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Scientific Production on Artificial Intelligence in Latin America: A Bibliometric Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the scientific production on artificial intelligence (AI) in Latin America between January 2020 and July 2025. A bibliometric methodology was applied based on publications indexed in Scopus and extracted through the OECD Policy Observatory panel on AI. Publications were classified by country, document type, and impact level according to the FWCI: high (>1.5), medium (0.5–1.5), and low (<0.5). The results show a strong concentration in Brazil (45.87%), followed by Mexico (18.46%), Colombia (9.41%) and Chile (8.93%). Ecuador (5.09%), Peru (4.12%) and Argentina (3.12%) have a growing participation, although with less international visibility. It concludes that, despite regional progress, structural asymmetries persist in scientific capacity. This article provides empirical evidence to support the design of public policies in science and technology, contributing to the achievement of SDG 9 and SDG 17.

Key words: *Latin America, artificial intelligence, scientific production, bibliometric analysis*.

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Producción Científica sobre Inteligencia Artificial en América Latina: Un Análisis Bibliométrico

RESUMEN

Este estudio analiza la producción científica sobre inteligencia artificial (IA) en América Latina entre Enero 2020 hasta Julio de 2025. Se aplicó una metodología bibliométrica con base en publicaciones indexadas en Scopus y extraídas mediante el panel del Observatorio de Políticas de OCDE sobre IA. Las publicaciones se clasificaron por país, tipo de documento y nivel de impacto según el FWCI: alto (>1.5), medio (0.5–1.5) y bajo (<0.5). Los resultados muestran una fuerte concentración en Brasil (45.87 %), seguido de México (18.46 %), Colombia (9.41 %) y Chile (8.93 %). Ecuador (5.09 %), Perú (4.12 %) y Argentina (3.12 %) presentan una participación creciente, aunque con menor visibilidad internacional. Se concluye que, pese al progreso regional, persisten asimetrías estructurales en la capacidad científica. Este artículo aporta evidencia empírica para apoyar el diseño de políticas públicas en ciencia y tecnología, contribuyendo al logro del ODS 9 y el ODS 17.

Palabras clave: *América Latina, inteligencia artificial, producción científica, análisis bibliométrico.*

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become one of the most disruptive and important technologies in science and technology in the last few years [1]. One of its most well-known parts is Generative AI (GenAI). This branch is known for being able to create new things like text, pictures, code, and music. It depends on models that have been trained on big datasets, like GPT-type language models and image generators like DALL·E [2], [3]. It has been amazing how quickly it has been adopted in fields like education, healthcare, the arts, and public administration. This growth has led to discussions about its moral, legal, and social effects [4], [5]. In this context, the amount of scientific work done on AI around the world has grown very quickly, especially between 2020 and 2024. This trend indicates a new stage in the progress of technological knowledge [6], [7].

From a regional perspective, Latin America exhibits a unique pattern [8]. Even though more people are interested in AI, notable differences in scientific output remain. Production is concentrated in a limited number of countries, and collaboration between institutions is still limited [9]. Moreover, although general bibliometric studies on AI exist, those specifically focusing on GenAI are still limited. Many also lack methodological rigor or a systematic regional focus [10]. This gap makes it hard to fully understand Latin America's scientific position in a field that is changing how knowledge is created and used [11].

In this context, it is imperative to systematize and critically assess the scientific output regarding AI in Latin America [12]. The absence of comparative studies analyzing trends by country, publication type, and impact level hinders precise diagnosis and the development of evidence-based regional science policies [13], [14]. Similarly, the lack of consolidated metrics makes it harder to see how Latin America is helping this new technology grow around the world [15].

This study aims to analyze the scientific production regarding AI in Latin America from January 2020 to July 2025, as well as to investigate its ramifications for science policy, regional collaboration, and technological advancement. The results of this study show that there are leading countries, new contributors, and structural differences. These results can help people make decisions about public policy, guide investment in research infrastructure, and encourage

collaboration at both the national and regional levels. The study aids in the formulation of inclusive, context-aware policies intended to mitigate disparities in AI-related scientific output and bolster the technological capabilities of underrepresented nations in Latin America.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative, documentary design based on bibliometric analysis. The approach identifies publication patterns, geographic distribution, and impact levels in recent AI research across Latin America. The goal is to offer a structured, transparent, and reproducible method.

