab, terutama di tengah tantangan kontemporer seperti disinformasi dan polarisasi ideologi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memetakan struktur intelektual dan evolusi tren riset mengenai Civic Education dan Literasi Demokrasi, khususnya dalam mengidentifikasi kesenjangan riset pada studi-studi yang dilakukan dalam konteks Indonesia. Metode yang digunakan adalah analisis bibliometrik pada 86 dokumen terindeks Scopus yang terdiri dari 74 artikel jurnal dan 12 prosiding konferensi dari tahun 2021 hingga 2025, dengan menggunakan perangkat lunak Biblioshiny dan VOSviewer. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa bidang studi ini berada dalam fase akselerasi signifikan dengan pertumbuhan tahunan 25,74%, yang mencerminkan meningkatnya urgensi akademis dalam merespons krisis demokrasi dan tantangan disinformasi digital di Indonesia. Produksi ilmiah sangat sentralistik pada institusi di Indonesia (UPI dan UNJ) dan dicirikan oleh fragmentasi kolaborasi dengan persentase kolaborasi internasional sebesar 12,79%. Kluster tematik menunjukkan digital citizenship dan blended learning sebagai emerging trends. Penelitian merekomendasikan peningkatan kolaborasi antar-kluster dan studi empiris berskala besar untuk menguji efektivitas model pembelajaran baru dalam meningkatkan kompetensi demokrasi.

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## Introduction

Civic Education and Democratic Literacy are two fundamental institutional pillars for maintaining the quality and sustainability of a democratic nation (Saldıray & Doğanay, 2024; Zeba et al., 2025). Amid the rapid tide of globalization, contemporary challenges such as the spread of disinformation (hoaxes), ideological polarization, and the weakening of public trust in political institutions position Civic Education as a crucial instrument for shaping active, critical, and responsibly engaged citizens (Bennett & Livingston, 2018; Lewandowsky et al., 2023; Mazid et al., 2025).

In the Indonesian context, these challenges are particularly acute given the complex dynamics of democracy, high exposure to disinformation on social media, and the urgent need to strengthen digital citizenship competencies among the younger generation (Agus et al., 2025; Musa & Baiq Astri Candra Wulan, 2024). The importance of this issue has driven rapid growth and diversification of studies across various disciplines, ranging from political science to educational technology. Despite this rapid development, civic education remains underexplored in academic research, necessitating a comprehensive analysis that integrates recent advancements and offers a holistic perspective on current trends (Mellado-Moreno & Burgos, 2025; Sumarwoto et al., 2024).

This study is based on a clear conceptual understanding of the core terminology that underpins this discourse. Civic education is defined as a planned process of instilling the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for effective civic participation (Torney-Purta, 2013; Wiratomo et al., 2025). As the role of digital technology in democratic life grows, this definition continues to evolve, with civic competencies now including the ability to navigate digital information, media literacy, and online political participation (Mossberger & Tolbert, 2021; Papacharissi, 2008). This concept often overlaps with the term citizenship education and synergistically supports the achievement of democratic literacy. Democratic literacy refers to an individual's ability to understand, evaluate and engage in constructive dialogue within complex socio-political environments, encompassing political participation and democratic competence (Braungart & Ichilov, 1991). In the contemporary context, democratic literacy is increasingly associated with recognizing disinformation, fostering healthy civic discourse in digital spaces, and developing technology-based civic engagement (Chan, 2024; Dame Adjin-Tetty, 2022; Lilja et al., 2024; Madani et al., 2025). Historically, the focus of studies has evolved from an initially transmissive model of teaching legal facts towards a more participatory and critical approach (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). To conduct a comprehensive review, search terms must therefore include closely related terms such as Civic Education, Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan, Democratic literacy, Citizenship Education, Political Participation, and Democratic Competence (Denda Ginanjar et al., 2024).

