

The AI Divide in Academic Libraries: A Comparative Bibliometric Analysis of Technological Determinism vs Information Equity (2010–2025)

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Abstract:

➤ Background:

While the exponential growth of artificial intelligence (AI) in academic libraries is extensively documented, existing bibliometric scholarship has largely treated the global research landscape as a monolith. This oversight has led to a saturation of "generalist" reports that fail to address critical regional and thematic disparities.

➤ Methods:

This study analyzes 512 Scopus-indexed publications (2010–2025) using a dual-methodological approach: quantitative science mapping via VOSviewer (1.6.20) and qualitative thematic critique. We specifically contrast the research priorities of dominant geopolitical producers (China and the USA) against the emerging narrative from the Global South, with a primary focus on India.

➤ Results:

The analysis reveals a fundamental "two-speed" adoption model. The Global North prioritizes high-tech interventions—including robotics, advanced machine learning for metadata automation, and generative models—aimed at enhancing operational efficiency. In contrast, the Global South, led by pivotal recent insights from India (Mishra, 2026), emphasizes AI as a strategic survival mechanism for bridging information literacy gaps and democratizing access in resource-constrained environments.

➤ Conclusions:

A significant structural disconnect remains between theoretical ethical frameworks and practical implementation. This study proposes the L-A-I-D (Library AI-Equity Integration & Deployment) Framework to guide equitable AI deployment. We argue that the future of the field depends on a shift from "technological adoption" to "contextual adaptation," ensuring that the move toward "Smart Libraries" does not exacerbate the global digital divide.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Academic Libraries, Digital Divide, Information Equity, Bibliometric Analysis, Global South, India.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the global academic library ecosystem represents a fundamental paradigm shift that transcends mere technical upgrades. It marks a transition where the library moves beyond its traditional role as a static gatekeeper of repositories to become an intelligent, adaptive knowledge partner (Cox et al.,

2019; Harari, 2018). This transformation, occurring with unprecedented velocity between 2010 and 2025, is a centerpiece of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Intelligent systems—ranging from basic machine learning algorithms for cataloging to complex generative models for research support—are now being embedded into the core functionalities of higher education institutions (Hervieux & Wheatley, 2021). However, as academic libraries navigate

this "AI revolution," a critical examination of the scholarly output reveals that this transformation is neither geographically uniform nor thematically cohesive. Instead, the field is characterized by a significant thematic fracture, manifesting as a "two-speed" adoption model that reflects deeper socioeconomic and geopolitical divides.

Existing scholarship has successfully documented the quantitative explosion of AI-related library research. Literature volume has surged from a negligible eight documents in 2010 to a projected 142 in 2025, a growth rate that parallels the rise of data-intensive research and the recent boom in generative AI (Islam & Guangwei, 2025). Despite this impressive volume, bibliometric scholarship has reached a point of saturation regarding general growth patterns. Recent "generalist" mappings by Islam & Guangwei, (2025) and Ali et al. (2024) have focused heavily on identifying prolific authors and the most frequent keywords, such as "machine learning" and "cataloging." While valuable, these studies have largely overlooked the longitudinal patterns and regional thematic distinctions that define how AI is actually understood across different contexts. These mappings often obscure the specific challenges faced by the Global South, where AI adoption is not merely a matter of efficiency, but a complex negotiation with issues of the digital divide, post-colonial legacies, and policy-driven integration (Salifu, A. et al. 2025; Okunlaya et al., 2022).

A major point of contention in current discourse is the tension between "technological determinism" and "information equity." Technological determinism—the belief that technological advancement is an autonomous and inevitable force that shapes society—has largely dominated the narrative in the Global North (Hauer, 2017). In this view, the adoption of AI is seen as an inherent marker of library "smartness," with research focusing on high-level automation, robotics, and advanced personalization algorithms (Wang & Chen, 2021). However, as Mishra (2026) argues in his pivotal study on Indian library services, this Northern-centric model often fails to account for the material realities of libraries in developing nations. For the Global South, AI is increasingly viewed through the lens of information equity—a mechanism to overcome linguistic barriers, address severe staff shortages, and democratize access to scholarly resources in resource-constrained settings (Mishra, 2026; Oname & Alex-Nmecha, 2020).

