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Two Decades of Practicum Research in Southeast Asia: A Bibliometric Analysis of Scholarship on Pre-Service Teachers' Field Experiences, 2008–2026

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ABSTRACT

The practicum is widely regarded as the most critical component of initial teacher preparation, yet research on pre-service teachers' field experiences in Southeast Asia has not been synthesized. This study presents a bibliometric analysis of Scopus-indexed literature on the pre-service teacher practicum and teaching internship in Southeast Asia. A high-recall search yielded 2,451 unique records, from which rule-based screening and verification identified 142 publications from 2008 to 2026. Performance analysis was complemented by science mapping (co-authorship, keyword co-occurrence, citation, and co-citation analyses) in VOSviewer. Output grew at a compound annual rate of 21.0% from 2015 to 2025, and three-quarters of the publications appeared from 2020 onward. Indonesia contributed the largest share (35.9%), followed by Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam, and Australia was the main extraregional collaborator; the Philippines produced a notable share but without international co-authorship. Collaboration networks were sparse and institution-based, and a few foundational studies dominated the citation network. Keyword and thematic analyses revealed a shift from program and international-practicum concerns toward teacher emotions, professional identity, self-efficacy, and mentoring relationships, with English language teacher education as the dominant domain. Co-citation analysis showed that the field draws mainly on Western theories of reflective practice, social-cognitive and sociocultural learning, and teacher identity, while increasingly citing Asian language teacher education research. The findings point to the need for cross-national research partnerships, cumulative theory-building, and greater attention to under-researched ASEAN contexts.

Introduction

The practicum is a key part of initial teacher education for student teachers, teacher educators, and education decision-makers. The practicum is the time spent by pre-service teachers teaching in real schools with supervision, where the pedagogical theories learned at the university are put to the test, professional identity is formed, and often crucial decisions are made regarding the choice of future profession (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Grudnoff, 2011). However, the practicum has come under fire for being the weakest link within teacher education because the experience from being in the field is often disconnected from the university courses, mentoring can be of poor quality because of varied levels of

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competency in the field, and there is still the question of the involvement of higher education institutes and the schools (Zeichner, 2010).

Two major international studies have synthesized research on the practicum. Cohen et al. (2013) analyzed 113 empirical studies conducted from 1996 to 2009, and their conclusion is striking: most literature focuses on student teachers themselves, especially on conflicts arising between students, their teachers, and university tutors. Lawson et al. (2015) reviewed 114 studies from 2000 to 2012 and concluded that most practicum studies are narrow and qualitative, suggesting that comparisons in this area can be difficult because of cultural and educational differences. These analyses have largely drawn on international examples from Europe and North America. Therefore, there is a clear need to examine specific regions.

Currently, Southeast Asia offers a strong example because the region's eleven countries have diverse teacher-education systems, and practices are changing over time. Thus, for example, Indonesia implements many innovations in teacher education, such as the campus-to-school system of education called *Kampus Mengajar* (Suyatno et al., 2023); Thailand practices a year-long internship program as part of one’s training of future teachers (Faikhamta & Clarke, 2015); and in the Philippines, the teaching internship is associated with the laws regulating teacher education and practice (Galanto Ormilla, 2025). In addition, because of increased mobility within Southeast Asia, it is now possible to observe cross-border practice (Kabilan, 2013; Nguyen et al., 2026) and, due to COVID-19, there were some sudden changes in practices in many Southeast Asian countries (Espinosa et al., 2026; Sunggingwati et al., 2023; Ugalingan et al., 2021). However, although many articles address the topic, the situation is not homogeneous, and the results of different studies need to be analyzed.

That is why bibliometric analysis can achieve this objective because, on the one hand, systematic reviews allow summarizing findings from a relatively small body of literature, whereas bibliometric review gives an overview of the volume of research in the given field of interest (Donthu et al., 2021; Zupic & Čater, 2015). This method has already proven effective in examining educational research domains (Hallinger & Kovačević, 2019). This approach allows researchers to define field characteristics, such as the geographical areas where research is conducted, major trends in references used, and other key details.

This study therefore conducts a bibliometric analysis of Scopus-indexed research on the pre-service teacher practicum and teaching internship in Southeast Asia. It addresses five research questions:

RQ1. How have the volume and impact of research on the pre-service teacher practicum in Southeast Asia evolved?

RQ2. Which sources, documents, and authors are the most productive and influential?

RQ3. Which countries and institutions contribute to the field, and how do they collaborate?

RQ4. What are the dominant research themes, and how have they changed over time?

RQ5. What intellectual foundations does the field draw upon?

Review of Related Literature

The Practicum as a Site of Learning to Teach

Theoretical explanations of the practicum suggest that learning cannot be separated from experience and social interaction. Schön (1983) introduced the concept of the reflective practitioner and views the practicum as a process of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action that helps novices learn to handle unpredictable classroom situations. Situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991) offers a similar explanation, identifying student teachers as legitimate peripheral participants who gain professional

knowledge through increased participation. Zeichner (2010) further develops this idea by arguing for "third spaces" that bring theory and practice together and place university experts and school practitioners on equal footing, rather than prioritizing university knowledge and treating schools merely as sites where it can be applied.

Building on these general ideas, several research topics have emerged. The first concerns professional identity and highlights the significance of practicum in shaping the teacher's personality (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). In his review of research on the topic, Izadinia (2013) identifies elements that influence student teachers' identities, including reflective activities, learning communities, and mentorship. The other research area is connected to the study of teacher efficacy. Here, Bandura's (1997) social-cognitive theory suggests that mastering various aspects during placement shapes newly emerging teachers' beliefs and decisions about their practice (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). The third research area considers teacher emotions and highlights the significance of emotionality and the concept of emotional geography in education (Hargreaves, 1998, 2001). The last research field addresses mentoring and supervision and highlights the importance of the cooperating teacher and university supervisor (Cohen et al., 2013; Lawson et al., 2015).

The Practicum in Southeast Asian Teacher Education

Southeast Asian teacher education programs differ widely in structure, duration, and the scope of practical components, as well as in institutional collaborations between universities and schools. Earlier studies in the region identified a range of issues encountered by teacher trainees from Malaysia during teaching practice (Goh & Matthews, 2011), as well as problems faced by pre-service science teachers who had to teach in English (Othman & Saat, 2009). Studies from Vietnam explored identity-building during placements (Dang, 2013) and the types of psychosocial support peer mentoring provides in practice (Nguyen, 2013). In Thailand, a long-running internship program enabled trainees to conduct classroom action research (Faikhamta & Clarke, 2015). Researchers in the Philippines highlighted the importance of teacher-training internships for future teachers (Rogayan & Reusia, 2021) in relation to the country's professional teaching standards (Galanto Ormilla, 2025).

Moreover, this region has been used for the testing of the internationalized form of practicum, which Kabilan (2013) showed has helped Malaysian students to develop professionally, and subsequent research addressed cross-border placements of Malaysian, Indonesian, Thai, and Vietnamese as well as Bangladeshi students (Ahmad et al., 2019; Kabilan et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2026). The pandemic period brought new experiments in conducting placements online and in hybrid formats (Miftah et al., 2024; Sunggingwati et al., 2023; Ugalingan et al., 2021), and studies exploring generative artificial intelligence in practicum activities have just started to emerge (Kusuma et al., 2024; Tegero & Mabini, 2025). Nevertheless, no complete overview of the relevant literature exists, and it remains unclear whether these constitute cumulative research inquiries or parallel discussions.

Theoretical Framework

Bibliometric Approaches to Mapping Research Fields

Bibliometric analysis uses two distinct but complementary techniques. Performance analysis is carried out to measure the productivity and impact of research elements like year, publication, author, institution, or country by means of publication volume, citation volume, and *h*-index. At the same time, science mapping investigates relationships between these elements. For example, co-authorship analysis groups authors by how frequently they co-author papers. To conduct keyword co-occurrence analysis, keywords are counted and grouped; citation analysis traces the flow of influence through citations; and co-citation analysis posits that two papers are related if they are cited together (Small,

1973). VOSviewer is the primary software used to construct and visualize networks; it employs a unified methodology for mapping and clustering. Thus, the techniques described in the previous two paragraphs allow researchers to examine how many papers on a particular topic have been published.

