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Research Article

Information Literacy Research in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science: A Bibliometric Analysis

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ABSTRACT

As a core ability to identify, evaluate, obtain and effectively use information in various academic and social contexts, information literacy becomes an important research direction in the context of library and information science. Using bibliographic data retrieved from the Dimensions database, this study examines the growth, impact, patterns of collaboration, and intellectual structure of information literacy research published in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science. This study adopts a bibliometric research approach, using multiple quantitative and science mapping methods - publication growth analysis, citation analysis, authorship and affiliation analysis, Lotka's Law, co-authorship, keyword co-occurrence analysis, co-citation analysis, and RPYS. These findings demonstrate the development of information literacy research, showing prominent authors, institutions, countries, the most-cited publications and significant knowledge domains to the field. Results indicate that information literacy research is evolving to be increasingly interdisciplinary and supported by emergent themes pertaining to digital literacy, information behaviour, academic learning, and technology-supported information practices. The research provides significant perspectives on the historical evolution, present status, and future directions of information literacy scholarship and aids in comprehending the role of information literacy scholarship in the present research landscape across the field of library and information science.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis, Citation, Dimensions Database, Information Literacy, Journal of Librarianship and Information Science, Research Trends.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, research on Information Literacy (IL) has evolved significantly, reflecting broader trends in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS). Initially, IL research focused on developing skills for using information sources and technologies, but it has since expanded to include ethical and social dimensions, such as digital inclusion and copyright issues, particularly in Latin America (Hatschbach and Olinto, 2008). Bibliometric analyses reveal that IL research has been characterised by a steady output, with a focus on collaboration and teaching methods, although the adoption of frameworks like the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education has been slow (Houlihan *et al.*, 2020). The evolution of IL research is also marked by a shift towards more interdisciplinary approaches, integrating cognitive perspectives and sentiment analysis (Habibi *et al.*, 2021). This shift is part of a broader trend in LIS, where traditional topics like library science have become less prevalent, while areas such as information retrieval and bibliometrics remain dominant (Han, 2020; Habibi *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, the application of bibliometric methods has highlighted the importance of IL in the context of information resource construction and library management, which are emerging as hot topics in the field (Wang, 2022). The international perspective shows that while IL research in Spanish-speaking regions follows global trends, it also retains unique characteristics, such as a strong focus on bibliometric research and a slower engagement with technological and educational aspects (García-Marco *et al.*, 2020). Overall, the focus of IL research has broadened to encompass a wider range of skills and knowledge, reflecting the dynamic nature of information handling requirements in the digital age (Behrens, 1994).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Information literacy is a prominent topic in library and information science research, with significant attention given to academic libraries and higher education. The Journal of Academic Librarianship is noted as a leading source, with information

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literacy being a trending topic from 2019 to 2021(Tupan, 2023; Ali *et al.*, 2022). In JOLIS, information literacy, public libraries, and academic libraries are among the most considerable subjects (Haseli *et al.*, 2024). The analysis identifies productive authors and institutions, with the University of Illinois and Padjadjaran University being notable contributors (Hirjani *et al.*, 2025; Ali *et al.*, 2022). Collaboration is highlighted as a key factor in improving research quality, with international collaboration networks being mapped, although some authors exhibit low collaboration (Haseli *et al.*, 2024) (Nabi and Dar, 2026). The bibliometric analysis reveals a diverse range of document types, with research articles and book reviews being highly produced in JOLIS (Haseli *et al.*, 2024; Barman and Rahman, 2025). The analysis also shows a significant rise in research activity, particularly in altmetrics and library science, with Mendeley and Twitter being central to research dissemination (Nabi and Dar, 2026; Barman *et al.*, 2025).

A study by Park and Kim identified 908 articles on information literacy published across 214 journals, with a notable increase in publications over time. Key journals include Reference Services Review and The Journal of Academic Librarianship, which have shown a rising trend in IL-related articles (Park and Kim, 2011). Akcan and Ablak's research highlights that the highest number of IL publications in education were recorded in 2018, with English being the predominant language. The USA and China are leading in academic publications on IL (Akcan and Ablak, 2022). Major descriptors in IL research include "user training" and "students," indicating a strong focus on educational settings and the development of IL skills among learners (Park and Kim, 2011). Keywords such as "media literacy," "teaching strategies," and "digital" are frequently used, reflecting the integration of IL with digital and media literacy in educational research (Akcan and Ablak, 2022). The application of bibliometric methods, such as Bradford's law of scattering and Lotka's law, has been used to analyse IL research trends and characterise its evolution over time (Nazim and Ahmad, 2007). Bruce's analysis of the emerging collective consciousness in IL research identifies five dimensions, including sectoral location, research approaches, and disciplinary influences, which contribute to understanding the research territory (Bruce, 2000). While the focus on educational contexts and competencies is prevalent, there is also a need to explore IL in other sectors and its broader societal impact. The integration of IL with other literacies, such as scientific literacy, highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the field and the potential for further research in diverse contexts (Klucevsek, 2017).

OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the rise and evolution of information literacy research published in Journal of Librarianship and Information Science during the period studied (2015-2025) using data extracted from the Dimensions database.
- To analyze the publication productivity and authorship pattern of information literacy research with special emphasis on the contribution of prolific authors, institutions and countries.
- To identify the most cited papers, and journals, respectively, and the central authors and cited references in the information literacy research based on citation analysis.
- To analyze the co-authorship networks, institutional collaboration, and international research partnerships in information literacy research.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. **RQ1:** What is the number of articles published and trend of Information Literacy (IL) research published in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science during the study period?
2. **RQ2:** What are the authorship patterns, leading contributors, productive institutions, and countries in information literacy research?
3. **RQ3:** What have been the most impactful publications, authors, and references by citation in information literacy research?
4. **RQ4:** What are the collaboration patterns of authors, institutions, and countries in information literacy publications?

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a bibliometric approach to analyse the evolution, productivity, impact, and intellectual structure of information literacy research published in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science using records extracted from the Dimensions database. The using tools used are Biblioshiny, R, and VOSviewer.

Search Key

'Information literacy' in title and abstract; Publication Year is 2015 or 2016 or 2017 or 2018 or 2019 or 2020 or 2021 or 2022 or 2023 or 2024 or 2025; Fields of Research (ANZSRC 2020) is 4610 Library and Information Studies; Source Title is Journal of Librarianship and Information Science.