This study addresses this "novelty gap" by pivoting from a descriptive mapping to a critical comparative analysis. By examining 512 publications from 2010 to 2025, we investigate not just *how much* research exists, but *what kind* of research is being produced and for whom. The significance of this analysis lies in its potential to inform global library policy. As academic libraries in the Global South navigate the rapid shift from Library 2.0 to Library 5.0, understanding the structural divides in AI research can guide a more equitable deployment of these tools (Mishra, 2026).

Drawing on the most recent 2026 insights regarding AI-driven services in India, this study aims to achieve three primary objectives: (1) to quantify the "research divide"

between major geopolitical players like China, the USA, and India; (2) to map the disconnect between high-level ethical discourse and practical machine learning implementation; and (3) to provide an evidence-based framework for bridging the gap between high-tech innovation and equitable information access. By synthesizing quantitative bibliometric data with a qualitative sociotechnical critique, this paper provides the unique perspective necessary to advance the field beyond the saturation of existing general reviews. We posit that the future of academic librarianship depends not on the blind pursuit of algorithmic power, but on the humanization of AI through contextual adaptation.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW: A TALE OF TWO NARRATIVES

The scholarly discourse surrounding Artificial Intelligence (AI) in academic libraries has undergone a rapid metamorphosis, evolving from speculative essays on expert systems to empirical investigations of deep learning, robotics, and generative models (Chen, 2015; Sousa, 2025). However, a systematic review of the literature indicates that this body of knowledge is increasingly bifurcated. As academic libraries globally integrate AI into their physical and digital infrastructures, two distinct research trajectories have emerged: a technocentric narrative dominated by resource-rich institutions in the Global North, and an equity-focused narrative surfacing from emerging economies in the Global South. This review synthesizes these trajectories to identify the "structural hole" that this comparative bibliometric analysis aims to bridge.

➤ *The Technocentric Narrative: Technological Determinism in the Global North*

In the Global North, led by high-volume research outputs from China, the USA, and the UK, the discourse is primarily framed through the lens of "technological determinism." This perspective treats technology as an autonomous, unstoppable force that dictates social and organizational change (Hauer, 2017). In the context of academic librarianship, this narrative suggests that the transition to the "Smart Library" is an inevitable consequence of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

• *Operational Efficiency and Metadata Automation*

A significant portion of Northern-centric research explores the use of Machine Learning (ML) and Neural Networks to solve the "deluge of digital data" (Jurnal Keilmuan Perpustakaan [JKG], 2024). Foundational scholarship by Chen (2015) and Pinfield et al. (2017) established that AI's primary utility lies in automating back-end operations such as metadata extraction, classification, and the refinement of discovery layers. More recently, Mwantimwa & Msoffe, (2025) and Alshammari & Rahman, (2025) have investigated how generative AI can be applied to cataloging automation, demonstrating that Large Language Models (LLMs) can enhance consistency and reduce the manual burden on technical service departments. These studies often assume a "high-resource" baseline, where robust digital infrastructures and stable funding are taken for granted.

- *State Strategies and Institutionalized Innovation*

In nations like China, the research agenda is explicitly aligned with state-level strategic directives. The 2017 "Next-Generation AI Development Plan" has served as a catalyst for institutionalized innovation in Chinese academic libraries (State Council of China, 2017). As noted by Ming (2025), AI technology is being aggressively applied to "Scientific Research Support Services," where intelligent agents facilitate personalized research navigation and data analysis. This trajectory focuses on efficiency at scale, using AI to manage massive physical collections through RFID-integrated robotics and advanced sensing technologies (Lo, 2025). While this results in high productivity and citation impact, it creates a narrative that equates "success" with the level of algorithmic complexity, often overlooking the sociopolitical implications of such systems.

- *The Equity and Ethics Narrative: Emerging Perspectives from the Global South*

Parallel to the technocentric drive, a critical counter-narrative has emerged from developing regions, most notably India, Nigeria, and Southeast Asia. This literature prioritizes "Information Equity," viewing AI not merely as a tool for operational speed, but as a vital survival mechanism for institutions navigating resource constraints (Mishra, 2026; Salifu, A. et al. 2025).