Methodology

Research Design

The research utilized a bibliometric approach that encompassed both performance assessment and mapping of the science (Donthu et al., 2021). The findings on record identification and screening were presented in accordance with PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021) and integrated into the bibliometric study criteria.

Data Source and Search Strategy

Scopus was selected as a data source because of its broad coverage of peer-reviewed journals in the social sciences. This database includes more regional journals than similar databases (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016) and offers a structured export format compatible with VOSviewer. The search was conducted in January of 2026 in the title, abstract, and keyword fields. The search terms consisted of three blocks, i.e., vocabulary on field-based learning (internship*, practicum*, placement*, “teaching practicum*”, “work-integrated learning”, “teacher trainee*”), vocabulary about changes (trend*, chang*, growth, development*, and evolution*), and vocabulary covering Southeast Asia or its individual countries. Appendix A provides the query in its entirety. No limitations were imposed on the year of publication, document type, or language.

Although some search terms are polysemous (e.g., placement* retrieves references to studies related to the placement of fertilizers, cement, and pollen as well), the search query was a deliberate high-recall net; precision was achieved through careful screening. The export generated 2,462 rows. Eleven records were split into two rows because their references contained delimiters; these were then combined, producing 2,451 records.

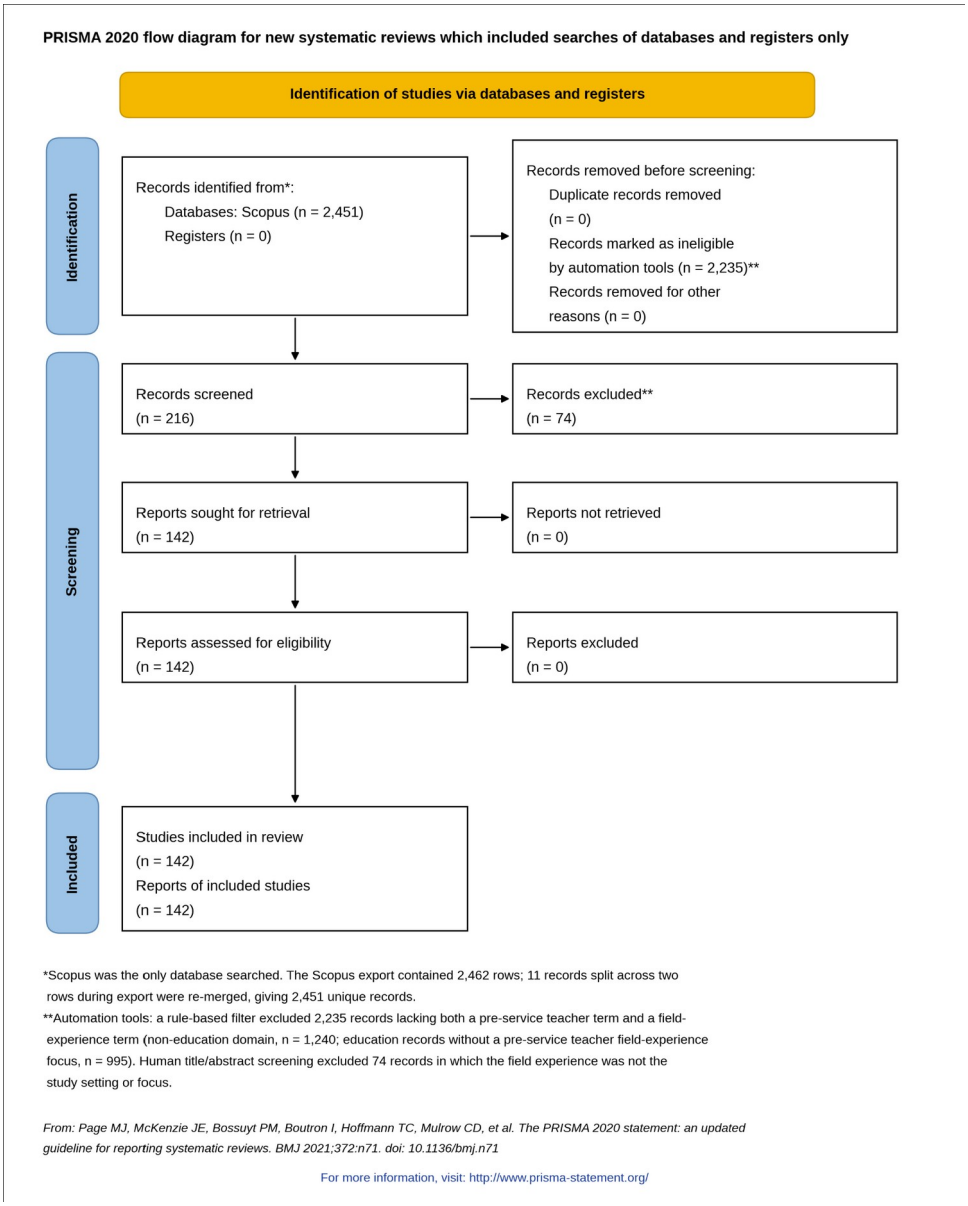
Eligibility Criteria and Screening

To be eligible, documents needed to meet certain criteria. First, it had to involve research on pre-service teachers, student teachers, or teacher candidates. Secondly, the papers had to either be primarily based on school-based practices (which could include teaching internships or international teaching) or be set in these practices. Finally, the work had to link to Southeast Asia based on the search terms used to obtain articles. The study excluded papers on pre-service teachers where work experience was neither the study context nor the subject of investigation, such as surveys of pre-service teacher beliefs, among other things. Other papers were excluded because they focused on work-based learning in professions other than education.

In the first stage of the process, an automated check was used to take titles and abstracts and check whether any of the retrieved documents contained words relevant to the two categories. The automated filter rejected 2,235 documents, of which over 1200 belonged to areas outside the field of education (exclusion code E1) and approximately 1000 were papers focused on education but not on the questions around pre-service teacher field training (exclusion code E2). In the second step, 216 relevant documents were screened, and 74 were rejected because the studies did not cover pre-service teachers’ practices in education. As the bibliometric analysis indicates, only documents with full bibliographic metadata were searched, so the researchers used only metadata from these articles; based on these data, only 142 documents were eligible. The complete list of the rejected documents is presented in the previous paragraph.

Figure 1

PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of Record Identification and Screening



Note. Template from Page et al. (2021).

Data Analysis

Performance indicators were computed using Python (pandas) by analyzing the Scopus export. The indicators included annual output and annual cumulative output, the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) from the last decade with full data (2015–2025), types of documents, sources, citations, the *h*-index of the corpus (Hirsch, 2005), the number of authors who contributed, and the total number of co-authored documents in partnership with international authors. Countries, institutions, and authors were counted using the full-counting system. In this system, each document receives full credit for each author, country, or institution involved. Citation counts reflect Scopus data on the date of obtaining the data. Because 2026 is incomplete, this year was excluded from the growth-rate calculations.

For the frequency analysis, the authors' keywords were normalized. Thus, all spelling and morphological variants were merged (for example, pre-service teacher, preservice teacher, student teacher). To identify thematic changes, the dictionary-based coding procedure assigned documents to

one of the 11 themes derived from the keyword analysis and practicum literature. The coding was done on the titles, abstracts, and the authors' keywords, and the number of documents under each theme was compared across four periods: 2008–2015, 2016–2020, 2021–2023, and 2024–2026.

The VOSviewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2010) program created the science map. Co-authorship networks were built for authors, organizations, and countries; the co-occurrence network was created, and overlay and density visualizations were created too; and a citation network was created for authors and a co-citation network for cited authors. All networks used the full counting method. The relatedness was normalized using the association strength method, and cluster identification was completed via VOSviewer's clustering method (Waltman et al., 2010). Since the number of documents is uncomfortably small, the thresholds were made narrow to make maps cover all participants of the research and topics.