Figure 1 shows the PRISMA flow diagram illustrates the systematic steps for identifying, screening, and determining eligibility and inclusion of records for the bibliometric analysis of information literacy research in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science with data sourced from the Dimensions database. Using the search terms “information literacy,” a total of 87,921 records were identified from a title and abstract search. After filtering by

publication year (2015-2025): 27,647 were excluded based on selection criteria of publication year; 60,274 records remained.

Next, subject category filtering was performed and all records were kept that: belong to Library and Information Studies (4610) dropping 48, 362 records from the other subject areas. Next, we refined the full-text filtered set using the journal filter, which yielded 111 documents published in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science, while 11,801 records were excluded as they were not published in the selected journal. A total of 111 studies were included for bibliometric analysis, constituting the final dataset to study trends in publication, citation impact, authorship, collaboration network and the intellectual structure of information literacy research.

Data analysis

Figure 2 shows the selected research domain had a total of 111 documents published from one source between 2015-2025, which shows a great annual growth rate of 36.83% while performing the bibliometric analysis. A total of 277 authors contributed to the dataset, 20 documents by single authors demonstrate the mix of individual and collective research efforts. Mean, co-authors per document: 2.91 Mean, international co-authorship: 16.22% Grand total: 226) #74504 (549.23 per document) #27212 (3.03 per document) Mean, international co-authorship #72495 (16.92% per document) #18181 (20.96. The publication has an average document age of 4.9 years, and has been cited 3,993 times, indicating the research area is still being actively developed. The documents have an average citation impact of 18.28 citations per document implying a large scientific impact and increasing visibility for research outputs in this area.

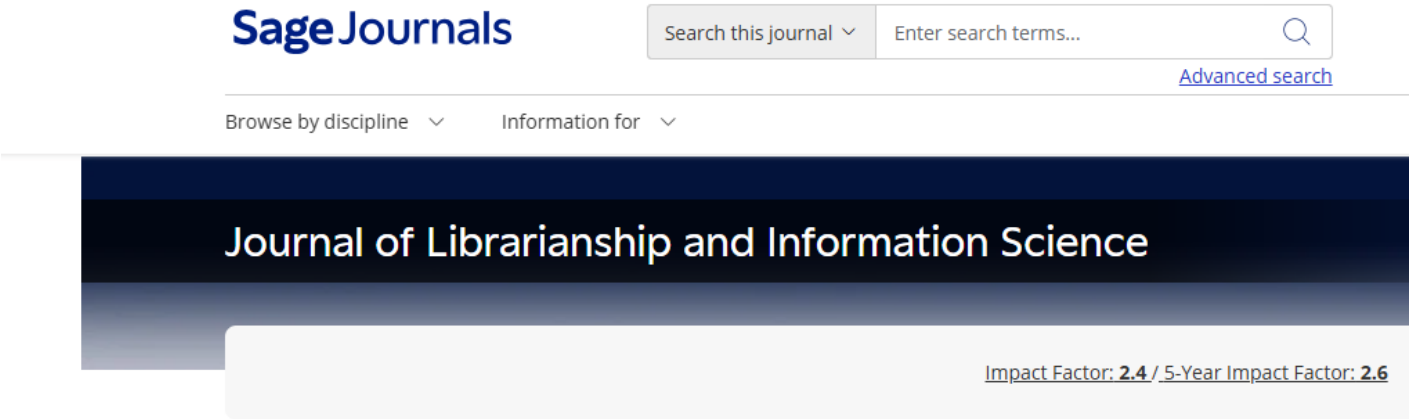
Annual production

Table 1 shows the annual publishing trend from 2015 to 2025 shows a declining but increasing growth pattern of realistic research output. The years 2015 and 2016 marked a single-to-15 articles in publication activity, respectively. In 2017 and 2018, the output was relatively stable with 8 articles in both years, and a decline could be seen in 2019 with only 2 publications. Research output started to recover in the years that followed, with 7 articles published in 2020, 10 articles in 2021, and a significant increase in 2022 where 17 articles were published. While publications were reduced to 10 articles in 2023 and 2024, the peak of research output was achieved in 2025 when 23 articles were published. The trend indicates an increasing scholarly interest in the research area, especially in recent years, characterised by an acceleration of publication activity, showing an increase in attention and development of the field.

Average Citations per Year

Table 2 shows the citation analysis of publications from 2015-2025 shows the differences in the research impact across the years. The year-wise highest mean total citations per article (MeanTCperArt) were noted in 2016 (34.67 citations/article) followed by 2018 (29.88 citations/article) and 2022 (24.06 citations/article), reflecting comparatively more scholarly interest towards publications of these years. As expected, 2025 (4.35 citations/article) and 2023 (7.6 citations/article) had the worst citation impact likely due to them being published more recently giving less time for articles to accumulate citations. The MeanTCperYear for the periods with maximum citation was 2022 (4.81 citations/year), and 2020 (3.33 citations/year), and 2018 (3.32 citations/year) on top of each other with 4.81 citations/year. At the beginning of the curve (2017), N was very little; in detail, it started with two articles in the year 2017, and the number of publications increased heavily reaching 23 publications in 2025. The accumulation of citations exhibited that while recent years display high growth in publication activity, older publications have received more citations based on longer periods of visibility (Figure 3).