Data source and selection process

Data for this study were obtained from the OECD.AI Policy Observatory panel [16], which consolidates Scopus records. The analysis covered the period of January 2020 to July 2025 and followed an adapted PRISMA framework to ensure transparency and reproducibility.

Publications were identified using predefined descriptors such as “artificial intelligence (AI),” “machine learning (ML),” “deep learning (DL),” “generative artificial intelligence (GenAI),” “neural networks (NN),” and related terms. These descriptors were combined with institutional affiliations from Latin American countries to refine the search strategy. This approach ensured comprehensive coverage and generated the initial dataset for bibliometric analysis.

Duplicate records were removed using Scopus internal identifiers and then verified manually. Only documents with complete metadata and a verifiable institutional affiliation in Latin America were retained. Items were excluded if they were incomplete, lacked identifiable authorship or affiliation, were not peer-reviewed (e.g. editorials, notes, letters, or abstracts), or were unrelated to AI.

A controlled taxonomy of AI-related terms was created to harmonize concepts across datasets and ensure consistent classification. After applying all filters, the final corpus comprised 34 002 records. Documents were classified by type (articles, reviews, book chapters, conference papers, and other documents) and by impact level using the Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI): high (FWCI > 1.5), medium (0.5 < FWCI ≤ 1.5), and low (FWCI ≤ 0.5).

Figure 1 summarizes the inclusion and exclusion criteria applied in the bibliometric analysis. The diagram shows the period, data source, affiliation, topics, publication types, and metadata standards used to include or exclude records. Together with the adapted PRISMA flow diagram, it provides a transparent overview of the selection process.