Table 1

Parameters of the Science-Mapping Analyses

Analysis	Unit of analysis	Minimum threshold	Items meeting threshold	Items displayed
Co-authorship	Authors	1 document	405	11
Co-authorship	Organizations	1 document	264	12
Co-authorship	Countries	1 document	25	22
Co-occurrence	Author keywords	1 occurrence	428	323
Citation	Authors	1 document; 0 citations	405	19
Co-citation	Cited authors	3 citations	621	621

Note. Counting method: full counting. Normalization: association strength. The items shown represent the biggest set of related items, except for the co-citation analysis, where all items satisfying the set threshold are shown. We identified authors by the short names used in Scopus (405 compared with 406 different full names in the performance analysis), and we identified organizations based on the information provided in Scopus affiliation strings.

Ethical Considerations

This study analyzed bibliographic metadata of published documents retrieved from Scopus. It involved no human participants, personal data beyond publicly available author information, or animals; therefore, ethics review was not required. Author names and affiliations were analyzed only as publicly available bibliographic information, in keeping with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173).

Results

Growth and Impact of the Field (RQ1)

Table 2 contains the key features of the dataset. The 142 articles published between 2008 and 2026 appeared in 108 sources and had received 1,262 citations (M = 8.89, Mdn = 2) at the time of collection, meaning this dataset has an h-index of 18. Over 88.7% of the corpus is represented by journal articles. Most articles are collaborative, with 406 authors contributing to the publications, averaging 3.07 authors per article and including 24 single-authored articles (16.9%). International co-authorship was limited to 35 documents (24.6%).

Table 2

Main Characteristics of the Corpus

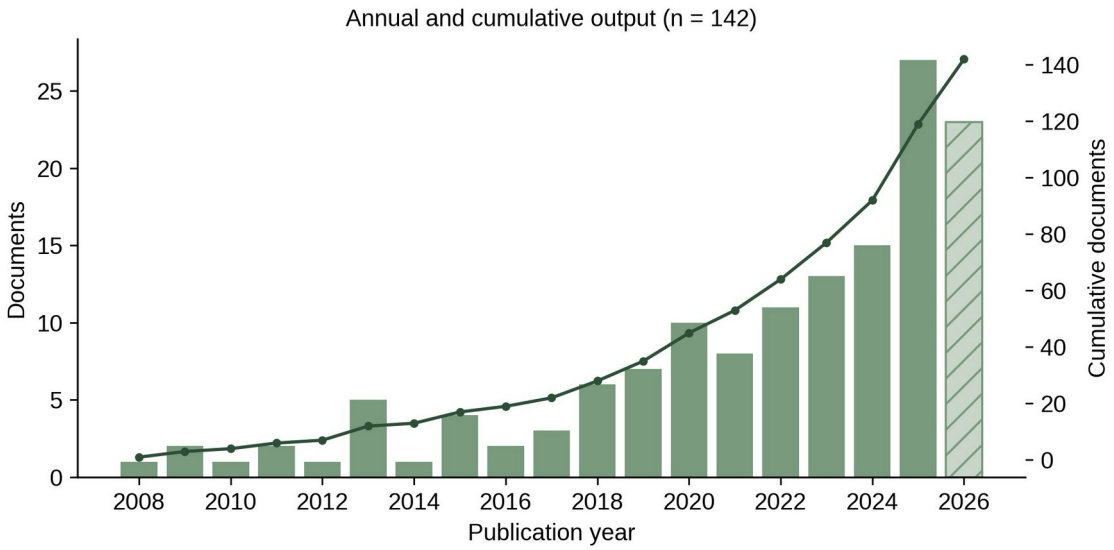
Indicator	Value
Timespan	2008–2026
Documents	142
Sources (journals, books, proceedings)	108
Articles / conference papers / book chapters	126 / 9 / 7
Compound annual growth rate, 2015–2025	21.0%
Documents published 2020–2026	107 (75.4%)
Total citations	1,262
Mean (median) citations per document	8.89 (2)
Uncited documents	43 (30.3%)
h-index of the corpus	18
Distinct authors	406
Authors per document	3.07
Single-authored documents	24 (16.9%)
Internationally co-authored documents	35 (24.6%)

Note. Citation counts from Scopus at the time of retrieval (January 2026). Growth rate excludes the incomplete year 2026.

Until the end of the 2010s, the research was very limited, with fewer than five publications every year before 2018 (Figure 2). The number of publications increased, reaching 10 in 2020, 15 in 2024, and 27 in 2025; by the beginning of 2026, 23 publications had been published. Overall, publications grew at an annual rate of 21.0% from 2015 to the end of 2025, and 75.4% were published from 2020 onward. At the same time, citations concentrated on earlier work: documents published before 2015 averaged 30.0 citations, while publications from 2024 to 2026 averaged only 2.2 citations. This pattern can be explained by the time needed for citations to accumulate, as well as by the fact that the field's recent rapid development has not yet translated into sufficient academic influence.

Figure 2

Annual and Cumulative Number of Documents, 2008–2026



Note. The hatched bar indicates the incomplete year 2026.

Most Productive Sources and Most Cited Documents (RQ2)

The corpus was widely distributed across sources. In total, 108 different outlets issued the 142 documents, and no more than four documents were contributed by any one source (Table 3). The journals *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *Studies in English Language and Education*, and *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* published four papers, though their impact differed. *Teaching and Teacher Education* published only three documents but collected 281 citations, more than any other source. The mix of dispersion and concentration suggests that regional practicum research cannot be confined to one home journal, while a small number of publications in major international journals can disproportionately influence the field.

Table 3

Most Productive Sources

Source	Documents	Citations
Australian Journal of Teacher Education	4	184
Studies in English Language and Education	4	46
International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research	4	9
Teaching and Teacher Education	3	281
Frontiers in Education	3	51
Qualitative Report	3	13
Asia-Pacific Education Researcher	2	46
Issues in Educational Research	2	42
Journal of Physics: Conference Series	2	26
Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice	2	25

Note. Sources ranked by number of documents, then citations.

In Table 4, the ten most cited documents were presented. Two of the aforementioned documents, which were published in *Teaching and Teacher Education* in 2013, were about Vietnamese student

teachers' identity development in pair placements (Dang, 2013; 161 times cited paper), whereas the other document's (Kabilan, 2013; 105 times cited paper) focus was on pre-service teachers' professional development during an international practicum abroad. The paper by Hoang and Wyatt (2021), titled "Exploring the Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Vietnamese Pre-Service Teachers of English as a Foreign Language," has been noted to have the highest citation rate—over 11 citations per year. In sum, these highly cited papers highlight three major concepts: professional identity, self-efficacy during practice, and practicum as a site for professional development.

