

Peer Review

Review of: "Cultural and Regional Influences on Global AI Apprehension"

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This article addresses an important issue: what people care about when it comes to the use of AI differs between regions and cultures, but the current literature focuses predominantly on Western democracies. The article conducts a literature review and highlights different areas of concern in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. I would like to highlight three main areas for improvement: conceptual clarity and consistency, methods and replicability, and a better-defined focus.

First, conceptually, the article never defines the cultural regions that constitute the main unit of analysis. For example, the author speaks of “Asia” when he really means China and Japan, which are at best representative of East Asian culture. He then argues that those two countries, though presumably part of a shared East Asian culture, exhibit very different attitudes towards AI (Table 1). Leaving aside the question of what constitutes a “culture,” it suggests to me that culture can't actually be what's doing the work. Similarly, the article jumps between a focus on citizen concerns about the state's use of AI in the public sphere, concerns about the economic implications of AI use in the private sector, and even differences in the state's use of AI (e.g., "China perceives AI through a state-driven lens"). These are not the same thing, and it would be important to clearly define what is being investigated. It might also allow the paper to develop a theoretical framework that goes beyond description.

Second, the methods used should be described in more detail. The PRISMA flow diagram shows round numbers at each stage of the selection process (1700 → 1600 → 1200 → 400 → 200 → 150). This is implausible. There is no list of studies that are included in the final analysis, and the section discussing the results only cites a handful of sources that have already been cited previously, making it impossible to verify the comparative thematic analysis. The description of the coding scheme is rather

sparse, and no information on intercoder agreement between the author and the second coder is provided. This part of the article needs much more detail to allow the reader to understand how the author arrived at his conclusions.

Finally, to come back to my first point, the article could be improved by limiting its scope and adopting a clearer focus. Currently, the article tries to answer too many questions, and in the end, doesn't really answer any. I see at least three themes mixed together in the analysis, each of which would merit its own investigation: 1) how people think about the state's use of AI in public policy and the public sphere, 2) how people think about the potential economic implications of AI (implying a focus on the private sector), and 3) how governments employ AI to further their domestic goals. By limiting the scope to one of these questions, the paper could make a more insightful contribution. For example, the incongruence between the findings for China and Japan (Table 1) might be because the analysis for China looked at question 1) and for Japan at question 2). Perhaps with a clearer focus, the relevance of culture would also become clearer.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.