Although the urgency of this study has sparked a body of literature, most existing syntheses are qualitative or narrative, or take the form of traditional literature reviews. These approaches have serious limitations as they are subjective in their selection of articles and fail to capture the macro-intellectual structure manifested through quantitative interactions among authors or concepts across thousands of publications (Bozkurt et al., 2021; Jing et al., 2024). For instance, Setiawan et al. (2023) examined the challenges of democratic policing from the

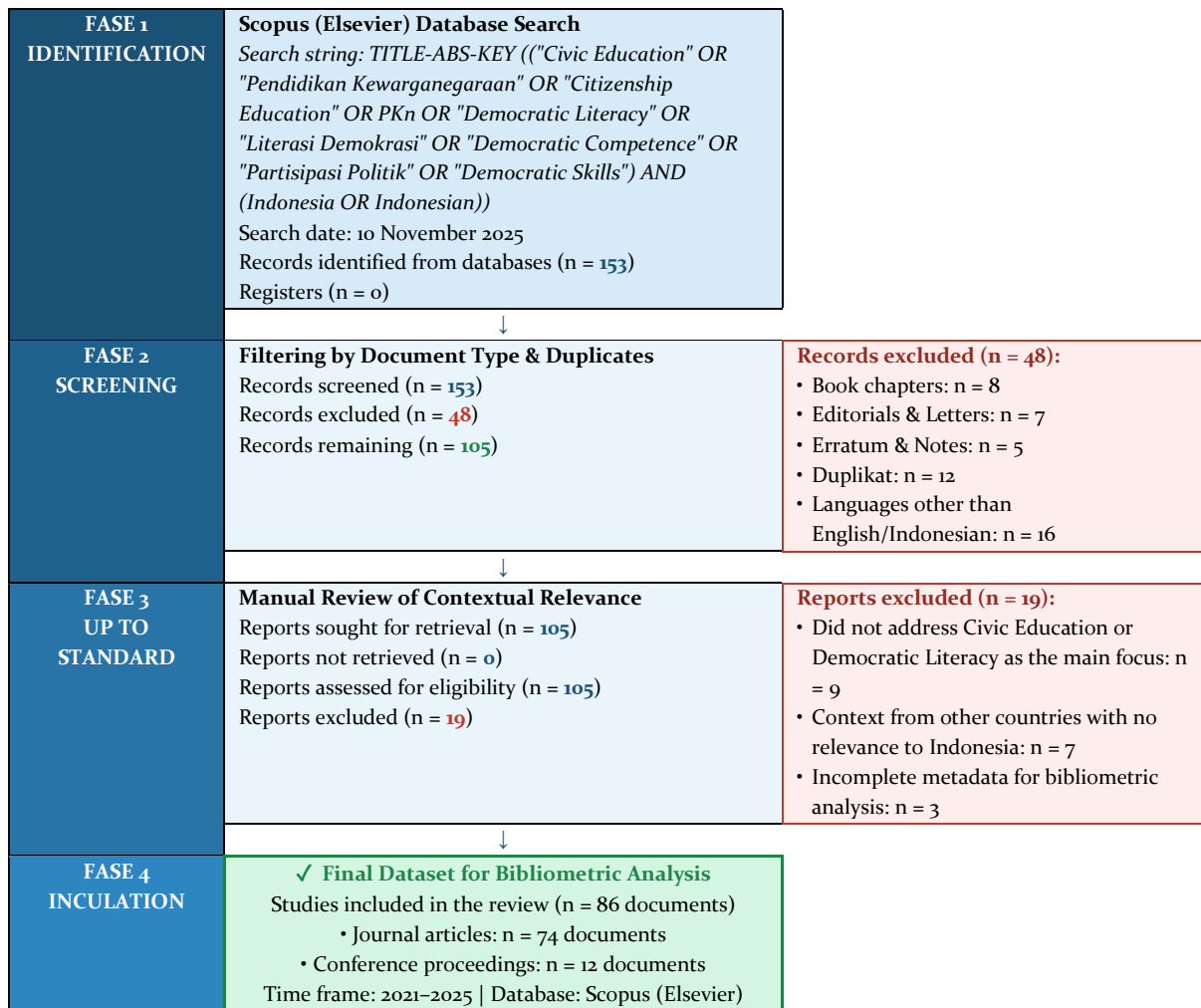
perspective of civic education in Indonesia, analyzing the conceptual aspects inherent in civic education, using a qualitative, literature-based approach. Meanwhile, [Widiatmaka and Kurniawan \(2023\)](#) discuss strategies for improving civic literacy among college students by leveraging digital literacy through civic education, using a qualitative literature review. Another study on this topic is [Seprie et al.'s \(2024\)](#) research on digital lesson planning in elementary schools that integrates civic values to effectively and contextually improve students' democratic literacy. All three studies employed a qualitative approach to collect research data.