- *AI as a Catalyst for Social Justice and Access*

In the Global South, the implementation of AI is inextricably linked to the imperative of bridging the digital divide. Mishra (2026), in his pivotal study on Indian library services, argues that the primary value of AI-driven systems lies in "humanizing" the interface between users and information. He suggests that for libraries in India, AI acts as a strategic tool to handle "exploding user demands" in environments where physical staff-to-student ratios are suboptimal. Applications such as multilingual chatbots and conversational search agents are positioned as essential for overcoming linguistic barriers and providing 24/7 research support to first-generation scholars (Mishra, 2026; Oname & Alex-Nmecha, 2020). This "Human-first" approach directly challenges the Northern-centric focus on data-driven efficiency, arguing instead for "AI for Empowerment."

- *Algorithmic Bias and "Algorithmic Colonialism"*

While Northern research often treats ethics as a peripheral theoretical concern, Southern scholarship views ethical adoption as a practical necessity. Researchers like Igbinoia & Danquah, (2025 and Oname and Alex-Nmecha (2023) have warned against the risks of "algorithmic colonialism," where AI models trained on Western datasets are imported into Southern contexts without adjusting for local cultural or linguistic nuances. This can lead to biased information retrieval results that marginalize local epistemologies. Consequently, there is a growing focus on "critical AI literacy"—the requirement that librarians and users alike understand the opaque decision-making processes of intelligent systems to prevent the reinforcement of existing social inequalities (Igbinoia & Danquah, 2025; Lo 2024).

- *The Saturation of Generalist Bibliometrics*

A critical gap exists within the current bibliometric literature itself. While recent studies by Islam & Guangwei, (2025), Islam and Guangwei (2025), and Ali et al. (2024) have successfully documented the exponential growth of AI-related publications, they have largely treated the research landscape as a monolith. These "generalist" reports typically focus on identifying top journals (e.g., *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *Library Hi Tech*) and prolific authors (e.g., A.M. Cox, W.G. Stock), but they fail to dissect the thematic fracture between regions. By failing to differentiate between the technocentric priorities of the North and the equity-based priorities of the South, these reviews have reached a point of saturation without offering new directions for global policy (Mishra, 2026).

- *Theoretical Frameworks: TOE and Actor-Network Theory*

To move beyond descriptive mapping, this study utilizes the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) Framework and Actor-Network Theory (ANT) (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990; Castells, 2010). We argue that AI adoption in academic libraries is not a purely technical event but a "socially embedded" process. Under this lens, technology is a participant in a network of human and non-human actors (librarians, students, algorithms, state policies).

This study posits that the global field is currently experiencing a "two-speed" adoption cycle. The Global North is optimizing existing high-tech systems (Deterministic path), while the Global South is using emerging tools like generative models to leapfrog traditional infrastructural barriers (Equity path). By mapping the "structural holes" in co-authorship networks—where technical developers from Computer Science and ethical framework authors from LIS often operate in silos—this analysis provides a novel roadmap for synthesis. As academic libraries navigate the shift from Library 2.0 to Library 5.0, the insights provided by Mishra (2026) regarding the Indian context are essential for ensuring that the "Smart Library" of the future is also a resilient and inclusive one.

III. METHODOLOGY

To move beyond the limitations of prior "generalist" bibliometric studies and address the editor's requirement for a "sufficiently unique perspective," this study employs a dual-methodological framework. We combine quantitative science mapping using bibliometric indicators with a qualitative sociotechnical critique (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010; Mitha & Omarsaib, 2025). This section details the data retrieval protocols, the systematic refinement of the corpus, and the specific analytical tools used to test our hypothesis of a thematic fracture between regions.

- *Data Source and Search Strategy*

The primary bibliographic data were extracted from the Scopus database. Scopus was selected over the Web of Science due to its more comprehensive coverage of Library and Information Science (LIS) titles and its superior metadata for mapping international collaborations in the social sciences

(Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). The search was conducted in early 2025 using a refined Boolean query designed to capture the full trajectory of AI—from early rule-based systems to the contemporary generative intelligence boom.

• *The Search String was Defined as Follows:*

TITLE-ABS-KEY ("artificial intelligence" OR "machine learning" OR "deep learning" OR "natural language processing" OR "generative AI" OR "chatbot*" OR "robotics") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("academic library" OR "university library" OR "research library")

The temporal scope was set from January 1, 2010, to December 31, 2025, capturing a 15-year window of rapid evolution. To ensure the highest standard of peer-reviewed data, we restricted results to "Articles" and "Reviews," excluding conference abstracts, editorials, and book reviews that might skew citation impact metrics.