The common life cycle analysis of annual publications reveals the growth path and estimated continuing development system of the area of research. The logistic growth model shows that in the earlier years, the growth of publications was slow. The model provides an R^2 of 0.376, indicating the logistic model accounts for a moderate share of the variance in the growth of



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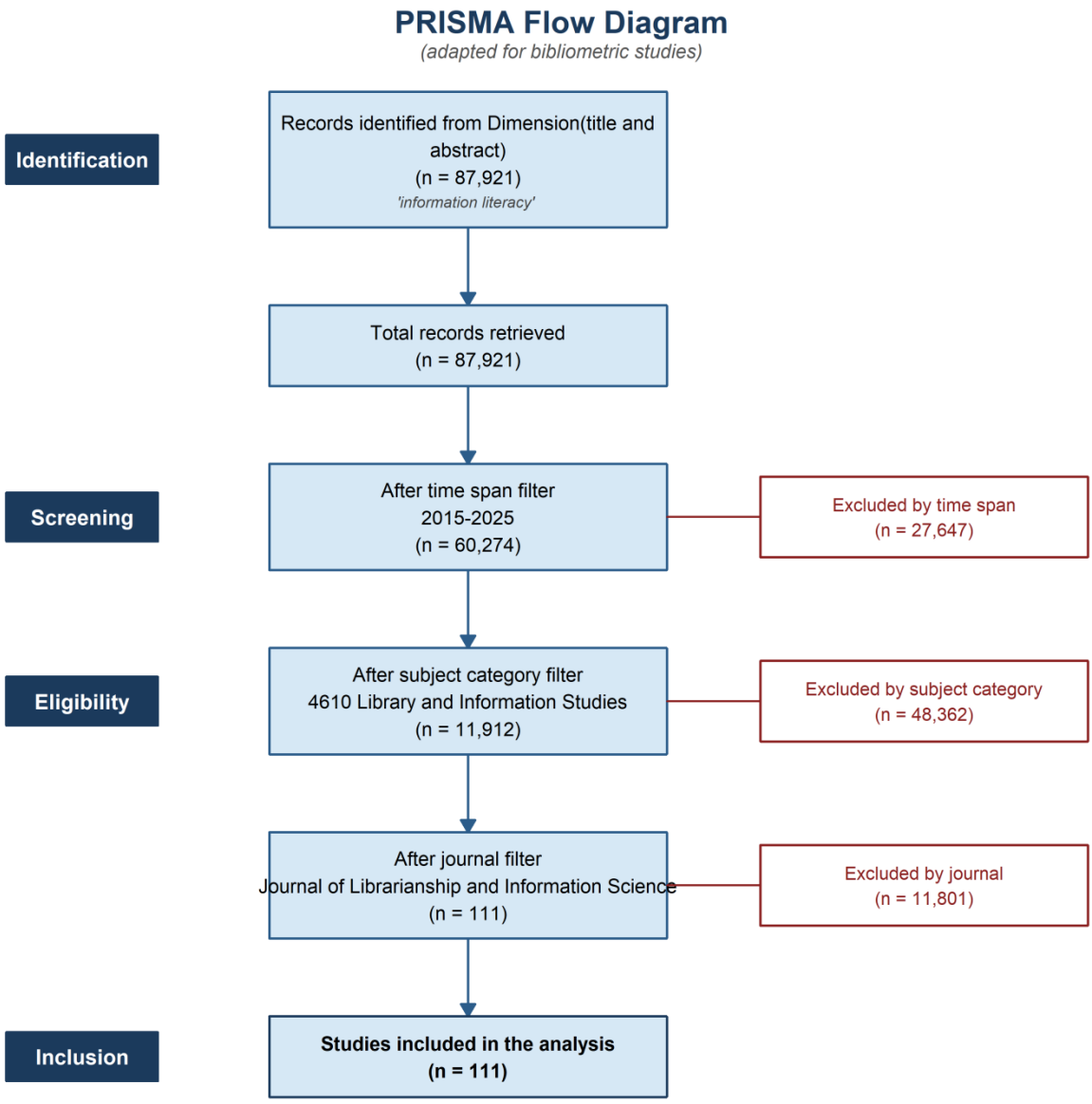

Figure 1: PRISMA flow Diagram.

annual publication rates. The forecast indicates that the research field will peak around the year 2038.5 with an approximated published output of 41 publications per year. Following the peak, it is anticipated that there will be a decline in publication output, suggesting a movement towards maturity and stabilisation of the research area. The data points presented above indicate the growing research interest in the discipline, and it also emerges that the domain is in a growth stage now and can continue its growth before approaching the saturation phase in several decades in the future.

Figure 4 shows the analysis of most locally cited sources also emphasises journals that have played a major role in developing the research area. The Journal of Librarianship and Information Science received the most local citations (170 citations), followed closely by the Journal of Documentation with 168 citations, emphasising their centrality and influence within the scholarly literature.

With 124 citations the Journal of Academic Librarianship came in third, and with 100 citations, the Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology, and Library and Information Science Research each ranked as number four. Other key sources are College and Research Libraries (67 citations), Journal of Information Science (61 citations), Reference Services Review (58 citations), Journal of Information Literacy (53 citations), and The Library Quarterly (51 citations). The distribution of citations shows a small number of specialised



Figure 2: Main Data.

Table 1: Annual Production.

Year	Articles
2015	1
2016	15
2017	8
2018	8
2019	2
2020	7
2021	10
2022	17
2023	10
2024	10
2025	23

journals in the library and field to form a core knowledge base and to relate trends in research and fundamental literature in the field of library and information science.

Figure 5 shows the first look at the most relevant authors reveals the most relevant contributors in the research field according to their number of documents published. Pinto M is the most productive author with 8 documents followed by Sales D with 6 documents. Aharony N, Lloyd A have developed 5 documents each as a sign of their high contributions to the development of the field. Other authors with 4 documents = Fernández-Pascual R, Hicks A, and Naveed MA, and with 3 documents → Casselden B. Aslan A and Bruce C also have lowest publication output from this list with 2 documents each. The distribution of publications by author implies that research activity is highly concentrated among a small cohort of productive scholars, and a number of other researchers contribute minor but significant scholarly outputs, suggesting a mix of established and emerging authors in the field.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of authorship over time denotes trends in the publication patterns and/or research activity of the most productive contributors during the study period. Pinto M has shown continuous research involvement from 2015 to 2025, with several articles published over the years, which illustrates continuous contribution. Sales D also exhibits research activity over a longer time span, with publications reaching over the time period and with significant output in more recent years. Aharony N has contributed regularly during 2017-2021, whereas Lloyd A and Hicks A have been more productive in the last couple of years (where contributions peak around 2022). Fernández-Pascual R and Naveed MA: Have continued to publish in the same journals over the years. Other authors such as Casselden B, Aslan A, and Bruce C had relatively shorter publication periods but produced important research outputs. The differences in publication timelines may suggest that while some authors have been committed to the field for the longer-term, others are new entrants that began to publish primarily during certain periods of relatively high research activity. In general, this temporal distribution indicates the entry of new key researchers in the research field and a gradual expansion of research contributions in this area.

