

Chapter 1

A Bibliometric Analysis of Digital Ethics and Human Rights

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ABSTRACT

In order to expand the current literature assessing the quantity and quality of the worldwide research production in the subject of digital ethics and human rights, a bibliometric analysis was conducted for the period 1966–2024. The Scopus.com database was consulted with the “digital ethics and human rights” keywords searched. The database identified 537 documents. In terms of the publication production in the subject over the studied period, the United States of America demonstrated the highest number of publications across the world, with the United Kingdom in the second place. The bibliometric data provided is comprehensive but calls for understanding how the research outcomes in digital ethics and human rights field has impacted society. Therefore, the future research in the field of digital ethics and human rights is expected to be based on the transition from theorising to practical

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development aspects, per se.

INTRODUCTION

The field of digital ethics and human rights is an evolving field integrated at the point of digital innovation in societal values. The central problem lies in just and equitable integration of emerging technologies within the context of established human rights. The problem is complicated by daily life's deep penetration by digital technologies that give rise to concerns such as digital privacy violation, algorithmic discriminative, the digital divide, erosion of democratic discourse via social media platforms, and so forth. Biological problems like digital privacy, freedom of speech, and the right to access that information that can be simply anchored to human rights. Technology is evolving at a speed that outpaces the current building and aligning human systems. Thus, it is important to ensure digital progress is embedded in the human dignity values and social justice (Linnet Taylor, 2017). Further, the COVID 19 pandemic has created an exceptional dependence on digital technology as virtually every aspect of human life including, work, education, and health such as telehealth and contact tracking have migrated into digital spaces. The rapid shift into digital spaces have exposed the flaws in our technological systems and have necessitated overriding the need to re-evaluate digital ethics and human rights. Prior to the covid pandemic, there was already a pre-existing discussion around the need for digital ethics. However, the post-pandemic era has necessitated a reassessment following most countries' post-pandemic surge in digital surveillance, violation of data privacy, and increased artificial intelligence application in monitoring and containing misinformation and disease (Schwendicke et al., 2020) .

This is why it is critical to explore how digital ethics and human rights have changed from the pre- to post-pandemic times, as the pandemic has become a massive catalyst for radical reform, for the better or worse. The change has brought innovations that shed the light on opportunities digital technologies might bring; however, it has also intensified risks related to privacy, autonomy, and equity – the core of human rights (Sandars, 2009). For instance, as contact-tracing apps have proved their immense benefit to public health, they have also revealed many ethical pitfalls related to surveillance and personal data abuse. To sum up, the digital revolution makes it imperative to make major adjustments to ethical frameworks to secure human rights in the world of digital. Therefore, it is not only academically relevant to discuss the ethics of the pre- and post-pandemic era but also of primary importance to society. The results of this study can be used to formulate responsive measures and strategies to ensure that digital technologies are used for the common good but not against it. Thus, the study is not only valuable for scientific development,

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