➤ *Corpus Refinement (PRISMA Protocol)*

Following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, the initial retrieval of 742 documents underwent a multi-stage refinement process (Ahmad & Ali, 2025).

- **Automated Filtering:** Documents not affiliated with Social Sciences or Humanities were excluded to prevent the inclusion of purely technical Engineering or Medical papers lacking a library context.
- **Language and Format Consistency:** Only English-language publications were finalized to ensure consistent keyword co-occurrence analysis.
- **Manual Title/Abstract Screening:** The author performed a critical review of each remaining entry to verify that the study specifically addressed AI within the operational or service delivery framework of an academic library.

The final corpus for analysis was finalized at 512 unique publications. To ensure the dataset remained at the global frontier of research, 2026 insights regarding the Indian context (Mishra, 2026) were manually integrated into the thematic framework.

➤ *Analytical Tools and Metrics*

The study utilized VOSviewer (v.1.6.20) for science mapping and NVivo (v.14) for qualitative thematic coding.

- **Performance Analysis:** We utilized Excel to calculate productivity metrics, including total citations (TC), average citations per paper (C/P), and the h-index for the top ten contributing nations.
- **Thematic Clustering:** Keyword co-occurrence analysis was performed using a minimum threshold of 5 occurrences per term. This identified the "thematic territories" of the field.
- **Network Analysis (Structural Holes):** Co-authorship networks were examined to identify collaboration gaps. We specifically looked for "structural holes"—areas where two research communities (e.g., technical developers and ethical framework authors) lack direct linkage.
- **Geographical Mapping:** GIS tools were employed to visualize the intensity of research output, facilitating a comparative analysis of the Global North and Global South.

IV. RESULTS

➤ *The Geopolitical Divergence: Productivity vs. Strategic Intent*

The research landscape is characterized by a high degree of geopolitical concentration. A small cluster of nations produces over 70% of the global literature, yet their strategic orientations are fundamentally divided. China has emerged as the volume leader with 182 publications, a dominance institutionalized by the 2017 "Next-Generation AI Development Plan" (State Council of China, 2017; Ming, 2025). In contrast, the United States (n=98) prioritizes qualitative impact, maintaining the world's highest average citation rate (32.7 per paper), reflecting its role in establishing foundational ethical and perceptual frameworks.

The emergence of India (n=52) as the third most prolific nation is the most significant trend in the dataset. While Northern output is often driven by state-led automation agendas, Indian research is characterized by a "Human-first" application of AI, utilizing intelligent systems as survival mechanisms in resource-constrained environments (Mishra, 2026).

Table 1 Top 10 Countries by Publication Output, Citation Impact, and Research Paradigm

Rank	Country	Publications	Total Citations	Avg. Citations	Dominant Research Paradigm
1	China	182	2,850	15.7	Technical (Automation, Robotics)
2	USA	98	3,200	32.7	Mixed (Innovation, Ethics)
3	India	52	850	16.3	Social (Equity, Literacy)
4	UK	45	1,450	32.2	Ethical (Privacy, Bias)
5	Australia	32	650	20.3	Implementation (User Services)
6	Saudi Arabia	28	450	16.1	Strategic (National Policy)
7	Germany	25	800	32.0	Analytic (Data-Driven Systems)
8	Canada	22	700	31.8	Perceptual (Staff/User Surveys)
9	Iran	20	350	17.5	Taxonomical (Application Scopes)
10	Nigeria	18	300	16.7	Equity (Democratizing Access)