Lotka's Law

Figure 7 shows the analysis of Lotka's Law is the first phase in showing the relationship between the number of documents anyone produces and the ratio of authors that add to the research field. The distribution follows a common pattern in that most of the authors contributed only 1 document (the largest percentage of authors) and its proportion ended up decreasing rapidly as the number of publications increased. Few researchers published more than one document, meaning that highly productive authors represent a narrow slice of the scientific workforce. This trend conforms to the first principle of Lotka's Law, that is: the number of authors is an exponentially decreasing function of their productivity. The illustrated pattern also reflects that this research domain is structurally characterised by a large base of more occasional contributors and a smaller subset of very active authors, a situation that helps in driving knowledge development and scholarly advancement in the field. The fact that the observed and expected distributions are so close together indicates that

Table 2: **Annual Production.**

Year	MeanTCperArt	N	MeanTCperYear	CitableYears
2015	5	1	0.42	12
2016	34.67	15	3.15	11
2017	21	8	2.1	10
2018	29.88	8	3.32	9
2019	19.5	2	2.44	8
2020	23.29	7	3.33	7
2021	20.5	10	3.42	6
2022	24.06	17	4.81	5
2023	7.6	10	1.9	4
2024	10.5	10	3.5	3
2025	4.35	23	2.17	2

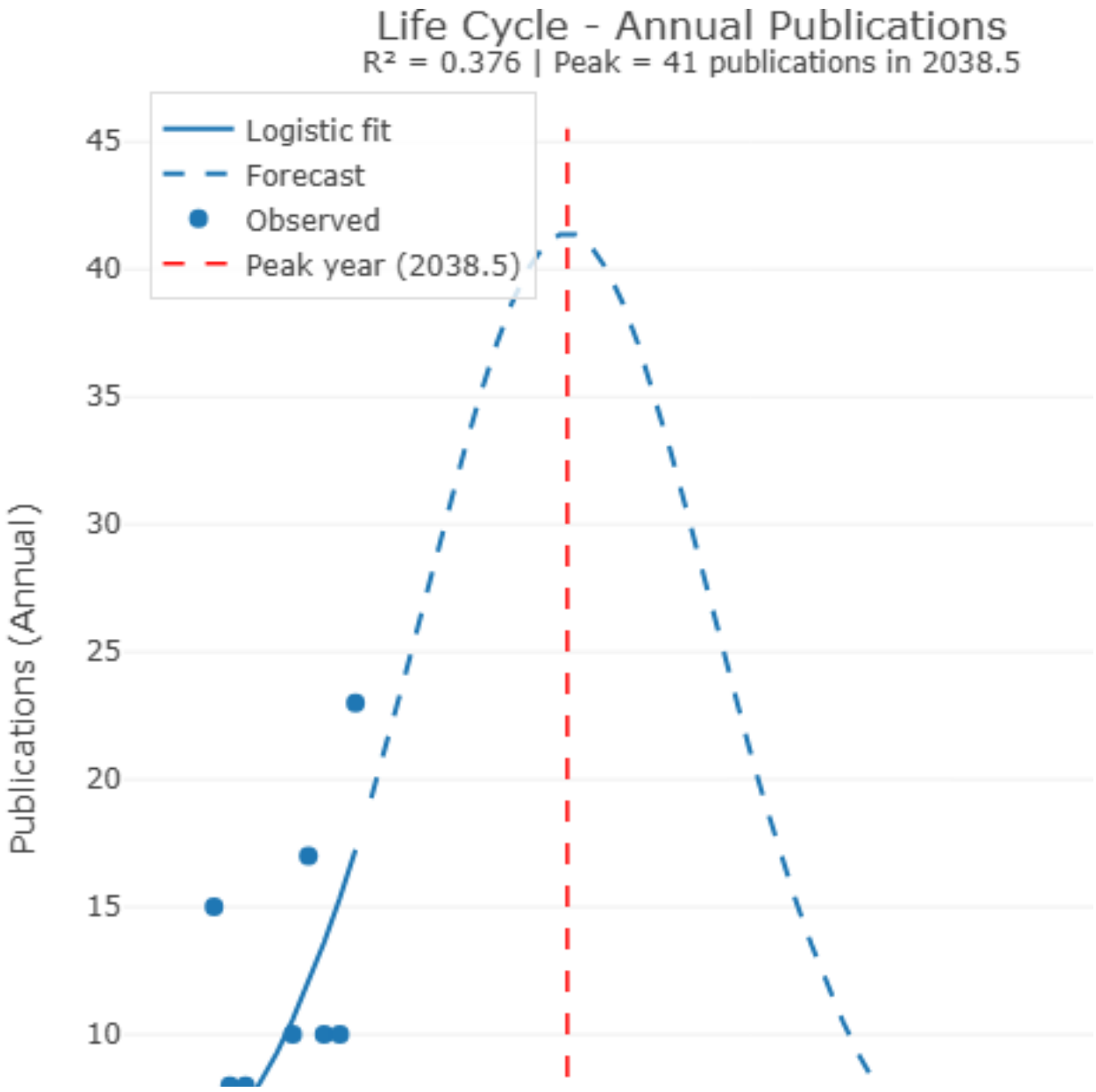

Figure 3: Life cycle.