Table 4

Ten Most Cited Documents

Rank	Document	Title	Source	TC	TC/yr
1	Dang (2013)	Identity in activity: Examining teacher professional identity formation in the paired-placement of student teachers	*Teaching and Teacher Education*	161	11.5
2	Kabilan (2013)	A phenomenological study of an international teaching practicum: Pre-service teachers' experiences of professional development	*Teaching and Teacher Education*	105	7.5
3	Hoang & Wyatt (2021)	Exploring the self-efficacy beliefs of Vietnamese pre-service teachers of English as a foreign language	*System*	71	11.8
4	Goh & Matthews (2011)	Listening to the concerns of student teachers in Malaysia during teaching practice	*Australian Journal of Teacher Education*	57	3.6
5	Nghia & Tai (2017)	Preservice teachers' identity development during the teaching internship	*Australian Journal of Teacher Education*	51	5.1
6	Nguyen (2013)	Peer mentoring: A way forward for supporting preservice EFL teachers psychosocially during the practicum	*Australian Journal of Teacher Education*	41	2.9
7	Campbell & Walta (2015)	Maximising intercultural learning in short term international placements: Findings associated with orientation programs, guided reflection and immersion	*Australian Journal of Teacher Education*	35	2.9
8	Othman & Saat (2009)	Challenges of using English as a medium of instruction: Pre-service science teachers' perspective	*Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*	32	1.8
9	Foong et al. (2018)	Individual and collective reflection: Deepening early childhood pre-service teachers' reflective thinking during practicum	*Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*	32	3.6
10	Prabjandee (2019)	Becoming English teachers in Thailand: Student teacher identity development during teaching practicum	*Issues in Educational Research*	31	3.9

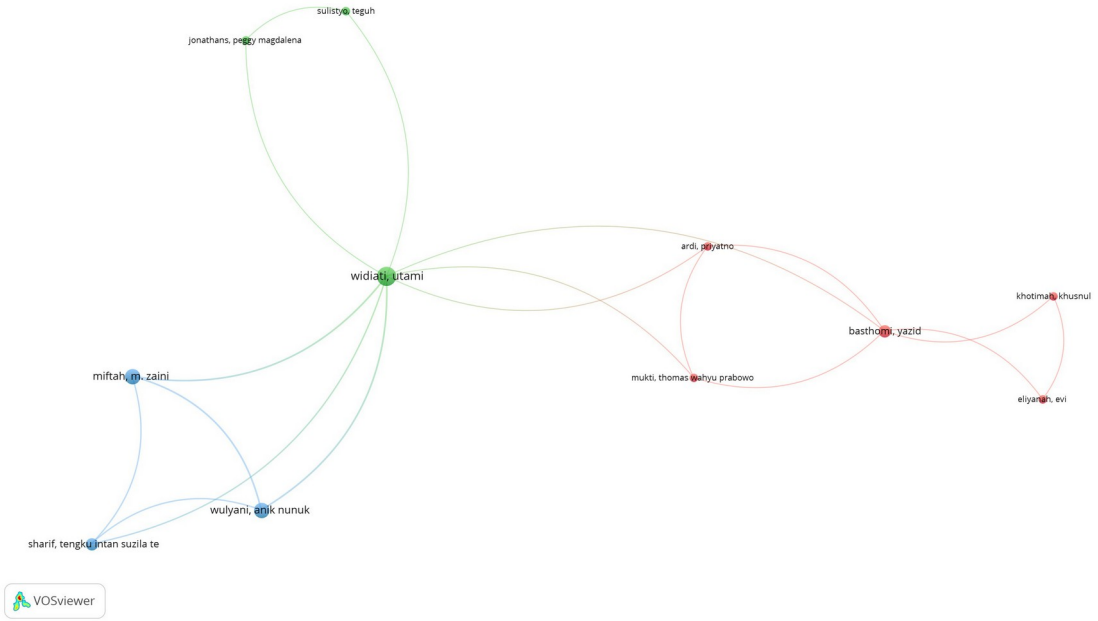
Note. TC = total citations; TC/yr = total citations divided by the number of years since publication, inclusive of 2026.

Authors and Institutions (RQ2 and RQ3)

Author productivity was relatively uniform, with a minimum of 25 of 406 authors producing two or more items, and the most active author being Utami Widiati of Universitas Negeri Malang, who published five papers in total. The established co-authorship network of the authors (see Figure 3) can be seen as limited and fractured at the same time, allowing a greater erasure of connections. Thus, only one major active part of the network had Widiati as the leading co-author. As a result, only three connected subgroups emerged: a subgroup of the English teacher education team from Malang (where Widiati, Miftah, and Wulyani are), three other contributors associated with Basthomi, and a couple of the smallest groups connected through Sulistyo and Jonathans.

Figure 3

Co-Authorship Network of Authors

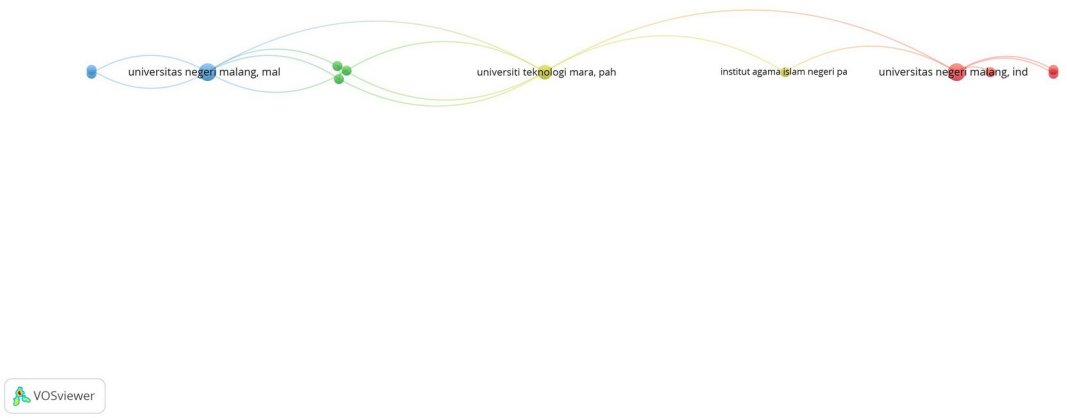


Note. Node size reflects the number of documents; colors denote clusters; links denote co-authorship.

In terms of institutional productivity, the leading institution was Universitas Negeri Malang (11 studies), followed by the University of Malaya (6 studies), as well as Deakin University, Universiti Teknologi MARA, and Hanoi National University of Education (4 studies each). The organisational co-authors' map, viewed in Figure 4, is quite sparse and laid along the Indonesia–Malaysia axis with Universitas Negeri Malang, Universiti Teknologi MARA, and an Indonesian state Islamic institution as connection points. It is worth noting that while Universitas Negeri Malang is shown in two positions, this is mainly due to how it is listed in Scopus as an affiliated institution in the two-string format representations. Overall, the low level of institutional cooperation indicates that most of the referred articles were written by researchers from one institution where the research was conducted, typically a teacher education program operated by these scholars.

Figure 4

Co-Authorship Network of Organizations



Note. Universitas Negeri Malang appears as two nodes owing to variant affiliation strings in Scopus.

Countries and International Collaboration (RQ3)

The most productive nations in research are presented in Table 5. Indonesia led the pack with 51 papers (35.9%), while Malaysia ranked second with 30 documents, and Thailand, the Philippines, and Australia followed with 19, 15, and 15 papers, respectively. However, citation impact figures differed markedly from productivity figures. Australia, with the most citations per paper (26.5), mainly contributed through partnerships. Vietnam had 17.9 citations per manuscript, followed by Malaysia at 11.6. In contrast, Indonesia and the Philippines had low citation figures (4.7 and 2.9). Meanwhile, some ASEAN countries produced few documents. Singapore and Myanmar contributed two and one papers, respectively.