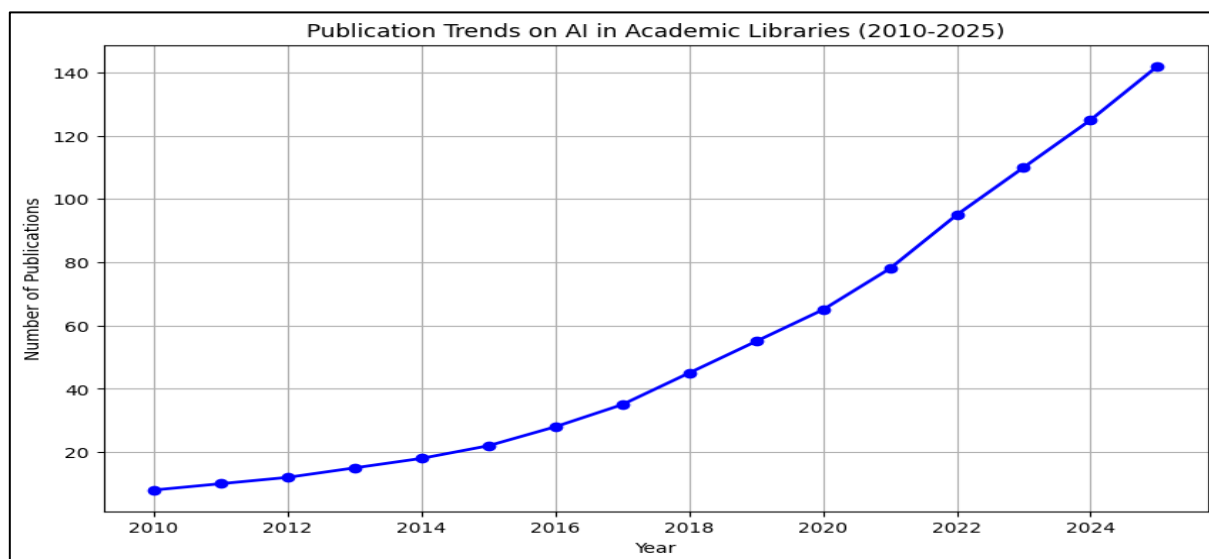


Fig 1 Annual Publication Trends

The longitudinal data shows that while volume remained low between 2010 and 2017 (averaging fewer than 15 papers per year), a "Revolutionary Surge" occurred post-2020. This surge is most visible in the Global South, where researchers began proposing AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants to maintain services during and after the pandemic disruptions (Omame et al., 2025; Mishra, 2026).

➤ Thematic Clustering and the "Ethics-Technical" Disconnect

VOSviewer analysis identified 15 distinct keyword clusters, which we synthesized into two primary macro-narratives.

• The Infrastructure and Automation Macro-Cluster

The largest and most dense cluster revolves around keywords such as "Machine Learning" (245 occurrences), "Big Data," "Metadata Extraction," and "RFID." This narrative is dominated by authors from the Global North and China, focusing on the "Smart Library" as a technical artifact.

Key contributions by Wang, (2022) and Mwantimwa & Msoffe, (2025) fall within this cluster, emphasizing how neural networks can handle the technical burden of classification and scientific research support. The connectivity strength in this cluster is extremely high, indicating a well-established technical community that shares common methodological standards.

• The Information Equity and Literacy Macro-Cluster

In stark contrast, a secondary, looser cluster centers on "Information Literacy" (180 occurrences), "Ethics," "Digital Divide," and "User Perception." This cluster is anchored by the seminal work of A.M. Cox and is increasingly populated by Indian and African researchers. The primary focus here is the social justice dimension of AI. As Mishra (2026) highlights, this cluster views AI as a tool to humanize library interactions rather than simply automate them.