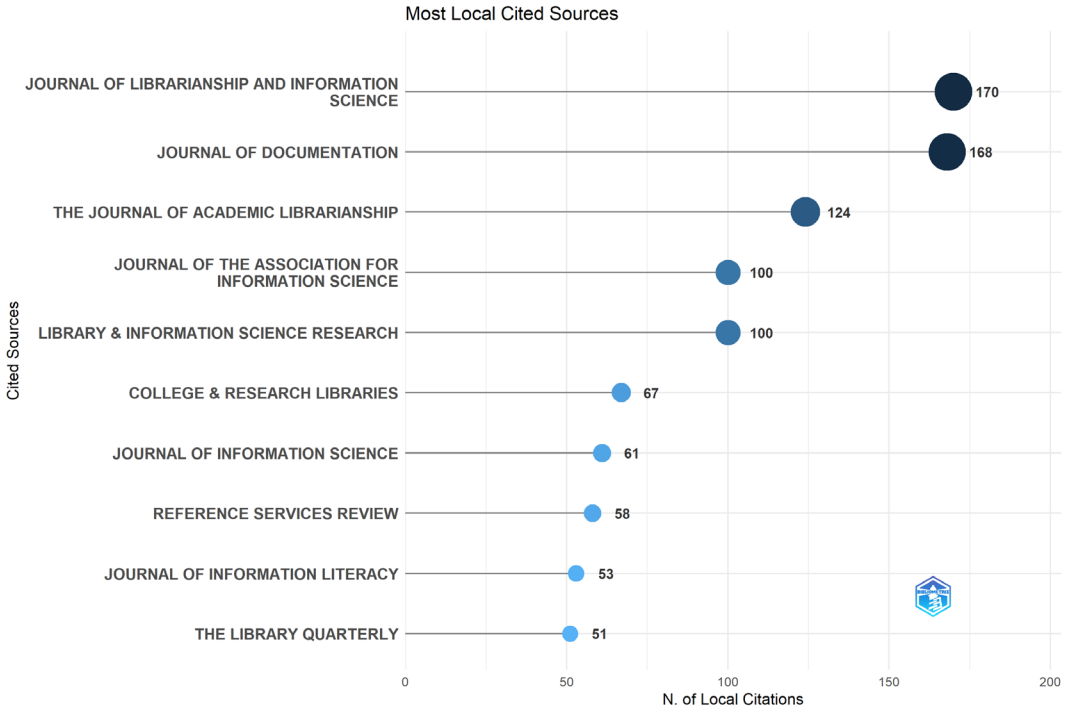

Figure 4: Most local Cited Sources.

the pattern of author productivity for publications of this type is overall consistent with the bibliometric productivity pattern well documented in the literature.

Most Relevant Affiliations

Figure 8 shows the per most relevant affiliations indicates a brief overview of the most influential institutions involved in the research output of the given field. The leading institutions contributing to the production of included articles are: University of Granada, Bar-Ilan University and Jaume I University, all producing 5 articles, and thus strongly engaged with the field of research. 4 articles from University of Sargodha are followed by 3 articles from Northumbria University, University of Boras, University of Granada (3 articles in total by two authors as per dataset). The others, with 2 articles each, were Munzur University, Northumbria University and Robert Gordon University. The distribution shows that research productivity is distributed among various international research institutions, with several institutions being more active in publishing papers. The pattern of affiliation shows that many institutions contribute to the field and that salient universities have roles in driving knowledge creation in the field.

Most Productive Affiliation

Figure 9 shows the time-trend plot for the production by affiliation shows the gradual increase in the contribution of the top producing institutions during the analysis period. The University of Granada has the most steady and immediate growth reaching 5 articles as maximum output in a year, which demonstrates that research activity is preserved through the years. The gradual increase of publication productivity is evident for Bar-Ilan University and for Jaume I University as well, although their publication production reaches 5 articles each, they both represent a strong and stable contribution to the field. 4 articles in the later years: university of Sargodha. The university of sargodha also shows a steady rise in the latter years while the other 2, Northumbria University and the university of borås if moderate growth with 3 articles in the later years. The time series shows that the majority of institutions gradually increased their research on the topic of study after 2016, with a visible accelerometer of productivity during 2019-2023. The trend reveals increased institutional participation overall, with a few leading institutions driving contribution (the majority of the contributions come from a few institutions) and many others having emerging involvement in the research space.

Figure 10 shows the country-wise scientific production analysis shows the geographical distribution of the total contributions of all research papers. Research output is distributed through multiple continents, showing international participatory and widespread academic activity within the field. Significant contributors include the US, China and some European countries, often with higher levels of scientific productivity than any other regions. The UK, Spain, Australia, India and Brazil also figure prominently among countries producing significant research, indicating a strong research presence as a source of new knowledge. Emerging contributions from Asian, African, and South American countries also provide evidence of the gradual extension of research interest beyond the traditional scientific centers Despite the overall geographical pattern indicating international characteristics of the research domain, individual

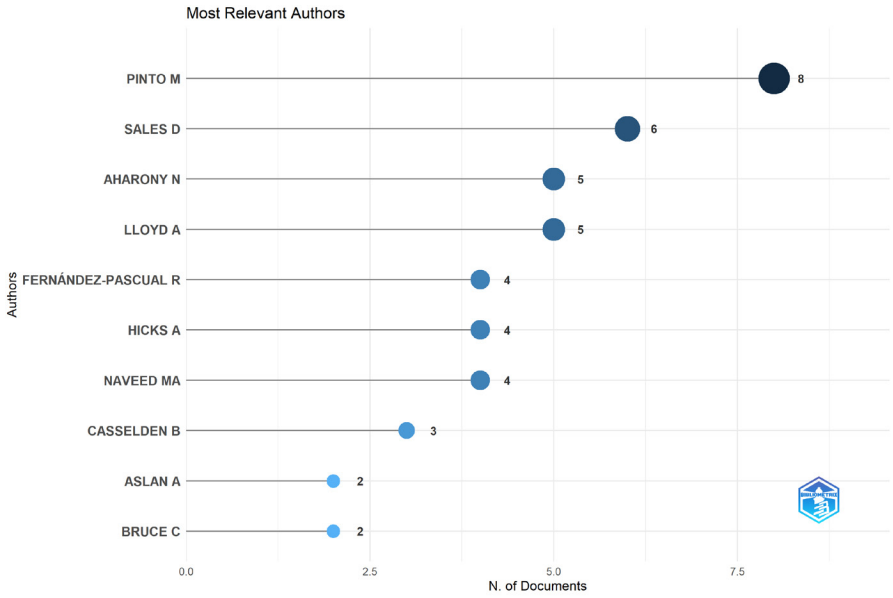

Figure 5: Most relevant authors.