Table 5

Most Productive Countries

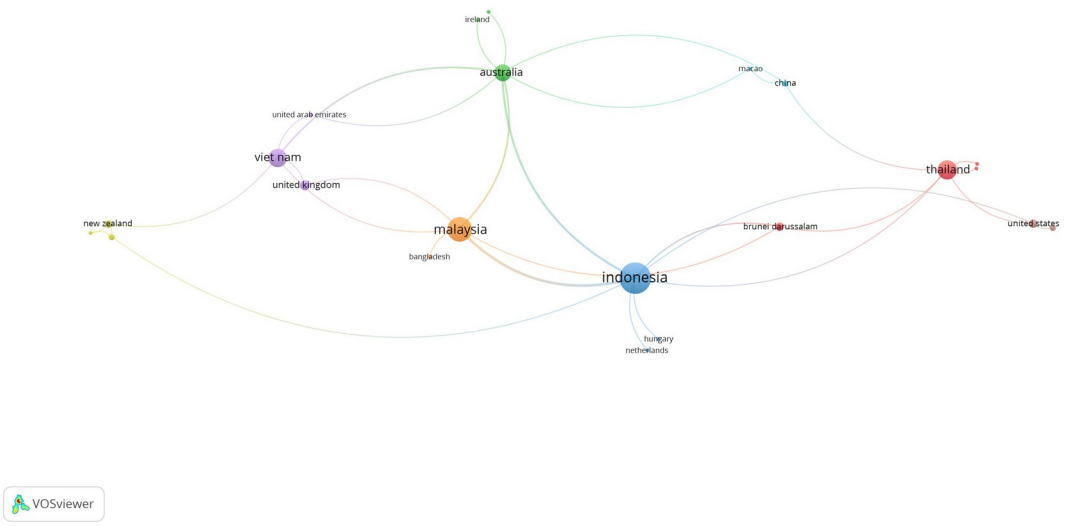
Country	Region	Documents	% of corpus	Citations	Citations per document	Internationally co-authored
Indonesia	SEA	51	35.9	240	4.7	16
Malaysia	SEA	30	21.1	349	11.6	12
Thailand	SEA	19	13.4	149	7.8	5
Vietnam	SEA	18	12.7	322	17.9	6
Australia	Outside SEA	15	10.6	397	26.5	13
Philippines	SEA	15	10.6	43	2.9	0
United Kingdom	Outside SEA	5	3.5	31	6.2	2
Brunei Darussalam	SEA	4	2.8	8	2.0	2
United States	Outside SEA	4	2.8	49	12.2	3
New Zealand	Outside SEA	3	2.1	32	10.7	2

Note. Full counts; percentages sum to more than 100%. SEA = Southeast Asia.

As can be seen in the co-authorship network of countries (Figure 5), Indonesia is situated in the middle of the network. The strongest link is between Indonesia and Malaysia, which produced seven co-authored publications. Australia plays the significant role of an extra-regional hub that has links with Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and China, while the UK, the USA, and New Zealand are characterized by fewer links with other countries. Notably, the Philippines is not present in the network. Although this country produced 15 publications, it produced no internationally co-authored practice articles; therefore, it is absent from Figure 5.

Figure 5

Co-Authorship Network of Countries



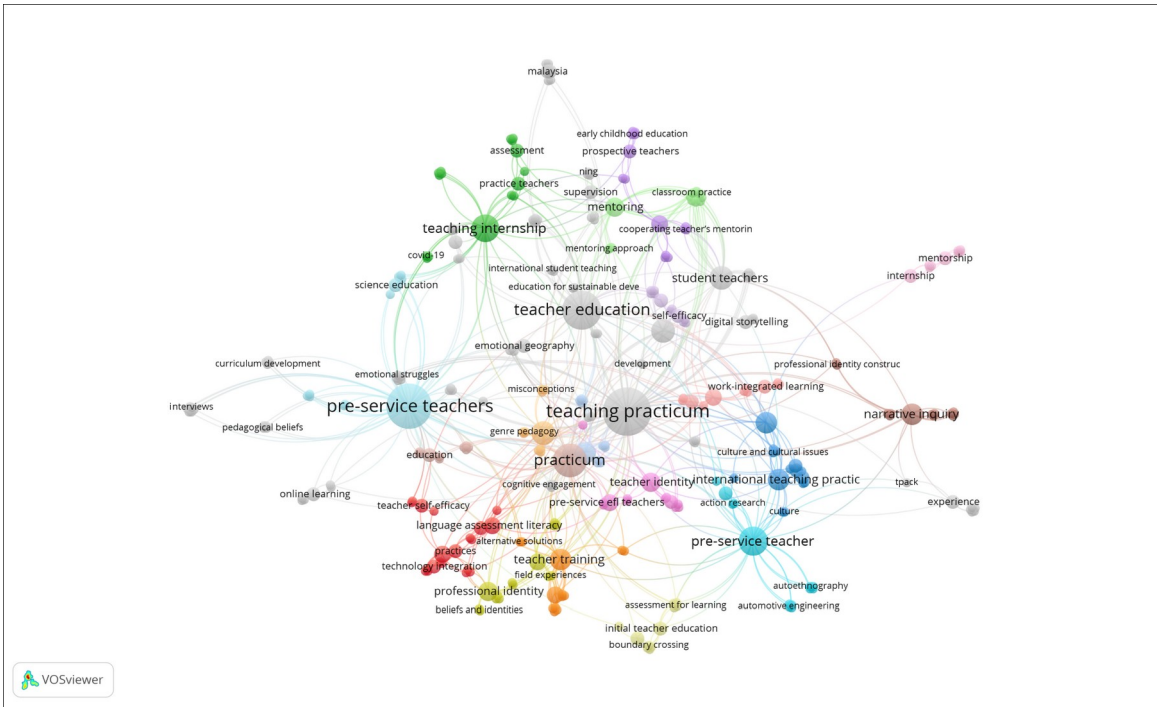
Note. Node size reflects the number of documents; link thickness reflects the number of co-authored documents.

Conceptual Structure: Keyword Co-Occurrence (RQ4)

Following normalization, the most frequently occurring author keywords were pre-service teachers (60), the teaching practicum or the teaching internship (52), teacher education (29), teacher identity (12), reflection and reflective practice (9), mentoring (9), international teaching practicum (8), professional development (7), narrative inquiry (5), and self-efficacy (4). The keyword co-occurrence network (Figure 6) shows author keywords as counted by authors, displaying that closely related variants such as teaching practicum, practicum, and the teaching internship-pac appear in different but adjacent nodes. If taken together, these variants explain the frame of the network where thematic clusters were formed: (a) mentoring, supervision and the role of cooperating teachers, (b) professional identity and narrative inquiry, (c) international teaching practicum/intercultural experience, (d) self-efficacy/reflection/transformed learning, (e) language assessment literacy and technology integration in English language teacher education, and (f) the construction of professional identity in teacher education and practicum.

Figure 6

Co-Occurrence Network of Author Keywords

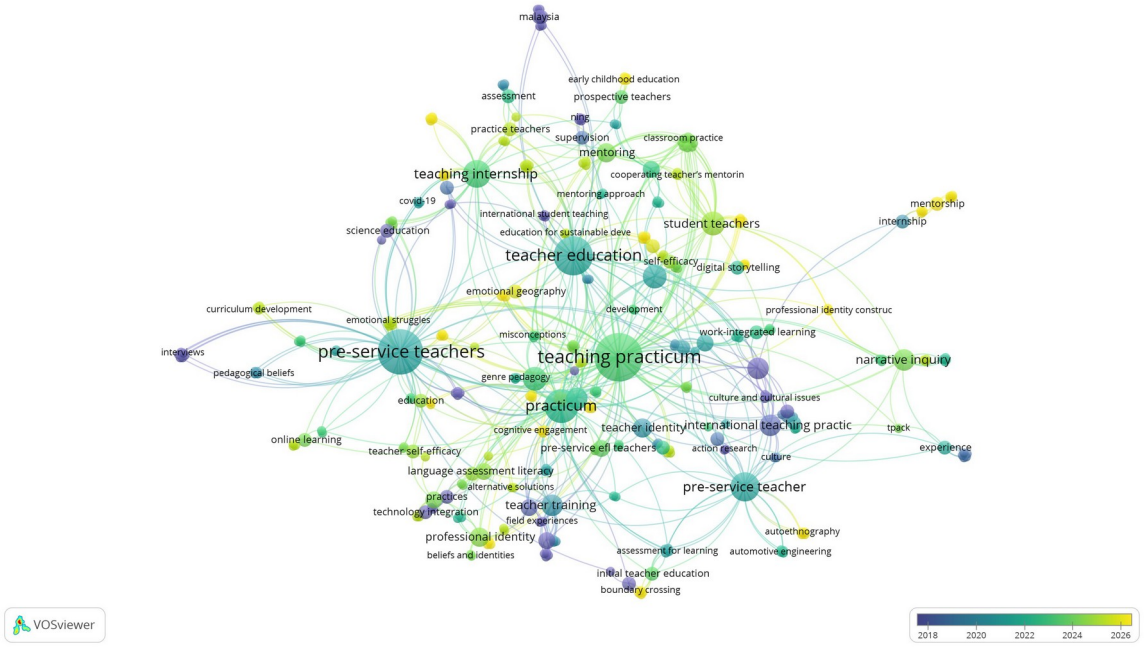


Note. Node size reflects occurrences; link thickness reflects co-occurrence strength; colours denote clusters.