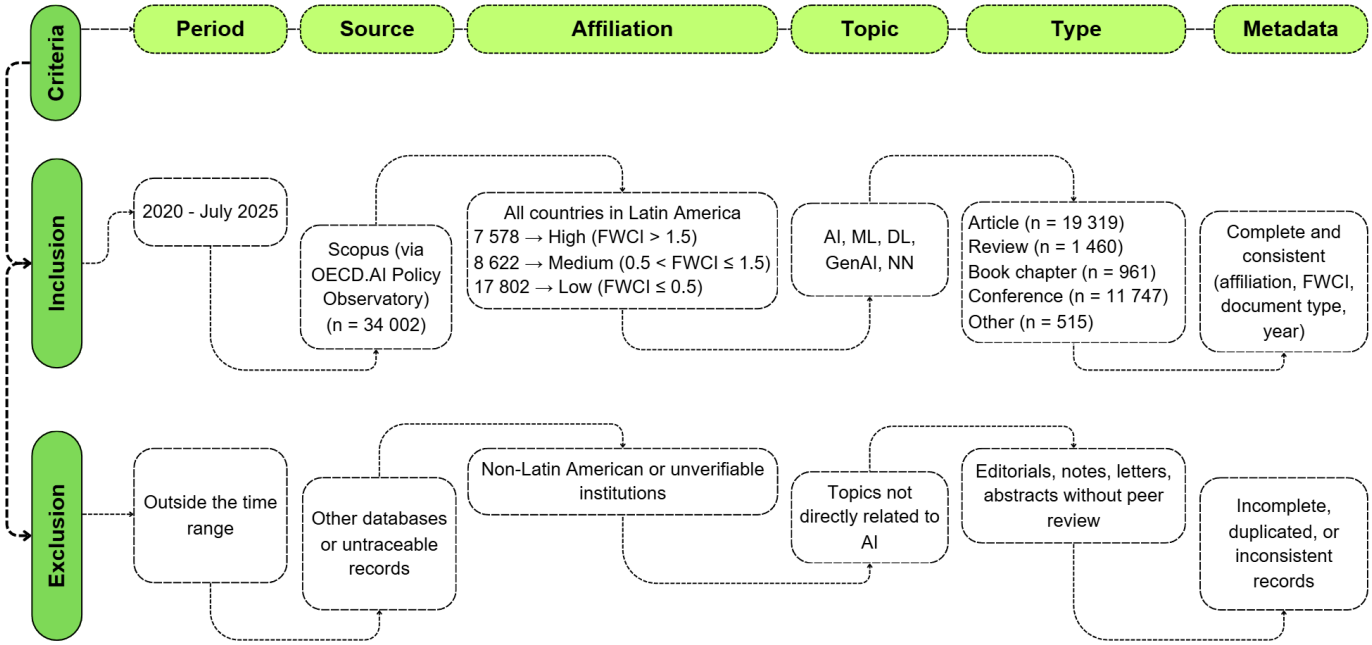

Figure 1. Criteria for inclusion and exclusion of bibliometric analysis.

Keyword co-occurrence analysis: thematic clusters and caps in AI scientific production

The extracted data was organized into analytic matrices using VOSviewer to represent networks and publication patterns. The graphical analysis allowed for a comparative interpretation of thematic structures and supported the identification of emerging gaps and dynamics within the AI scientific production in Latin America.

The co-occurrence network (Figure 2) reveals three main clusters. The red cluster corresponds to core AI methodologies, highlighting machine learning, deep learning, and neural network–based approaches. The green cluster reflects human-centered and health-related studies, encompassing demographic descriptors and clinical applications. The blue cluster represents methodological and bibliometric terms, including article types, algorithms, and prediction, functioning as a bridge

between the technical and applied domains. This structure evidences the thematic diversity and interconnectedness of AI scientific production in Latin America. Identifying these clusters highlights priority thematic areas and shows where collaboration opportunities may emerge between technical and applied domains, supporting evidence-based regional policies.

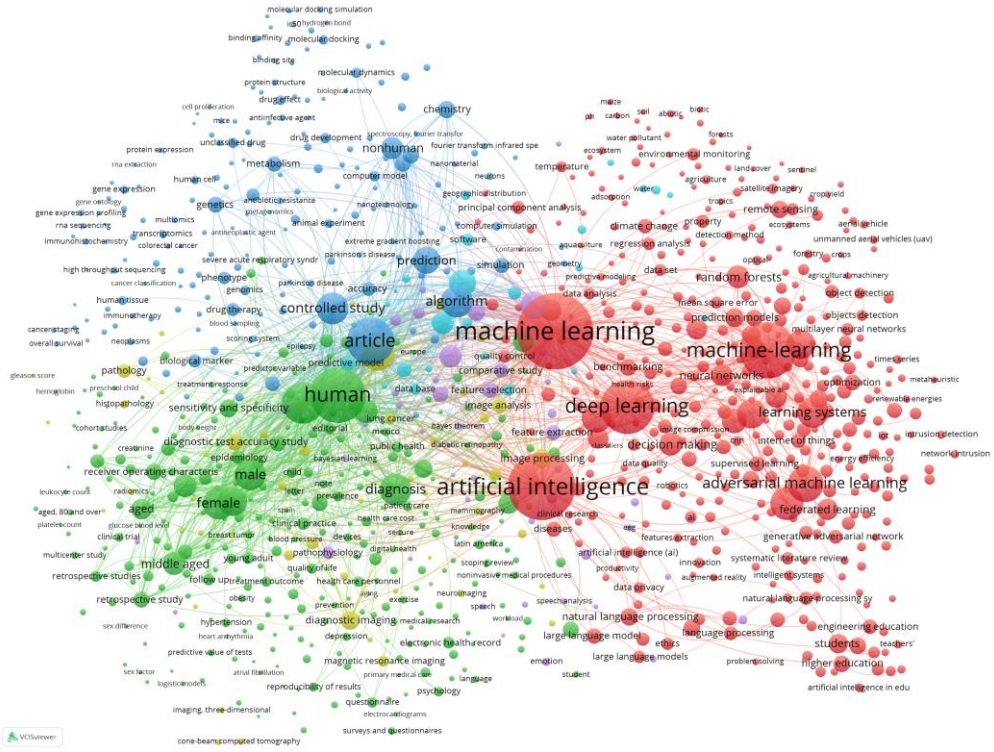

Figure 2. Keyword co-occurrence network for AI publications in Latin America.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quality classification: High impact