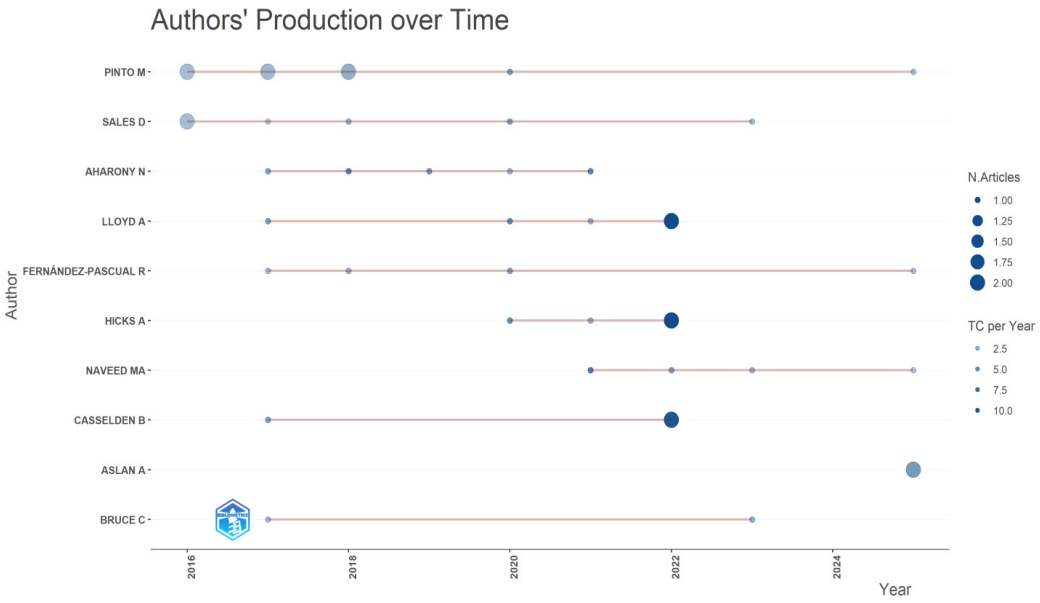

Figure 6: Author's Production over Time.

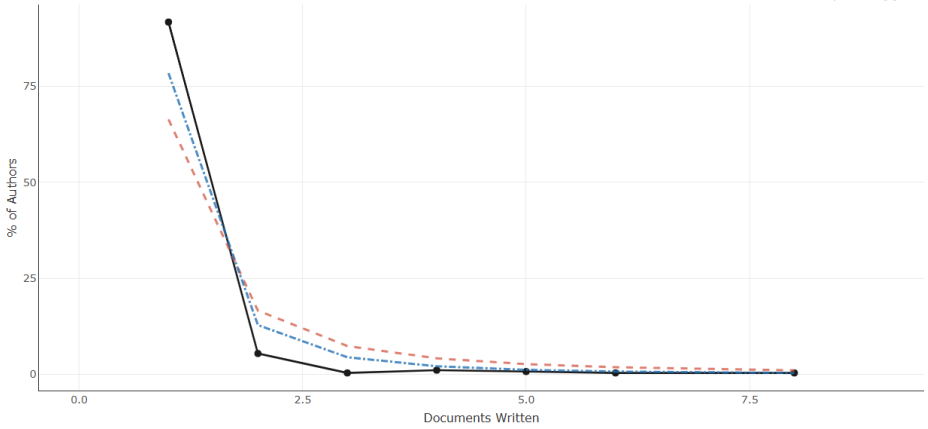

Figure 7: Lotka's Law.

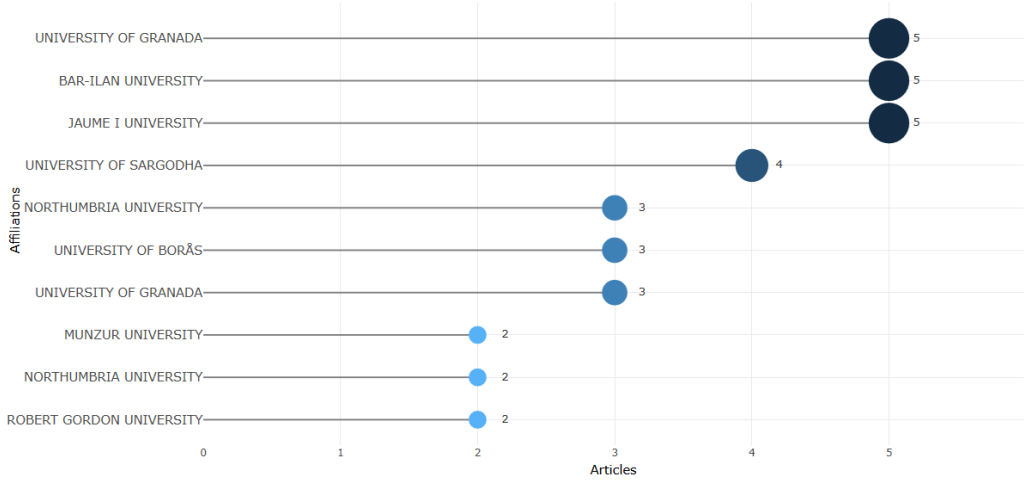

Figure 8: Most Relevant Affiliations.

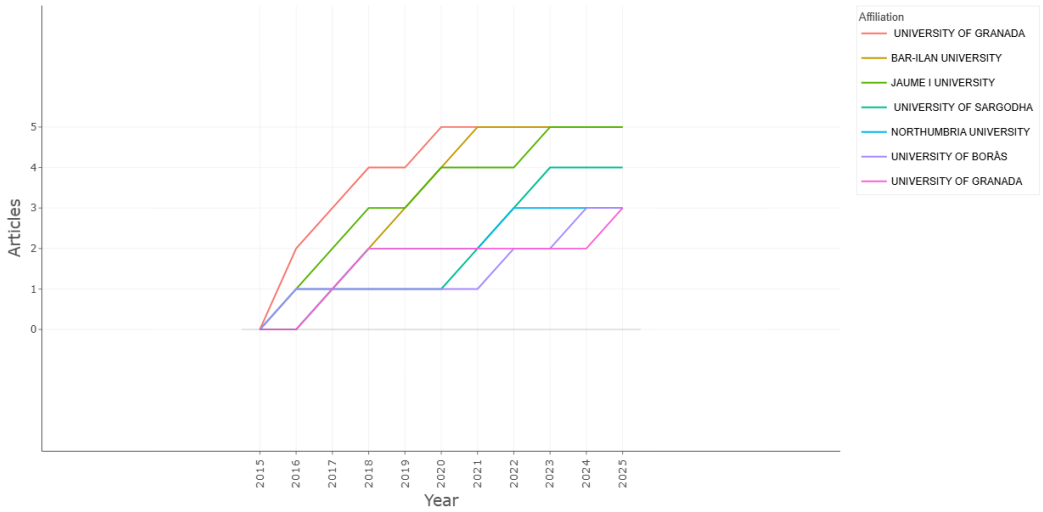

Figure 9: Most Productive Affiliation.

contributions come from both developed and developing countries, hence showing enhancement of global collaboration and dispersing the scholarly activities in a regional spatial.