The overlay visualization (Figure 7) assigns a word a color based on the average publication year of related documents. It shows keywords related to earlier research, such as international teaching practicum, international student teaching, field experiences, initial teacher education, or Malaysia, in greenish tones (i.e., belonging to the 2018–2020 period). Keywords classified under the last research phase (i.e., post-2024) include emotional geography, emotional struggles, mentorship and cooperating teachers' mentoring, self-efficacy, early childhood education, autoethnography, and boundary crossing, which are color-coded in reddish shades. The density visualization (Figure 8) confirms the trends identified in the previous visualization, with teaching practicum, pre-service teachers, teacher education, and teaching internship as very popular themes, while international teaching practicum and professional identity represent less important focal points of attention. Online learning, technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK), action research, and curriculum development are among the least explored themes located in low-density areas of the map.

Figure 7

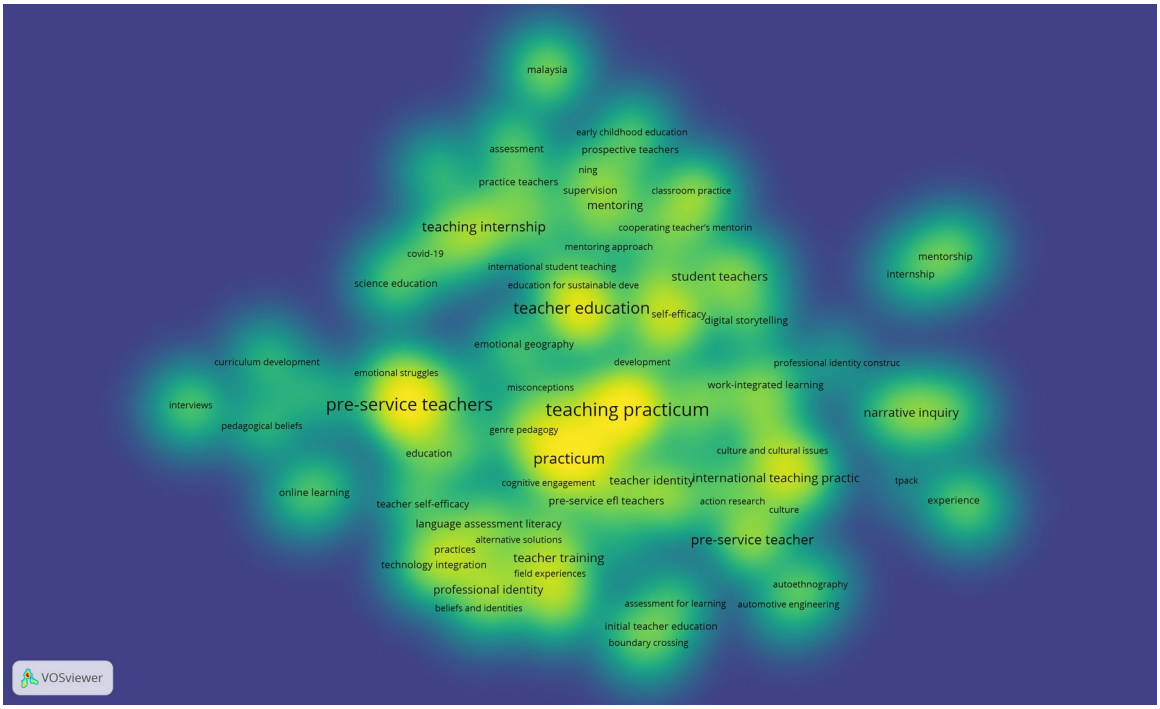
Overlay Visualization of Author Keywords by Average Publication Year



Note. Colors range from earlier (purple) to more recent (yellow) average publication years.

Figure 8

Density Visualization of Author Keywords



Note. Brighter areas indicate greater concentration of keyword occurrences.

Thematic Evolution (RQ4)

Table 6 and Figure 9 show the proportion of documents focused on each of the eleven topics across four time periods. In total, the most common topics were reflection and reflective practice (64

documents), English and language teacher education (60), and mentoring and supervision (53). The largest change was in emotions and well-being topics, which appeared in 5.9%–7.1% of documents before 2023 and in 30.8% of documents written from 2024 to 2026. The topics of professional identity (from 11.8% to 27.7%), self-efficacy (from 17.6% to 26.2%), as well as pedagogical competence and subject matter knowledge (from 5.9% to 38.5%), also demonstrated a steady increase, while technology and digital practice rose dramatically from 23.5% to 38.5% as well. Discussions related to English teacher education became extremely popular, which can be seen in the fact that this topic was covered in 53.8% of the most recent academic works. Conversely, studies on international or cross-border practicum declined from one out of five documents before 2021 to 4.6% after 2023, while pandemic-related papers peaked in 2021–2023 (15.6%) and then decreased.

Table 6

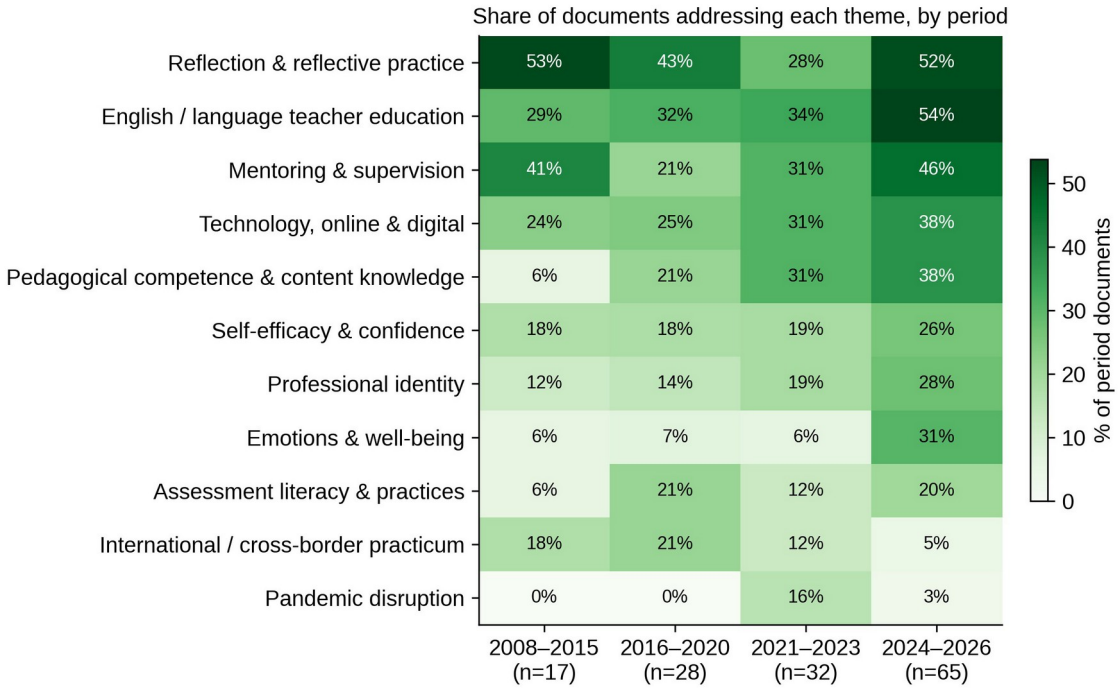
Share of Documents Addressing Each Theme, by Period (%)

Theme	Total n	2008–2015 (*n* = 17)	2016–2020 (*n* = 28)	2021–2023 (*n* = 32)	2024–2026 (*n* = 65)
Reflection and reflective practice	64	52.9	42.9	28.1	52.3
English / language teacher education	60	29.4	32.1	34.4	53.8
Mentoring and supervision	53	41.2	21.4	31.2	46.2
Technology, online and digital	46	23.5	25.0	31.2	38.5
Pedagogical competence and content knowledge	42	5.9	21.4	31.2	38.5
Self-efficacy and confidence	31	17.6	17.9	18.8	26.2
Professional identity	30	11.8	14.3	18.8	27.7
Emotions and well-being	25	5.9	7.1	6.2	30.8
Assessment literacy and practices	24	5.9	21.4	12.5	20.0
International / cross-border practicum	16	17.6	21.4	12.5	4.6
Pandemic disruption	7	0.0	0.0	15.6	3.1

Note. Documents can address more than one theme. Coding was applied to titles, abstracts, and author keywords.