Figure 3 shows the distribution of high-impact scientific production (FWCI > 1.5) on AI in Latin America during 2020–2025. The figure reveals a strong concentration in a few countries. Brazil produces almost half of the region's high-impact output, followed by Mexico, Chile, and Colombia. Ecuador, Peru, and Argentina appear as moderate but steadily growing contributors. In contrast, most Central American and Caribbean nations show minimal participation, reflecting structural inequalities in research capacity, infrastructure, and international networks.

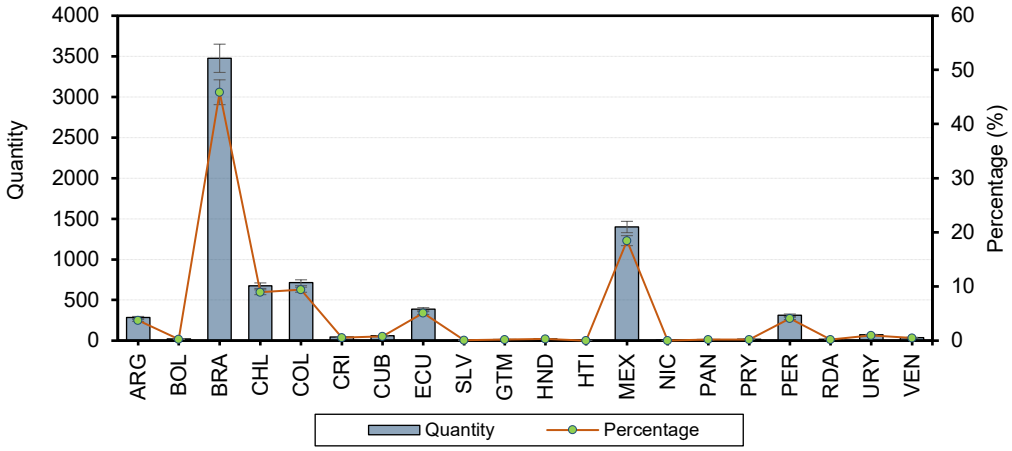

Figure 3. Number and percentage of AI publications in Latin America (FWCI > 1.5).

Figure 4 presents the evolution of high-impact publications over time. Across the period 2020–2025, the data reveal a mild upward trend, with peaks in Brazil and Mexico coinciding with moments of increased funding and international collaboration. Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Argentina display smaller but consistent gains, signaling the gradual consolidation of research teams and infrastructures in AI-related fields.

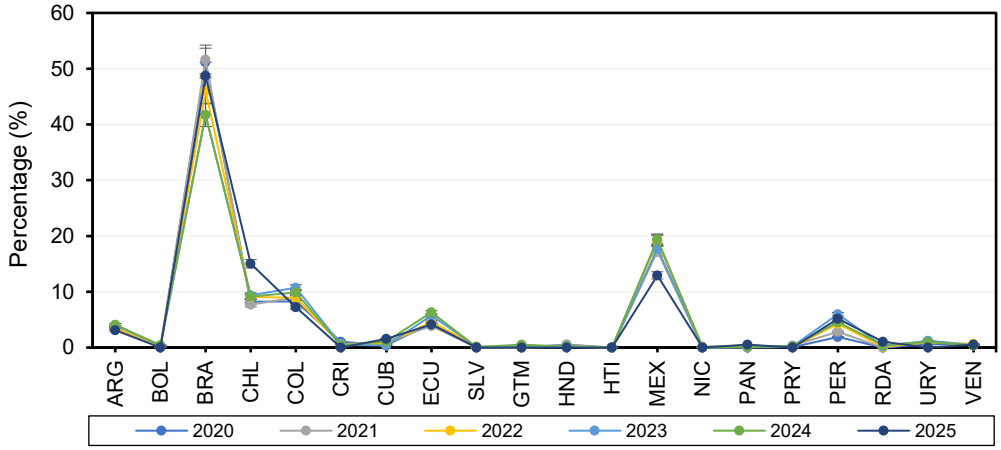

Figure 4. Annual percentage distribution of AI in Latin America (FWCI > 1.5).