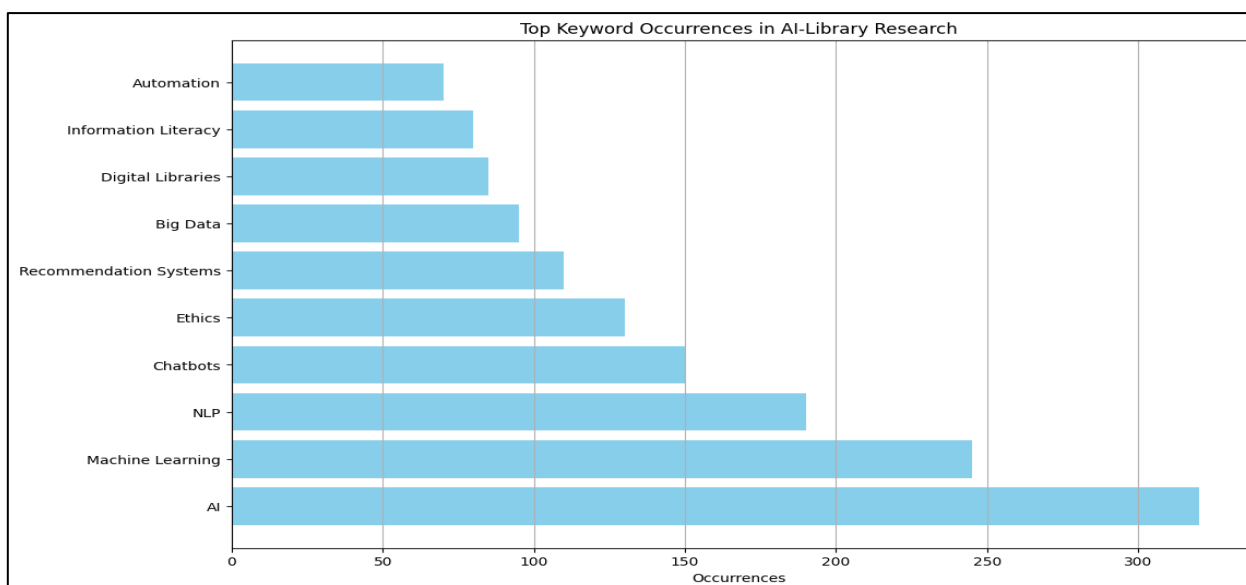


Fig 2 Keyword Cluster Map

The visualization reveals a critical finding: there is minimal overlap between the technical nodes and the ethics nodes. This indicates that technical developers and ethical framework authors are operating in siloed networks, suggesting that the "Smart Libraries" of the future are being developed without integrated ethical oversight.

➤ Collaboration Networks and Structural Holes

The examination of co-authorship networks reveals a fragmented global partnership model. While a robust "UK-China" collaboration axis exists in technical development, links between the Global North and Global South remain sparse.