Figure 9

Thematic Evolution of Practicum Research in Southeast Asia



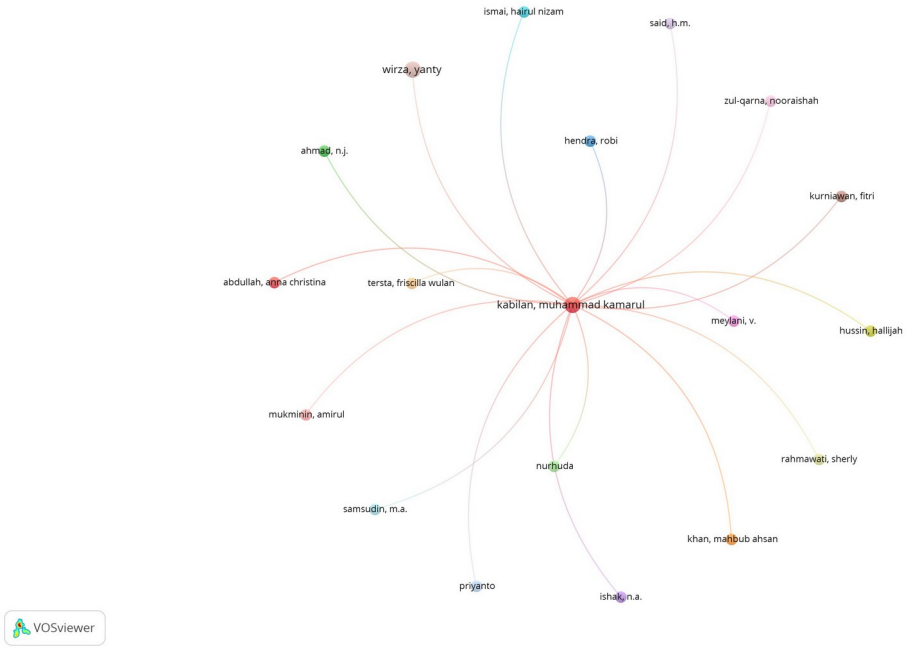
Note. Cell values are the percentage of documents in each period addressing the theme.

Intellectual Structure: Citation and Co-Citation Analysis (RQ5)

As shown in Figure 10, the author citation network centered on Muhammad Kamarul Kabilan, whose work on international teaching practicum was cited by authors in countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia (Kabilan, 2013; Kabilan et al., 2017). The star shape of the network indicates that more recent research tends to cite fewer but significant earlier works without citing each other. In addition, a high percentage of uncited literature (30.3%) suggests that the literature has more publications than citations.

Figure 10

Citation Network of Authors

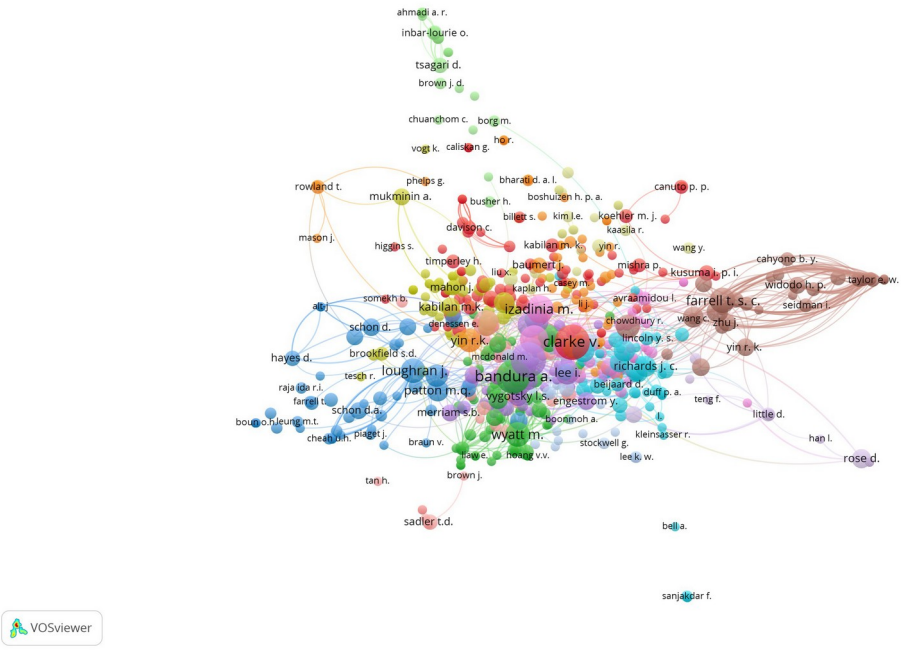


Note. Links indicate that a document by one author cites a document by another within the corpus.

The co-citation network of cited authors (Figure 11) shows how the branch has built its intellectual foundation. Authors can be divided into four clusters based on their overarching themes. The first cluster includes theories of learning to teach, that is, reflective practices (Schön, Loughran, Brookfield and Farrell), social-cognitive and sociocultural perspectives (Bandura and Vygotsky; Wyatt's work on language teacher self-efficacy), identity and mentoring (Izadinia and Engeström), as well as language teacher identity (Richards, Beijaard, Duff). The second cluster includes regional references and Indonesian authors in English language teacher education (e.g., Widodo, Cahyono), along with Farrell's studies on reflective practice and Taylor's transformative learning theory, forming a Southeast Asian citation community. The third cluster incorporates small specialization groups across the disciplines of assessment literacy (Inbar-Lourie, Tsagari), mathematics teacher knowledge (Rowland, Baumert) and genre pedagogy (Rose). Finally, the fourth cluster includes methodological sources (Clarke, Yin, Merriam, Patton, Lincoln, Seidmann) that cluster around the middle part of the diagram, showing that qualitative and case-based methods are being used; Clarke is cited more often, suggesting that thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) is being widely used.

Figure 11

Co-Citation Network of Cited Authors



Note. Node size reflects number of citations; links indicate co-citation; colours denote clusters.

Discussion

This study offers the first bibliometric map of research on pre-service teacher practicum and teaching internship in Southeast Asia. Four interpretive themes emerge from the findings.

A Rapidly Growing but Fragmented Field

Research on practicums in Southeast Asia has surged, with more than three-quarters of all research published in 2020 or later, showing annual growth of over 20% in the last decade. This growth coincides with reforms in teacher education and COVID-19-driven shifts in field practice and research priorities. Nevertheless, this field remains disconnected. The findings are published in more than 100 different sources, and the researchers do not interact with each other but are mainly limited in their collaborations within their own institutions. The publications resemble what Lawson et al. (2015) described: international publications are small and tied to specific contexts, making it difficult to synthesize findings across studies. According to the authors, many studies produced within this field are linked to the development of teacher education programs, and much research is aimed at improvement in this region rather than knowledge production at a higher level.