The only study to employ a bibliometric approach to a similar topic is that of [Sumarwoto et al. \(2024\)](#), which analyses trends in 21<sup>st</sup>-century civic education research using Scopus data. However, this study did not focus its analysis specifically on the Indonesian context, nor did it integrate Democratic Literacy as a standalone analytical construct or systematically identify research gaps using thematic maps and overlay visualizations. This study is novel in three ways: first, it explicitly focuses on studies conducted in Indonesia; second, it integrates analyses of civic education and democratic literacy as two interrelated constructs; and third, it uses a combination of co-occurrence analysis, thematic maps and overlay visualizations to identify research gaps systematically.

To address this issue, this study employs bibliometric analysis as an objective, measurable, quantitative methodology. This enables the statistical mapping of the research landscape, identifying theoretical pillars, hotspots, and hidden thematic trends that narrative reviews cannot reveal. The bibliometric data analysis to be conducted includes the following: (1) calculating annual publications, (2) identifying the most productive authors and institutions, (3) identifying journals that publish the most on related topics, (4) conducting citation analysis to determine the most influential articles, and (5) performing keyword co-occurrence analysis to map thematic clusters and research concepts. The primary objective of this study is to identify research gaps in civic education and democratic literacy research conducted in Indonesia, using comprehensive bibliometric mapping to capture intellectual structures and thematic trends.

## Method

This study employs bibliometric analysis, a systematic quantitative method used to map the intellectual structure and development of research on civic education and democratic literacy. As a research evaluation approach, bibliometrics analyzes statistical and bibliographic data to identify patterns, trends, and relationships within a field ([Ellegaard & Wallin, 2015](#)). This method was chosen because it enables the objective analysis of large datasets, overcoming the subjectivity often associated with traditional narrative reviews. Data were collected exclusively from the Scopus database (Elsevier), which provides comprehensive metadata essential for citation and keyword network analyses. The use of Scopus as the sole data source was a deliberate methodological choice, although it may exclude relevant publications indexed in Web of Science, Google Scholar, and other databases. To maximize data coverage and ensure methodological rigor, a systematic search was conducted on 10 November 2025 following PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, with the document selection process illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Document Selection Flowchart (PRISMA Flow Diagram)

Figure 1 outlines the document selection process. A Scopus search identified 153 documents, of which 48 were excluded due to document type restrictions (e.g., book chapters, editorials, errata, notes) and duplicates, leaving 105 documents. Following a manual review, 19 additional documents were excluded as not directly relevant to Civic Education or Democratic Literacy in Indonesia, resulting in a final dataset of 86 documents. The bibliometric analysis followed four stages: defining the search scope and keywords, determining the timeframe and document types, collecting the literature, and analyzing the data using visualization software (Passas, 2024). The search string combined Civic Education and Democratic Literacy-related terms with “Indonesia” or “Indonesian,” while “Democratic Literacy” was retained because validation showed it generated broader and more internationally consistent results than “Democracy Literacy.” The study included English- and Indonesian-language journal articles and conference proceedings published between 2021 and 2025, a period chosen to capture post-pandemic developments in digital education and democratic literacy. Exclusion criteria covered non-academic publications, studies lacking a primary focus on civic education or democratic literacy, research outside the Indonesian context, and duplicate records. The final dataset comprised 74 journal articles and 12 conference proceedings, analyzed using Biblioshiny and

VOSviewer to examine publication trends, thematic structures, and bibliographic networks, with findings presented through visualizations and interpreted in relation to existing theories and prior research.

## Results and Discussion

A systematic review was conducted by searching the Scopus database for scientific articles on civic education and democratic literacy. The core search terms were “Civic Education” and “Democratic Literacy”, with “Indonesia” added as the research location and key search term. However, differences in terminology meant that searching with only these core keywords yielded few articles on related topics, as terms with the same or slightly different meanings were used. To obtain more relevant results, operators such as ‘AND’ and ‘OR’ were used to expand the search. The first search string used the following: TITLE-ABS-KEY (“Civic Education” AND “Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan” AND “Democracy Literacy” AND “Literasi Demokrasi”) AND (Indonesia OR Indonesian)). This initial search yielded too few research articles. To increase the number of results, the search string was modified to TITLE-ABS-KEY (“Civic Education” OR “Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan” OR “Citizenship Education” OR “PKn” OR “Kewarganegaraan” OR “Democracy Literacy” OR “Literasi Demokrasi” OR “Democratic Competence” OR “Political Participation” OR “Democratic Skills”) AND (Indonesia OR Indonesian)). A total of 153 documents were obtained from the refined search results, then filtered based on criteria and reviewed, ultimately yielding 86 documents, consisting of 74 journal articles and 12 conference proceedings.