Figure 11 shows the of most globally cited documents highlights key publications that are exceptionally well-cited in the research domain. The highest number of global citations (178 citations) received from the document of Koltay T. (2016) in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science, followed by Cox A (2022) of the same journal (154 citations) which indicates that they are most impactful. The other most-cited works are Benselin JC. Middleton L. (2018), 77 citations, Noh Y. (2016), Martzoukou K. (2021) 71 citations each) - table A.7 Key studies, Chen G. (2024); Atoy MB. (2020) Aharony N. (2018) and Marcella R. (2018) -works cited 49-68 times. The fact that this list is primarily composed of articles published in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science sheds light on this journal as an important venue for the dissemination of impactful research in this area. The citation pattern reveals that a small number of very influential studies have had a disproportionate impact on shaping the theoretical and empirical progress in the field.

Figure 12 shows the RPYS analysis provides a historical evolution, enabling identification of important references which have contributed to the evolution of a research domain. Results indicated the cited references were mostly part of earlier years of publications, with some major peaks which indicate periods when major pioneering works were published and cited widely by following publications. The peak citation intensity is in the beginning years, which are likely to have contained key contributions that established the important concepts and theoretical landscapes within the field. There were visible peaks at 2002, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2013 and 2017, showing that significant and noteworthy scholarly contributions remain influential during these times. The citation curve slowly declines and plateaus after the first growth phase, indicating the shift from a dependency on foundational literature to a more mature state of knowledge building, characterised by expanding and diversified knowledge sources. The research papers yield an image of developments and help researchers learn the quantitative evolution of intellectual foundations while singling out past references that have shaped and transitioned the past of the research field.

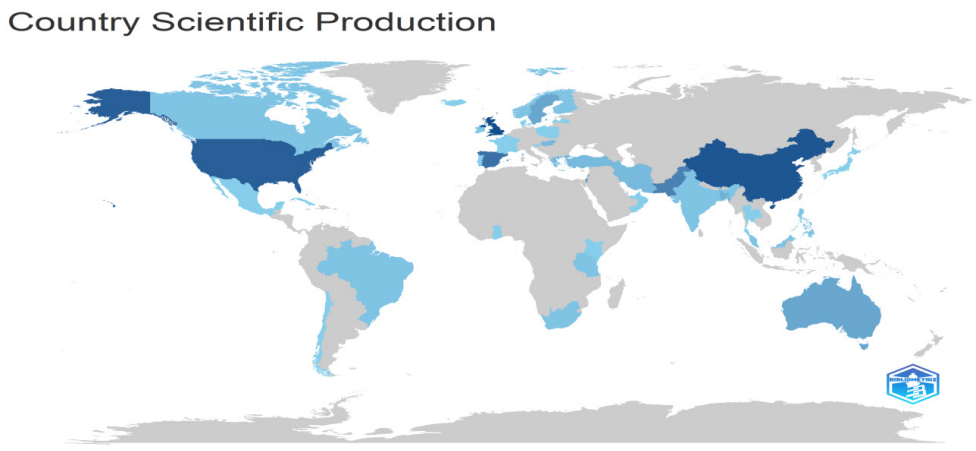

Figure 10: Country Scientific Production.

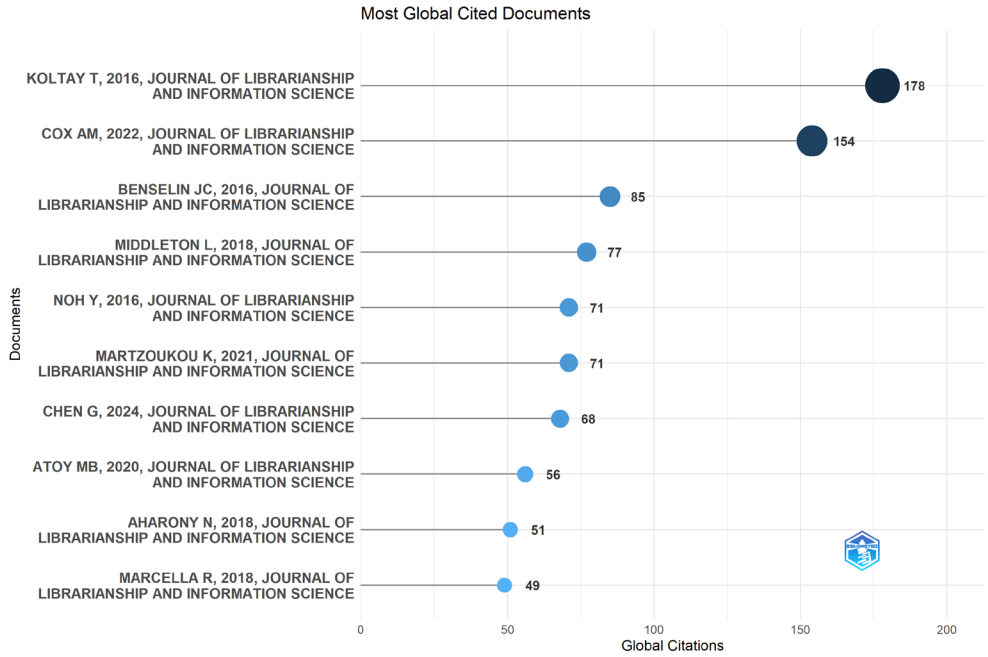

Figure 11: Most global Cited Documents.