An Uneven Regional Geography of Knowledge Production

Knowledge production is highly uneven within the region. Indonesia accounts for over a third of publications in the corpus, indicating that its teacher education sector has produced considerable research. Cambodia, Laos, and Timor-Leste have no authors from their countries, and Singapore and Myanmar are only marginally represented. Collaboration seems to follow certain paths. Australia, not any Southeast Asian country, serves as the main connecting point between research communities of different countries, while the strongest link between Indonesia and Malaysia is based on linguistic and institutional ties. The Philippines differs because it has a large volume of practicum studies, but all authors are from the country, and the studies are not cited elsewhere. These studies are important for a

country undergoing teacher education reforms aimed at establishing standards (Galanto Ormilla, 2025) and would benefit from stronger collaboration with countries in the region. It is also important to note a decline in publications on international and cross-border practicum research after 2020, as student-teacher exchange programs have been a major way to implement collaborative research initiatives (Kabilan et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2026). Restoring this work after the pandemic opens new opportunities for multi-country research collaborations.

From Programs to Persons: An Affective and Relational Turn

The development of the subject indicates that the research has shifted from program modeling and structure to studying pre-service teachers' experiences and emotions. Earlier publications focused on the design of international practicums, field experience, and initial teacher education programs, while more recent publications focus on emotions, professional identity, self-efficacy, and mentorship (Alia et al., 2025; Chea, 2024; Daud et al., 2025; Drajati et al., 2026; Pandee et al., 2020). The field's development aligns with international research that emphasizes identity formation as part of teacher training and teaching as an emotional process. Particularly important is the increasing number of studies focused on emotions and struggles, as it helps to understand the situation of student teachers being sandwiched between the demands of university and school, an important factor that has consequences for their mental health, retention, and provision of support (Sunardi et al., 2025).

Two other aspects of the thematic landscape are worth mentioning. First, the area of English language teacher training dominates, with most studies being devoted to it. The dominance of the field makes it possible to see the strengths of the community of applied linguistics; at the same time, it is important to acknowledge that there is almost no research regarding pre-service teachers in mathematics, sciences, pre-school, sports education, and vocational education, despite the fact that publications such as Faikhamta and Clarke (2015) and Bamrungsin and Khampirat (2022) refer to the specific difficulties that they might face. Second, technology is increasingly important but remains marginal. Specifically, studies on online practicums emerged in response to the pandemic, whereas studies on generative AI in teaching practicums have only recently appeared. Given how quickly AI technologies appear in education, the Asian community is well positioned to contribute to the discussion.

Borrowed Theory and the Need for Regional Theorizing

According to the findings of the co-citation analysis, the intellectual foundations of the field consist mainly of frameworks that have originated from the West, including reflective practice theory (Schön, 1983), social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997), cultural-historical activity theory, and identity theory (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Although these theories have proven effective, the emergence of a regional cluster of scholars in Indonesian English language teacher education clearly reflects the region's growing intellectual potential. However, the field's methods remain largely methodological, and region-specific theories remain underdeveloped, suggesting that predetermined frameworks are more exploited than created for the Southeast Asian context, where multicultural and multilingual schools of significant influence exist.

Implications and Research Agenda

The results have implications for policies, practice, and research. The fragmentation of the area suggests to policymakers and teacher-training institutions the need for regional consortia to promote multi-site and multi-country practicum research and link teacher-training reforms to systematic evaluation. Practicum coordinators should take into account the growing evidence of emotions, identity, and mentorship that highlights the necessity of providing the preparation of cooperating teachers,

incorporating the elements of emotional support and peer support into practicum format (Nguyen, 2013), and understanding the practicum as a site of professional development rather than a place for skill demonstration only.

Table 7

A Research Agenda for Practicum Research in Southeast Asia

Gap identified	Suggested direction
Fragmented collaboration and limited cumulative citation	Multi-site and multi-country studies; replication and extension of influential regional studies; systematic reviews and meta-syntheses of regional evidence
Under-represented countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Timor-Leste) and the domestic orientation of Philippine research	Partnership-based studies that include under-represented systems; comparative studies of practicum policy and standards across ASEAN
Dominance of English language teacher education	Practicum research in mathematics, science, early childhood, physical education, special and inclusive education, and vocational teacher education
Predominantly qualitative, small-scale designs	Mixed-methods and longitudinal designs following pre-service teachers into induction; validated instruments for practicum constructs
Emerging affective and relational themes	Studies of emotional well-being, workload, and support structures; mentor preparation and its effects on student-teacher learning
Peripheral position of technology and AI	Research on generative AI, simulation, and hybrid practicum models, including their ethical and equity implications
Reliance on borrowed theory	Development of theoretical accounts grounded in Southeast Asian school cultures, mentoring hierarchies, and multilingual contexts

Conclusion and Recommendations

Studies of pre-service teacher practicum and teaching internship have evolved from a few in the late 2000s to an exciting field of research today. This comprehensive analysis indicates that the field is rapidly evolving, with Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam as the main contributors, and with growing attention to the emotional, relational, and identity aspects of the teaching profession. The analysis also reveals that, in the studied field, most collaboration occurs within institutions, with little cross-institutional citation, uneven geographical representation, and a reliance on theory. To address these gaps, Southeast Asian studies should collaborate with institutions and researchers across countries, focus on under-researched areas, and use theories to make meaningful contributions to educational theory.

Based on these findings, three recommendations are offered. First, teacher education institutions, professional associations, and funding bodies in the region should support cross-national and cross-institutional research partnerships on the practicum, including the renewal of student-teacher exchange programs as sites for joint research. Second, researchers should extend practicum research to underrepresented countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Timor-Leste, and to teacher education programs beyond English language teaching, including mathematics, science, early childhood, physical education, special and inclusive education, and vocational education. Third, future studies should complement small-scale qualitative designs with mixed-methods and longitudinal designs, develop theory grounded in Southeast Asian school cultures, and examine emerging concerns such as pre-service teachers' well-being and the use of generative AI and simulation in practicum preparation.

Limitations of the Study

Many restrictions must be mentioned. The analysis began with a single database. Scopus has good reach in regional journals (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016), but records indexed only in national databases, Google Scholar, or Web of Science were excluded. Second, the search terms combined field-experience credentials with change or development. This is because such terms might not appear in all relevant abstracts, meaning some relevant documents may still be missing; therefore, the corpus should be regarded as a large, representative sample rather than a complete census. Third, screening used titles, abstracts, and keywords; however, this dictionary-based thematic coding, while easy to monitor, has drawbacks because it fails to capture meaning as well as manual content analysis. Moreover, citation counts also depend on time; thus, recent documents are less represented even though they make up a large part of the total corpus.

Statement on the Use of Generative AI

During the preparation of this work, the author used Claude AI to help clean the Scopus export and apply the rule-based screening filter. The author reviewed and verified all outputs and the text and takes full responsibility for the publication's content.

Declarations

Funding. This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflict of interest. The author declares no conflict of interest.

Data availability. The Scopus export of the 142 included records, the record-level screening log, and the keyword thesaurus are available as supplementary material and from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Author contributions (CRediT). Mark Kevin M. Astrero: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data curation, Formal analysis, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review and editing.

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Ethics approval and informed consent. Not applicable; the study analyzed published bibliographic records and involved no human participants.

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Appendix A

Scopus Search Query

TITLE-ABS-KEY ((trend* OR chang* OR growth OR increas* OR pattern* OR development* OR evolution* OR trajectory* OR "time series" OR "longitudinal" OR "emerging") AND (internship* OR "teaching internship*" OR "student internship*" OR placement* OR practicum* OR "work-based learning" OR "work integrated learning" OR WIL OR "school-based practicum*" OR "teaching practicum*" OR "teacher trainee*") AND ("Southeast Asia" OR "South-East Asia" OR ("Southeast Asia" W/1 region*) OR ((Brunei* OR "Brunei Darussalam" OR Cambodia* OR "Lao PDR" OR Laos OR "Myanmar" OR "Burma" OR Malaysia* OR "Philippines" OR Indonesia* OR Singapore* OR Thailand* OR Vietnam* OR "Timor-Leste" OR "East Timor"))))

Search conducted in January 2026; no limits applied to publication year, document type, or language.