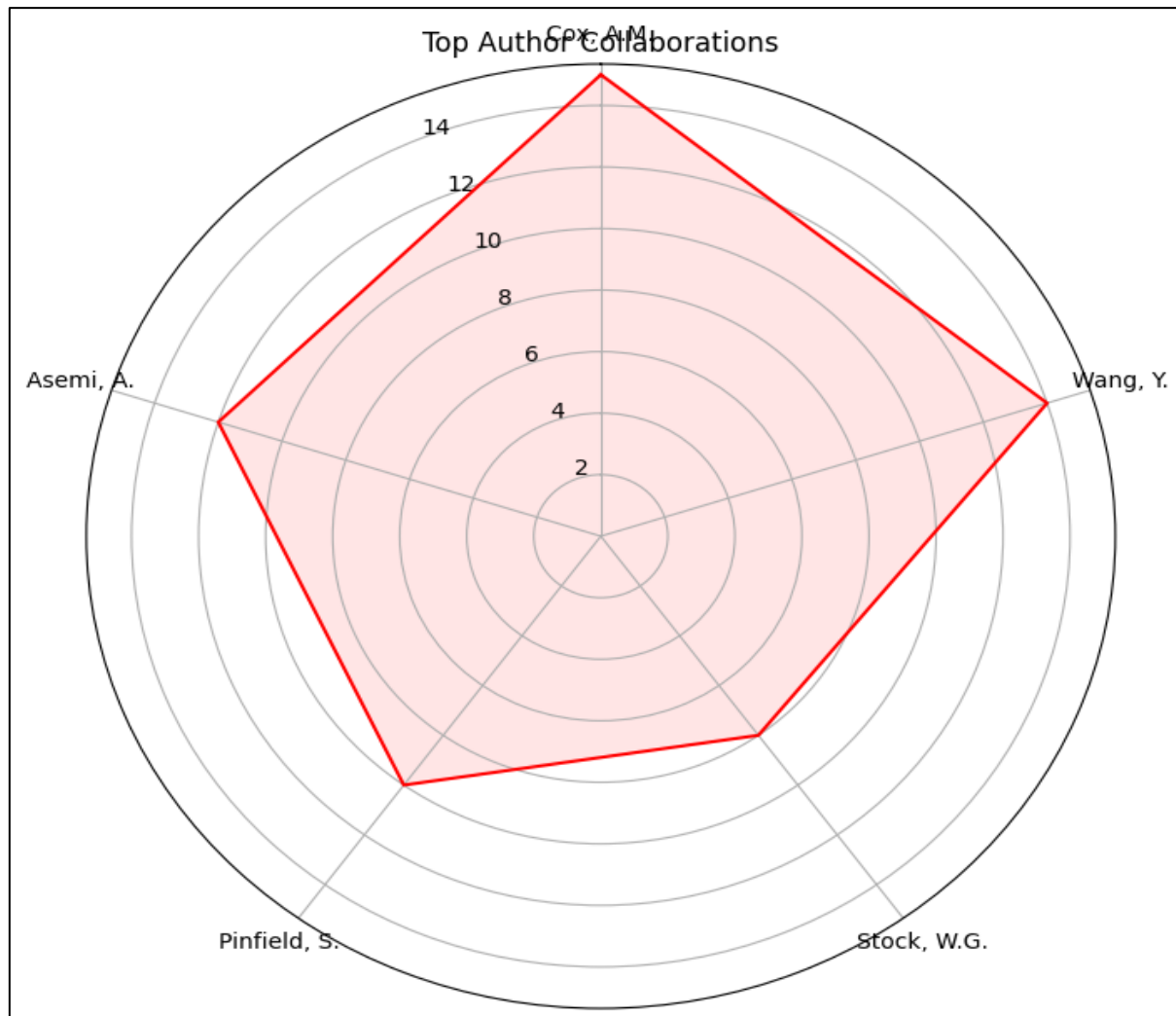


Fig 3 (Co-authorship Network)

Authors like W.G. Stock (Germany) and Y. Wang (China) show strong international partnerships within Northern institutions, but their citation networks rarely extend to researchers in India or Nigeria who are focusing on information equity. This fragmentation supports our hypothesis of a "Two-Speed Adoption" cycle: resource-rich libraries are automating the status quo through high-tech investment, while resource-constrained libraries are attempting to "leapfrog" traditional barriers through grassroots AI literacy and multilingual support (Mishra, 2026; Salifu, A. et al. 2025).

➤ Temporal Phases of Evolution

The results identify three distinct evolutionary phases of AI in LIS:

- Phase I: The Foundational Stage (2010–2017): Characterized by small-scale experiments with expert

systems and basic data mining. Adoption was limited to a few pioneering US and European institutions (Islam & Guangwei, 2025).

- Phase II: The Implementation Surge (2018–2022): Marked by the institutionalization of AI in national policies (e.g., China) and the rise of robotics and deep learning for cataloging automation (Zhang et al., 2025; Wang & Breeding, 2019).
- Phase III: The Generative Revolution (2023–2025): Post-ChatGPT, the focus shifted toward "Interactive Intelligence." This phase saw a spike in keywords related to LLMs, LibraryGPT frameworks, and "Critical AI Literacy" (Mishra, 2026; Deng et al., 2024).

The temporal data confirms that while Northern countries led Phase II, Phase III is being increasingly defined by Southern narratives of equity and human-centered design,

catalyzed by the accessibility of Large Language Models (Mishra, 2026).

V. DISCUSSION: BRIDGING THE GLOBAL AI DIVIDE

The findings of this comparative bibliometric analysis (2010–2025) demonstrate that Artificial Intelligence is no longer a peripheral experiment but a structural reality of the modern academic library. However, the identified thematic fracture between regions suggests that the "AI Revolution" is progressing at two different speeds and with two fundamentally different sets of priorities. This section interprets these results through the lens of Technological Determinism versus Information Equity, exploring how the field can bridge its current silos to ensure a resilient global knowledge ecosystem.

➤ *The Dichotomy of Adoption: Efficiency vs. Empowerment*

Our analysis confirms a clear bifurcation in research priorities between the Global North and the Global South. For the Global North and China, the adoption of AI is driven by a narrative of "Technological Determinism," where intelligent systems are viewed as the inevitable next step in the evolution toward the "Smart Library" (Novida et al., 2024; Hauer, 2017). In these contexts, research focuses on utilizing Neural Networks and Large Language Models (LLMs) to optimize operational efficiency—specifically through automated metadata extraction and advanced scientific research support (Ming, 2025; Wang, 2022). This approach assumes a high-resource baseline where technology is used to enhance existing digital dominance.