Figure 5 illustrates how different types of documents are distributed among high-impact publications. In Brazil and Mexico, journal articles are the most common type of research output, showing that research is more advanced. However, a large number of conference proceedings

from Mexico, Chile, Colombia, and Ecuador indicate that early-stage and collaborative projects that have not yet been published in journals are becoming increasingly important. This combination of document types shows how mature AI scientific production is in different countries.

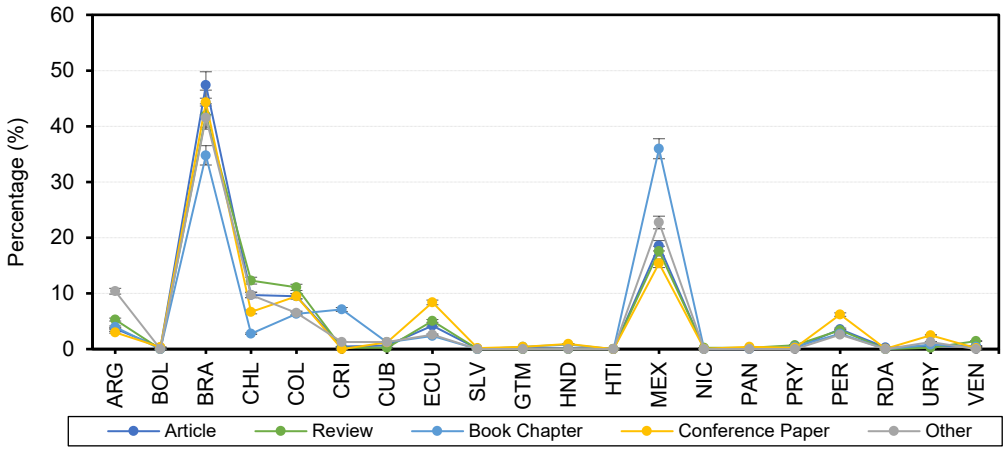

Figure 5. Percentage by type of AI document in Latin America (FWCI > 1.5).

The results indicate that Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, and Chile account for the highest percentages of high-impact scientific output related to AI in Latin America. Brazil's leading position is consistent with the findings of González-Argote et al. [17], who reported that 54% of AI-related articles from the country were produced through international collaboration, highlighting the strength of its scientific networks. Similarly, Del Carpio-Delgado et al. [18] emphasize that this leadership is sustained by a consolidated research infrastructure supported by alliances among universities, innovation centers, and technology companies. These prior studies reinforce the current results, showing that the combination of strong institutional capacity and international cooperation significantly enhances the quality and impact of AI-related scientific production in the region.

In addition, the prominence of GenAI–related terms within the co-occurrence network (Figure 2) indicates a shift from traditional machine-learning applications toward content creation and model-driven research. This trend reflects the rapid diffusion of GenAI tools and methodologies across Latin American research groups, particularly in countries with greater digital infrastructure and access to large-scale computing resources. By incorporating GenAI into their research agendas, leading nations are expanding the frontiers of AI science and positioning themselves in areas of

global technological relevance. This finding suggests that sustained investment in GenAI-related infrastructure, as well as training for early-career researchers, may help smaller countries accelerate their transition from low- to high-impact research outputs.

Quality classification: Medium impact

Figure 6 shows the total volume of medium-impact scientific output (0.5 < FWCI ≤ 1.5) in Latin America. The figure reveals that Brazil continues to dominate, holding nearly half of the region's medium-impact output. Mexico, Colombia, and Chile occupy the next positions, indicating consolidated research activity in terms of volume but still in transition toward higher citation impact. Ecuador, Peru, and Argentina exhibit steady gains, reflecting the progressive strengthening of institutional capacities. In contrast, most Central American and Caribbean countries maintain minimal participation, highlighting persistent inequalities in research capacity and international collaboration.