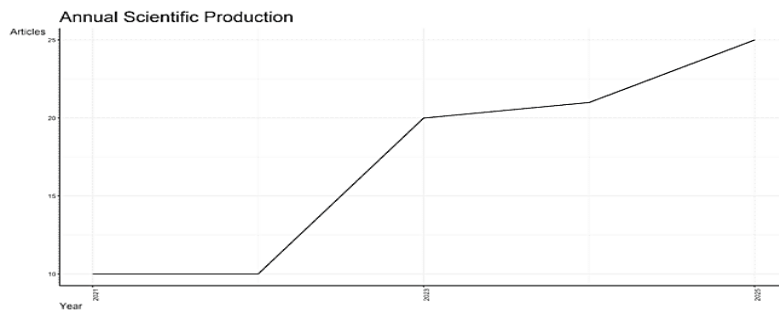
**Table 1.** Key Information from the Dataset

Deskripsi	Information
<i>Timespan</i>	56
<i>Sources (Journals, Books, etc)</i>	86
<i>Documents</i>	86
<i>Document Types</i>	74 Artikel, 12 Conference Papers
<i>Annual Growth Rate %</i>	25.74
<i>Document Average Age</i>	1.52
<i>Average citations per doc</i>	2.407
<i>References per Document</i>	27.3 (average per document)
<i>Author's Keywords (DE)</i>	287
<i>Authors</i>	289
<i>Authors of single-authored docs</i>	7
<i>Co-Authors per Doc</i>	3.88
<i>International co-authorships %</i>	12.79
<i>Author's Keywords (DE)</i>	287

Source: The author's research, 2025

Table 1 summarises the key findings from a Biblioshiny analysis of 86 documents (74 journal articles and 12 conference proceedings) on the topics of civic education and democratic literacy in Indonesia. Overall, the dataset indicates an annual growth rate of 25.74%. From an academic perspective, this growth rate suggests that the field is transitioning from niche to established status, as defined by [Aria and Cuccurullo \(2017\)](#) in their analysis of the development of academic

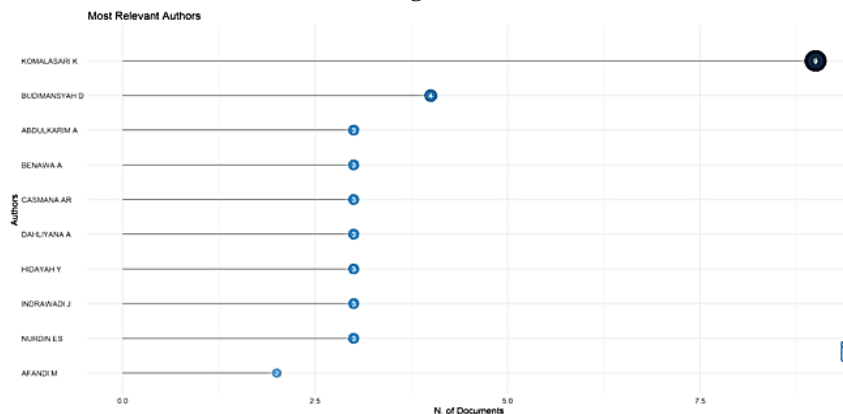
fields using bibliometrics. The research field is considered very new, with an average document age of just 1.52 years. Despite the young age of the research, the average citations per document (2.407) indicate that works in this field have begun to gain attention; this value serves as a good indicator. Team collaboration dominates this research, with an average of 3.88 authors per document and a moderate level of international collaboration at 12.79%. This implies that Indonesian research has limited exposure to global citation networks, which may reduce its impact and visibility internationally (Confraria et al., 2017).



