

Centering African voices: Mapping the bibliometric trajectory of *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science* in Web of Science

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ABSTRACT

African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science has been a prominent publication outlet for African researchers since its inception in 1991. As one of the few journals from the Global South indexed in the global knowledge systems, it remains marginalized, evidenced by its limited international patronage, low citation counts and poor impact factor. However, no study has been conducted using Web of Science to examine the journal through the lens of epistemic justice framework. Using 268 papers published between 2007 and 2024, bibliometric review method was employed to examine its patterns of representation, citation and influence. Findings revealed its recent transition to Open Access as a form of epistemic justice, with the sole use of English entrenching linguistic epistemic injustice for non-anglophone knowledge systems. Despite African voices in the authorship and research being amplified, female voices and indigenous knowledge research remain underrepresented. Moreover, the journal's ninety percent rejection rate could be severely suppressing the emerging voices of younger and early career researchers in the region. Collaboration patterns show high intra-African relationship which affirms Igwebuike and Ubuntu principles, yet low international engagement persists. Furthermore, the absence of both Central and North African contributions was also identified. Its citation performance demonstrated greater scholarly influence in the Global South compared to the north. While mostly being cited by international journals than African journals is laudable, it highlights the persistent systemic barrier of regional journals' underrepresentation in citation indices. The editorial team should remain resolute in balancing the tension between decolonization and internationalization.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Bibliometrics; Scholarly communications; Social justice; Information use; Critical librarianship.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

African journal; Open Access; Epistemic justice; Bibliometrics; Web of Science.

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