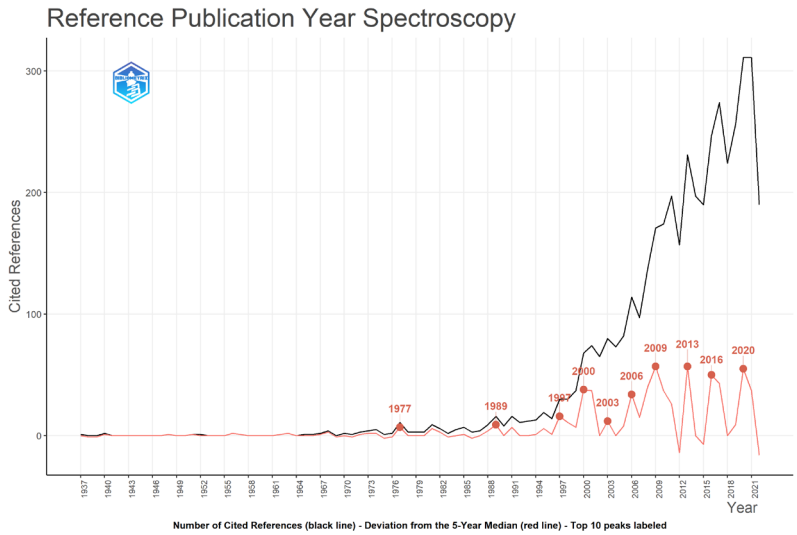

Figure 12: Reference Publication Year Spectroscopy.

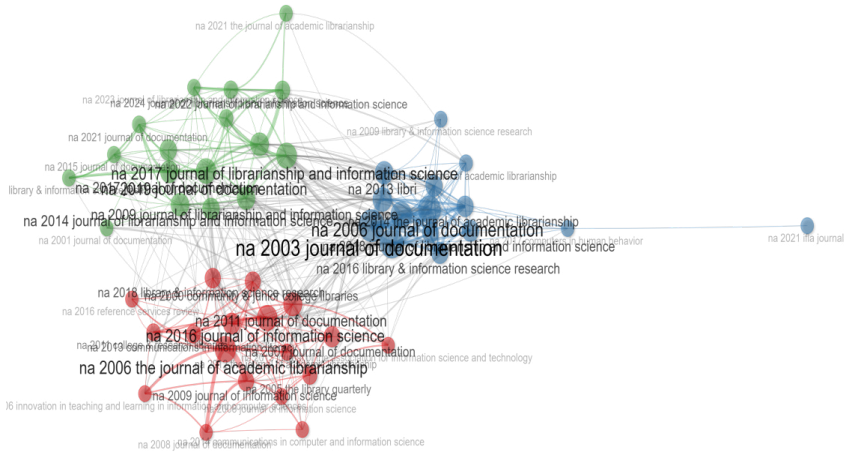

Figure 13: Co-citation network.

Co-citation Network

Figure 13 shows the Mapping of co-citation network from sources frequently cited, gives an overview of the intellectual relationships and knowledge structure in the research area. This network is composed of several distinct clusters, illustrated here using colors, each of which represents groups of similar studies that further specific thematic domains. The green cluster indicates a prominent network of connected foundational and conceptual studies, which is in contrast to the red cluster, emphasising another collection of closely linked references, targeting connected research perspectives. The blue cluster illustrates a different but detangled group of influential publications with certain nodes demonstrating high connectivity across other clusters, suggesting these are key players in assimilating knowledge. Relying on the connectivity and size of the nodes, the relative importance of sources and the citations given to the individual sources are represented, with a larger and centrally located node being a more important scholarly source. The first cluster that you see, called "Clusters Overview", shows the relative density of connections of all the clusters with each other helps you illustrate the multidisciplinary nature of the field as well as how unique areas of different streams of research have jointly contributed to the evolution of the knowledge base?

FINDINGS

This study presents a bibliometric analysis of information literacy research published in Journal of Librarianship and Information Science and based on the Dimensions database to produce an overview of its development, productivity, impact, and intellectual development. The results show an overall increase in literary productions throughout the study period, suggesting that information literacy as a theme in library and information science research has gained significance. The analysis highlights major contributing authors, prolific institutions, leading countries, and main source contributions, indicating the collaborative and global scale of research evolution. Citation analysis reveals extremely influential publications and citations that have helped to lay the conceptual and theoretical groundwork for information literacy research, whereas author productivity analysis illustrates a distribution pattern that conforms to the well-documed and anticipated bibliometric laws such as Lotka's Law. Co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence mapping as results of the network analyses substantiate the establishment of prominent research clusters related to information literacy education, digital literacy, academic libraries, information behaviour and emerging technology-driven learning environments. The research also highlights developing research patterns and knowledge frameworks, reinforcing the transition of traditional library education toward a more comprehensive paradigm around digital literacy, critical citizenship, and perseverance of learning. These results contribute to the research objectives by examining publication growth, identifying key contributors and important collaborations, evaluating academic impact, and mapping the intellectual and thematic development of information literacy research, and ultimately building a comprehensive landscape of the field that reveals current trends and future research opportunities.

LIMITATION

In assessing the results, it should be considered that the present study has some limitations. The analysis is limited to publications indexed in the Dimensions database and specifically articles in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science, and thus relevant studies available in the other databases or journals are missing. The analysis is based on bibliographic records that are then for consideration during 2015-2025.

CONCLUSION

This bibliometric will give a complete overview of the development, research productivity, citation impact, and intellectual structure of information literacy published in the Journal of Librarianship and Information Science based on data from the Dimensions

database. Findings: The results demonstrate the scholarly interest has been increased in information literacy studies with an increase in publication output with influential contributions from scholars, institutions and all of the countries. This citation analysis clearly identifies the rich source of both influential publications and influential authors that have defined the concepts and theories of the field. The analysis of authorships and collaborations illustrates the contribution of single researchers and global academic networks in the development of Information Literacy (IL) research respectively. The thematic and conceptual mapping demonstrates that information literacy research has moved beyond the confines of its historical focuses on skills and library instruction to address wider aspects of digital literacy, learning, information behaviour, and new technological contexts. This paper contributes to a dynamic, interdisciplinary, and emergent research area and reveals valuable insights into research and publication trends, the most influential contributions, current research themes, and emerging areas that may help guide future research directions for library and information science scholars and practitioners.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANZSRC: Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification; **CSC:** Cancer Stem Cell; **IL:** Information Literacy; **JOLIS:** Journal of Librarianship and Information Science; **LIS:** Library and Information Science; **LISA:** Library and Information Science Abstracts; **MeanTCperArt:** Mean Total Citations per Article; **MeanTCperYear:** Mean Total Citations per Year; **PRISMA:** Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses; **RPYS:** Reference Publication Year Spectroscopy; **RQ:** Research Question; **UK:** United Kingdom; **USA:** United States of America.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on request.

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