Source: The author's research, 2025

**Figure 2.** Annual Scientific Output

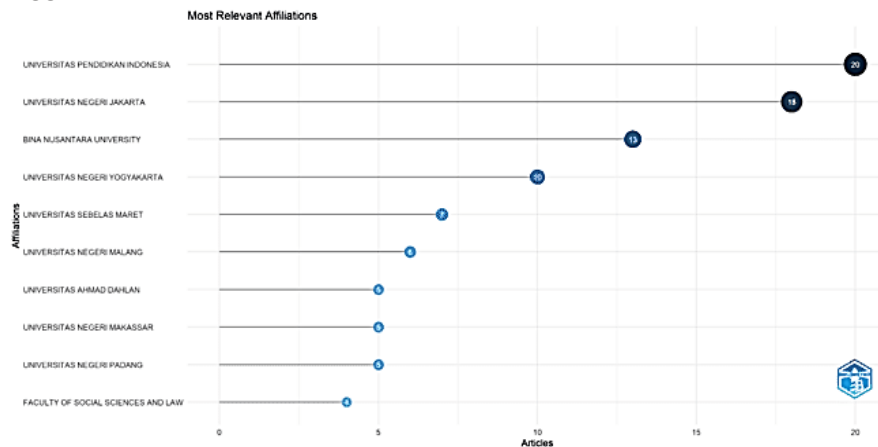
Figure 2 shows the annual scholarly output on Civic Education and Democratic Literacy from 2021–2025. Publication numbers remained stable at around ten articles per year during 2021–2022, then increased sharply to 20 articles in 2023 and continued growing to 25 articles in 2025. This trend indicates that the field has recently entered a phase of significant acceleration, moving from a niche area dominated by core researchers toward an emerging research domain. The growth is reflected not only in publication volume but also in the increasing diversity of contributing institutions, the emergence of new thematic clusters such as digital citizenship and blended learning, and the entry of new authors into the field (Moral-Muñoz et al., 2020). This acceleration is driven by concerns over declining democratic trust and the growing need to strengthen digital democratic literacy amid widespread disinformation. Evidence from the [Edelman Trust Barometer \(2024\)](#) and [Suriadi \(2025\)](#) suggests that weakening trust in democratic institutions, particularly in developing countries including Indonesia, has been intensified by economic dissatisfaction and digital disinformation narratives.



Source: The author's research, 2025

**Figure 3.** Most Relevant Authors

Figure 3 shows the ten most relevant authors, ranked by the number of published documents. The data reveal a significant dominance by individual authors, with Komala Sari K. in the lead by a wide margin, having published 9 documents — far surpassing the other authors. Budimansyah D. ranks second with four publications. A large group of authors (Abdulkarim A., Benawa A., Casmana AR, Dahliyana A., Hidayah Y., Indrawadi J., and Nurdin ES) have three publications each. Afandi M. is at the bottom of the list with two publications. Authors not listed here have published one or two articles. These findings suggest that the scientific output in this dataset is characterized by a ‘super-contributor’ model, with Komala Sari K. having a significant influence on the volume of research output. A small group of core authors follows this. The dominance of a single author with nine publications out of a total of 86 — accounting for more than 10% of the dataset — suggests a structural dependence on this author. These results may suggest that these authors have made civic education their primary research niche.

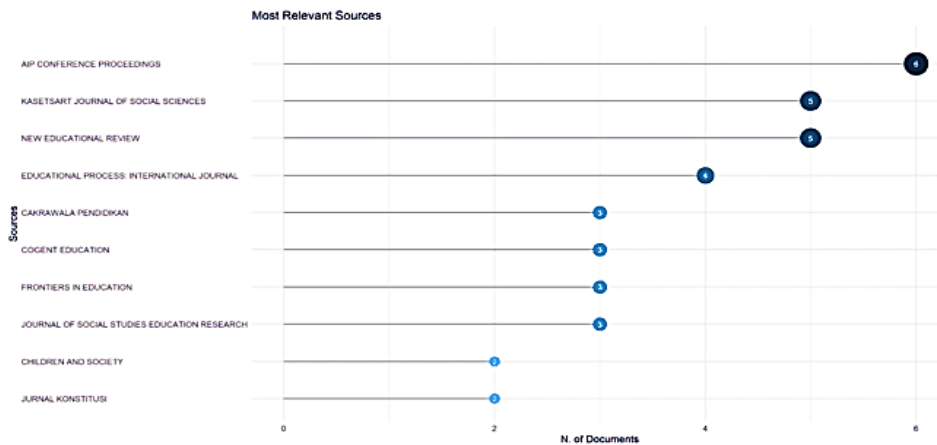


Source: The author's research, 2025

**Figure 4.** Most Relevant Affiliations

Figure 4 shows extreme geographical centralization, with the University of Education Indonesia (UPI) and Jakarta State University (UNJ) dominating the contributions with 20 and 18 published articles, respectively. Bina Nusantara University ranks third with 13 articles. Other institutions also made significant contributions, such as Yogyakarta State University with 10 articles and Sebelas Maret University with seven articles.