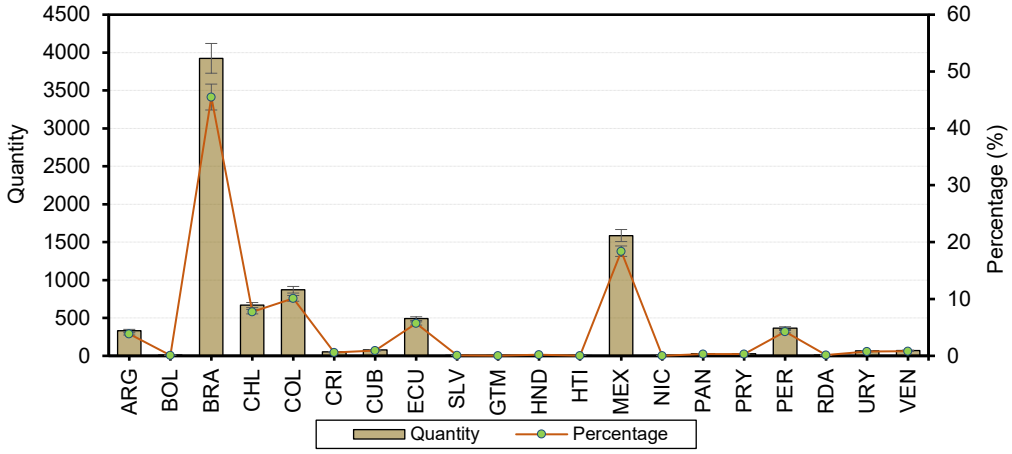

Figure 6. Number and percentage of AI publications in Latin America (0.5 < FWCI ≤ 1.5).

Figure 7 presents the evolution of medium-impact publications over time. The data show relative stability in Brazil and Mexico with mild fluctuations, while Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Argentina display consistent or slightly upward trends. The apparent decline in 2025 may be due to incomplete indexing of bibliographic databases. These patterns underscore how medium-impact publications can serve as a pipeline toward high-impact output, offering early signals of emerging research hubs.

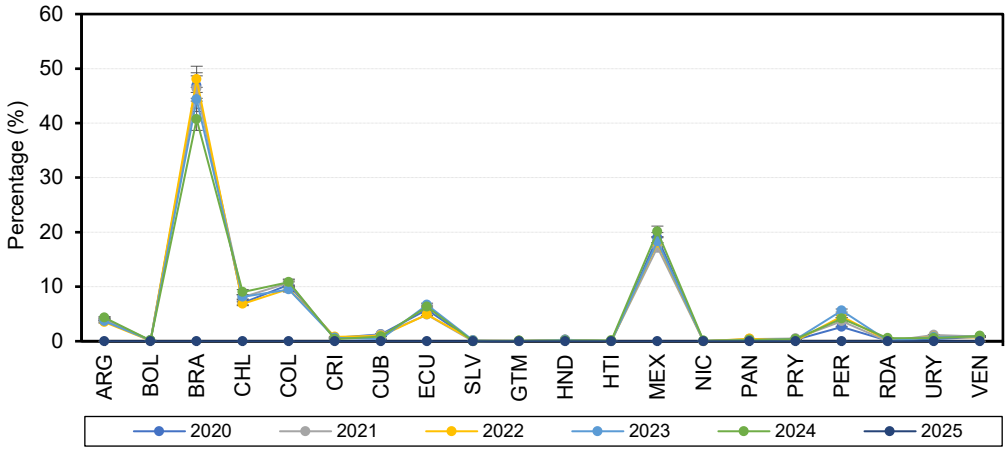

Figure 7. Annual percentage distribution of AI in Latin America (0.5 < FWCI ≤ 1.5).