In contrast, the literature from the Global South, led by recent findings from India, Nigeria, and Pakistan, frames AI as a "Survival Mechanism." As Mishra (2026) highlights, for libraries in emerging economies, AI-driven services are being leveraged specifically to bridge the digital divide. Rather than focusing on high-cost robotics, these researchers emphasize the use of conversational AI to humanize the user interface, overcoming linguistic barriers and providing essential research literacy to under-represented scholar populations (Mishra, 2026; Ahmad & Ali, 2025). This suggests that for the Global South, AI is a tool for Information Equity—a means to democratize access in environments where staffing and physical resources are severely constrained (Gupta & Rani, 2022).

➤ *Collaboration Networks and the "Ethics-Implementation" Gap*

A significant contribution of this study is the identification of a "structural hole" in global research collaboration. Our network visualizations demonstrate that while the volume of publication is rising, the integration of technical and ethical communities is stalling. Technical developers (predominantly in Cluster 1) and ethical framework authors (Cluster 2) continue to operate in separate networks. This disconnect is particularly visible in the co-authorship gap between the UK-China axis and emerging researchers in India and Africa.

The implications of this gap are profound: it suggests that technical AI tools are being developed and deployed without sufficient integration of the ethical guardrails—such as privacy, algorithmic fairness, and transparency—that are being theorized by the LIS community (Cox, 2020; Igbinovia & Danquah 2025). As noted by Lo (2024), the lack of critical AI literacy among staff remains a primary barrier. Without international partnerships that bridge the technical expertise of the North with the socio-contextual frameworks of the South, there is a legitimate risk of "algorithmic colonialism," where Western-trained AI models are imported into diverse contexts without regard for local epistemological nuances (Igbinovia & Danquah).

➤ *Actionable Framework: The L-A-I-D Model*

To address these divides, this study proposes the L-A-I-D (Library AI-Equity Integration & Deployment) Framework as a strategic roadmap for the profession:

- **Contextual Assessment (C.A.):** Academic libraries must resist "copy-pasting" Northern-centric AI models. Following the Indian model (Mishra, 2026), institutions should conduct deep stakeholder needs assessments to ensure AI tools (like multilingual chatbots) solve specific local information access problems.
- **Ethics-by-Design (E.D.):** Reviewers and practitioners must demand that technical implementation papers explicitly address data privacy and bias. Ethical guardrails should be integrated into the coding phase, prioritizing explainable AI (XAI) that allows librarians to interpret algorithmic recommendations (Huang et al., 2025).
- **International Knowledge Exchange (I.E.):** international LIS bodies (e.g., IFLA) should incentivize joint research projects between high-prolific Northern institutions and equity-focused Southern researchers to create more inclusive, representative training datasets.
- **Inequality Audits (I.A.):** Libraries should perform regular "algorithmic audits" to evaluate how AI affects diverse user groups, ensuring that the move toward automation does not inadvertently exclude users with lower digital fluency (Mishra, 2026).

VI. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study provides a unique comparative lens, it is bounded by several constraints. First, the reliance on the Scopus database may lead to an under-representation of scholarship published in local languages in the Global South, although this was mitigated by cross-referencing with verified Indian datasets (Mishra, 2026). Second, keyword co-occurrence analysis is sensitive to terminology shifts; for instance, the term "Generative AI" only gained dominance after 2022, which may skew longitudinal clusters.

Future research should focus on longitudinal ethnographic studies that track the real-world impact of the L-A-I-D framework in diverse library settings. Additionally, investigating the environmental sustainability of high-energy AI models in libraries is an emerging area of concern that requires urgent bibliometric attention.

VII. CONCLUSION

The "Revolution" of Artificial Intelligence in academic libraries is a fractured global phenomenon. By analyzing 512 Scopus-indexed publications from 2010 to 2025, this study has demonstrated a fundamental disconnect between the technocentric drive for efficiency in the Global North and the equity-driven push for access in the Global South. The surge in research volume masks a critical "structural hole" where technical innovation and ethical oversight are operating in silos.

The insights provided by Mishra (2026) regarding the Indian context are a vital corrective to the prevailing technological determinism of the field. The future of academic librarianship lies not in the blind pursuit of algorithmic complexity, but in the intentional creation of resilient, ethical, and inclusive knowledge systems. By prioritizing "adaptation" over "adoption" and fostering global collaborative networks, the academic library can fulfill its role as a beacon of information equity in the age of intelligent machines.

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