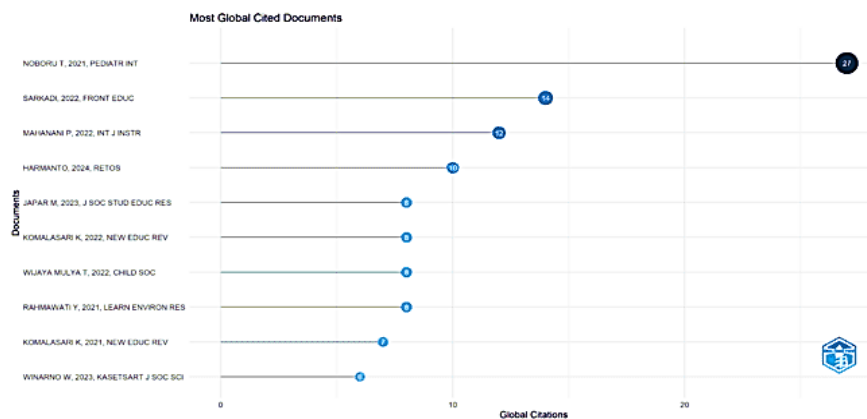
These findings provide a deeper interpretation of the previously observed patterns of author dominance. The dominance of the Indonesia University of Education and Jakarta State University — both of which are public higher education institutions with a strong focus on education and social sciences — indicates that the centers of scholarly production in this field are concentrated in Indonesia. This may be due to the focus of the dataset or the institutions' strengths in the field of education. This pattern suggests that research on civic education and democratic literacy in this dataset is highly centralized and dominated by universities in Java, particularly those with a strong educational mandate. There is also an author–institution correlation: a previous analysis showed that authors Komala Sari K. and Budimansyah D., affiliated with the Indonesian University of Education, demonstrated that high productivity stems not from extensive international collaboration but from strong local institutional collaboration.



Source: The author's research, 2025

**Figure 5.** Most Relevant Sources

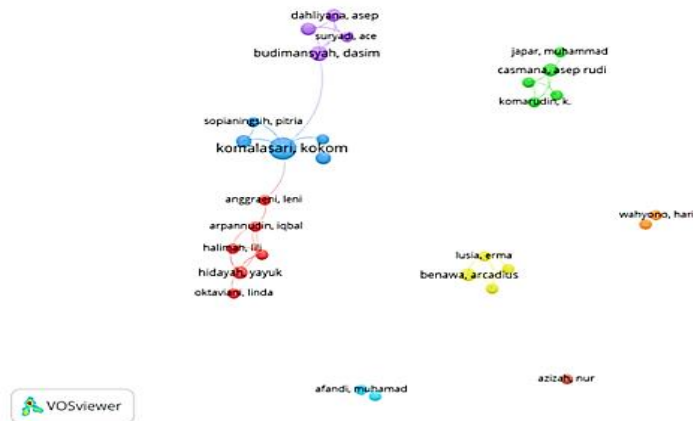
Figure 5 shows the most productive sources of scientific publications each year. The most prolific publication source was AIP Conference Proceedings, which published 6 documents. This was followed by Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences and New Educational Review, each of which published five documents. Other sources that published three documents each were: International Journal (four documents); and Cakrawala Pendidikan, Cogent Education, Frontiers in Education, and the Journal of Social Studies Education Research (three documents each). These findings are highly significant. The most productive journal is AIP Conference Proceedings (six documents). The dominance of conference proceedings as the most prolific publication source indicates that the majority of research is still in the early stages of dissemination. This is consistent with bibliometric findings in emerging fields, where conference proceedings often serve as the primary dissemination channel before research matures into articles indexed in Q1/Q2 journals (Gorraiz et al., 2014; Lisée et al., 2008). The presence of journals in education (New Educational Review) and the social sciences (Kasetsart Journal), as well as conference proceedings, indicates that this field is interdisciplinary, spanning education, the social sciences, and engineering/application-based publications.