Figure 8 details the distribution of document types among medium-impact publications. Brazil exhibits strong participation across all types, especially journal articles, conference papers, and book chapters. Mexico shows notable strength in book chapters, likely linked to institutional editorial policies and academic networks. Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and Argentina maintain balanced distributions between articles, conferences, and reviews, indicating different stages of maturity and dissemination strategies. Countries with minimal participation remain below 1%, reinforcing the concentration of medium-impact production in a limited number of nations.

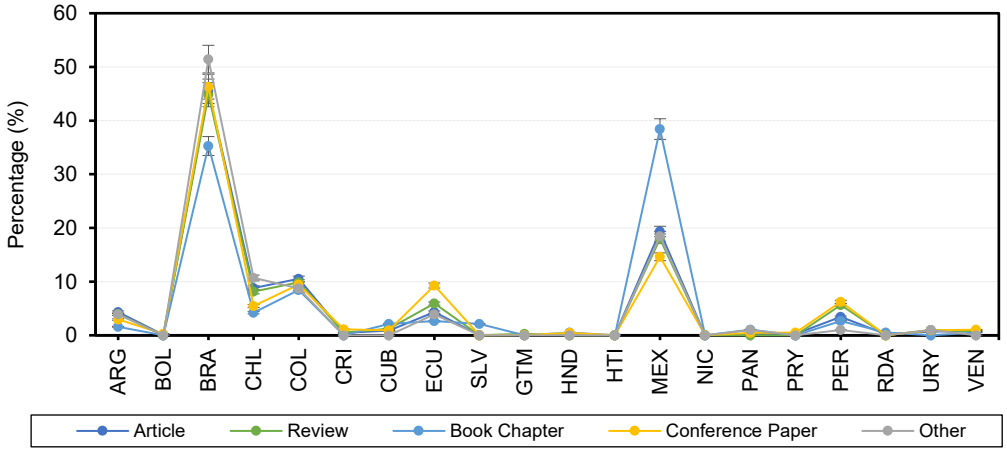

Figure 8. Percentage by type of AI document in Latin America (0.5 < FWCI ≤ 1.5).

Brazil is still the main country in Latin America that does AI-related scientific research, followed by Mexico and Colombia. This is true even when the impact is medium ($0.5 < FWCI \leq 1.5$). This continuity is attributed not only to increased participation in journal articles and conference proceedings but also to public policies aimed at enhancing scientific research. In fact, international networks of collaboration and links with the productive sector have been promoted in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Uruguay, along with national AI initiatives and strategies focused on innovation and ethical frameworks. This has greatly improved the ability of institutions to do scientific research in AI [19], [20], [21]. On the other hand, Ecuador and Argentina have become more well-known by forming academic groups that focus on machine learning and publishing more papers with authors from other countries. Both have made their scientific presence stronger [12], [22].

Overall, findings indicate that medium-impact publications are a strategic way for Latin American countries to build up their research capacity, try out new ways of working together, and move to higher-impact scientific production. Building better infrastructure and encouraging international partnerships in this area can speed up the growth of a more balanced and globally competitive AI scientific production.

Quality classification: Low impact

Figure 9 displays the volume and percentage of low-impact scientific publications ($FWCI \leq 0.5$) in Latin America between 2020 and 2025. Brazil accounts for over 40% of these publications, followed by Mexico, Colombia, and Chile. Peru, Ecuador, and Argentina also contribute significantly, indicating sustained efforts to strengthen their scientific presence despite limited international visibility. This distribution highlights the coexistence of consolidated research hubs and emerging lines still in development, as well as the need to reinforce regional publishing capacity, promote cross-border collaboration, and improve access to editorial platforms.