Source: The author's research, 2025

**Figure 6.** Most Global Cited Documents

Figure 6 illustrates the ten documents with the highest global citation counts in the dataset. The document by Noboru T. (2021) tops the list with 27 citations, followed by Sarkadi (2022) with 14 and Mahanani P. (2022) with 12. Interestingly, Komala Sari K., the most productive author, has two articles on this list (2022 and 2021), which have received 8 and 7 citations, respectively. The dominance of citations by documents published in the last three years (2021–2024) suggests that this field’s theoretical foundation is relatively new and dynamic. In more established fields, the citation landscape is usually dominated by classic works. Here, however, the theoretical framework is shaped by contemporary research reflecting the urgency of current issues. This suggests that researchers prefer to cite recent studies that address current challenges rather than relying on outdated theories, indicating a rapid shift in the theoretical frameworks in use. Not only does the most productive author (Komala Sari K.) excel in the number of her publications, but she also contributes to influential theoretical pillars, as demonstrated by the depth of her citations.

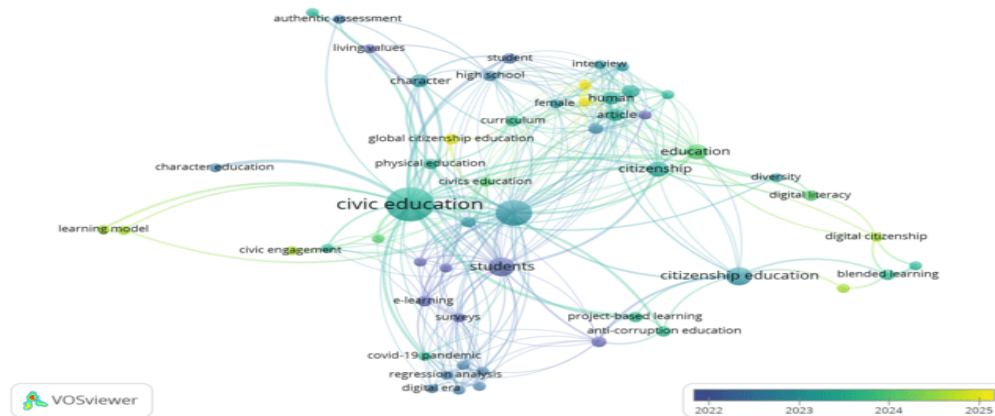


Source: The author's research, 2025

**Figure 7.** Co-authorship

Figure 7 illustrates the co-authorship network of authors who published at least two papers and received at least zero citations. Of 288 authors, only 29 met these criteria, and merely 15 were interconnected, forming five isolated collaboration clusters. The largest cluster centers on Komala Sari, Budimansyah, and Sopianingsih Pitria, while other clusters are led by Anggraeni Leni and Arpannudin Iqbal; Japar Muhammad and Casmana Asep Rudi; Lusia Erma and Arcadius Benawa; and a smaller cluster including Hari Wahyono, Muhamad Afandi, and Muhamad Wahyono.

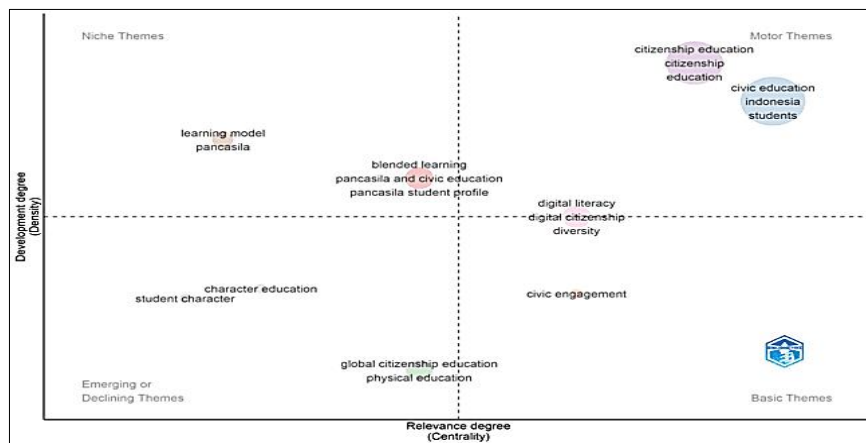




Source: The author's research, 2025

**Figure 9.** Overlay Visualization

Figure 9 shows that the clusters on the left (including 'curriculum' and 'character') are dominated by dark blue/green (earlier years), while keywords in the bottom right and on the periphery, such as 'digital era', 'blended learning', and 'digital citizenship', are dominated by light yellow/green (most recent years). The 'mature' themes in the 'curriculum' cluster (dark blue/green) have matured to become a well-established theoretical foundation. Conversely, the 'emerging trends' themes, represented by keywords such as 'digital era', 'blended learning', and 'digital citizenship' (light yellow/green), reflect current trends that have emerged in response to technological advancements and social crises. The main external drivers are the need to foster democratic competencies amid disinformation, particularly during election periods (Widiyanto & Istiqomah, 2023), and the shift to online learning environments caused by the pandemic (Wagiono et al., 2021).



Source: The author's research, 2025

**Figure 10.** Thematic Map

Figure 10 presents a thematic map derived from keyword cluster analysis, which categorizes Civic Education and Democratic Literacy research in Indonesia into four quadrants based on centrality (relevance) and density (development). The Motor Themes quadrant contains the core research areas, represented by the clusters “citizenship education,” “civic education,” “Indonesia,” and “students”. Their high centrality and density indicate that these are mature and well-developed themes with strong connections to other research areas. The Niche Themes quadrant includes specialized topics such as “learning model” and “Pancasila,” which have been explored in depth but remain relatively isolated from broader civic education discussions.

The most notable research gaps appear in the Emerging or Declining Themes and Basic Themes quadrants. Topics such as digital literacy, digital citizenship, civic engagement, and diversity remain underdeveloped and weakly connected to the broader research landscape despite their growing importance in contemporary democratic contexts. This finding highlights a significant gap in Indonesian scholarship, as these issues have not yet become central components of existing civic education frameworks. Therefore, future research should focus on integrating these emerging themes into the core civic education agenda to support curriculum innovation and policy development that address the challenges of 21st-century democracy. Based on a comprehensive analysis, three major research gaps are summarised in Table 2 below:

**Table 2.** Synthesis of Major Research Gaps in Studies on Civic Education and Democratic Literacy in Indonesia

No.	Research Gaps	Bibliometric Indicators	Implications	Research Recommendations
1	Low levels of international collaboration and fragmented co-authorship networks	International collaboration: 12.79%; five isolated clusters; 14 authors with no connections	Limited global visibility, low citation impact, and a lack of methodological diversity	Establish cross-institutional and cross-national research consortia and encourage co-authorship with researchers from countries with strong traditions of civic education.
2	The disconnect between traditional participation theory and the measurement of digital competence	A weak connection between the Blue Cluster (digital) and the Red Cluster (formal curriculum). Digital citizenship falls within the Emerging quadrant	Existing civic education models have not systematically integrated the digital dimension	Studies that explicitly bridge traditional civic participation theory with frameworks of digital citizenship and democratic literacy.
3	There is a lack of large-scale empirical research on post-pandemic interventions	Conference proceedings dominate (six documents). Blended learning and project-based learning are in the	The effectiveness of new pedagogical models in improving democratic literacy has not been empirically tested	Large-scale experimental or quasi-experimental studies are needed to test the effectiveness of blended learning and project-based learning in improving democratic competencies

‘Emerging’  
quadrant.  
Existing quantitative  
studies have a low  
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## Conclusion

A bibliometric analysis of 86 documents (74 journal articles and 12 conference proceedings) indicates that research on civic education and democratic literacy has experienced significant growth since 2023, reflected in an annual growth rate of 25.74% and responsiveness to emerging issues. Scholarly production is highly concentrated within Indonesian institutions, particularly UPI and UNJ, supported by strong domestic collaboration but limited international engagement (12.79%). The field’s intellectual structure is dynamic, relying on recent theoretical foundations (2021–2024) and shifting from classical civic theories toward digital competence and measurement frameworks. Overlay Visualization highlights emerging themes such as digital citizenship, blended learning, and pandemic-related issues, while co-occurrence analysis reveals that digital challenges remain insufficiently integrated into formal pedagogy. Three major research gaps are identified: fragmented collaboration, a disconnect between traditional civic theories and digital competencies, and a lack of large-scale empirical intervention studies. Accordingly, future research should strengthen international and cross-thematic collaboration, evaluate innovative pedagogical models such as blended and project-based learning, and develop theoretical frameworks linking civic participation with digital competence. However, findings should be interpreted cautiously due to limitations, including reliance on a single database (Scopus), a short timeframe (2021–2025), focus on Indonesia, and the quantitative nature of bibliometric analysis, which cannot fully capture conceptual depth.

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