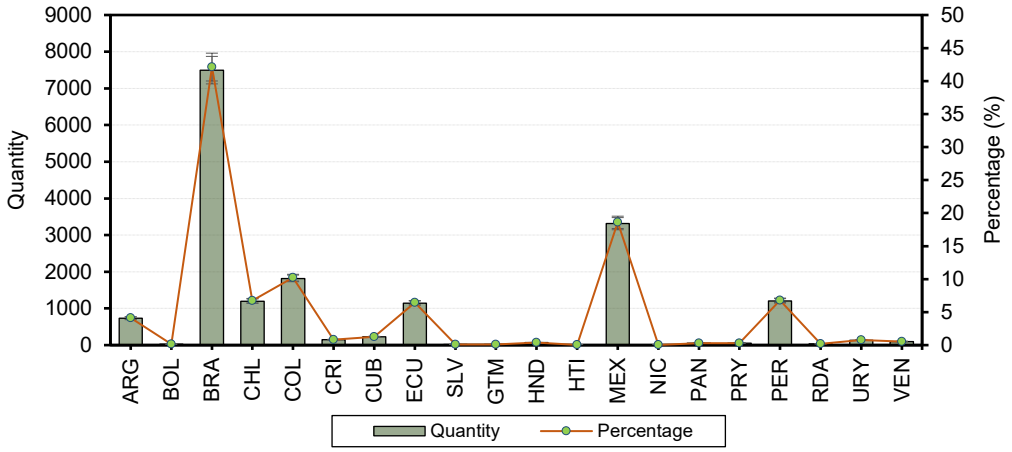

Figure 9. Number and percentage of AI publications in Latin America (FWCI ≤ 0.5).

Figure 10 presents the distribution of low-impact output by document type. Brazil leads with more than 40% of the total, followed by Mexico and Colombia, all significantly above the regional average. These countries stand out particularly in book chapters and review articles, surpassing 30% in Brazil and reaching 40% in Mexico, suggesting editorial strategies oriented toward broad knowledge dissemination. Peru and Argentina slightly exceed the regional average with more diversified outputs across journal articles, conference proceedings, and book chapters. In contrast, fourteen Latin American countries report shares below 2%, and some such as Haiti, Nicaragua, and El Salvador lack representation in certain publication types. This scenario reveals persistent structural segmentation within the regional scientific output, as Brazil, Mexico, and Colombia together account for over 70% of total low-impact output.

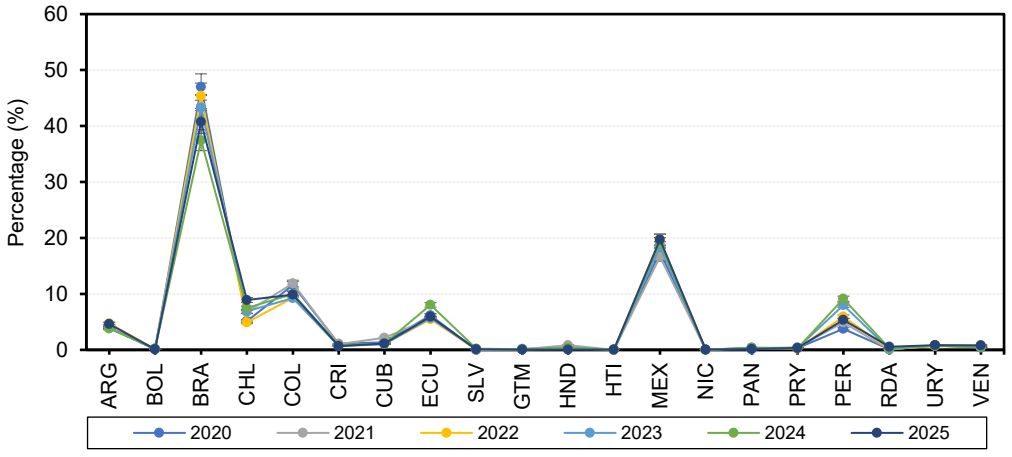

Figure 10. Annual percentage distribution of AI in Latin America (FWCI ≤ 0.5).

Figure 11 shows the annual percentage distribution of low-impact publications during 2020–2025. Brazil consistently leads even within this lower-impact segment, followed by Mexico and Colombia, forming a triad that accounts for most regional output at this level. Peru, Ecuador, and Chile display moderate but steady contributions, each surpassing 5%. By contrast, Central American and Caribbean nations remain below 1%, reflecting a persistent structural gap in scientific publishing capacity. This pattern shows that concentration stays the same no matter how visible it is. Countries with better infrastructure and institutional resources are always in charge, no matter what the impact category is.

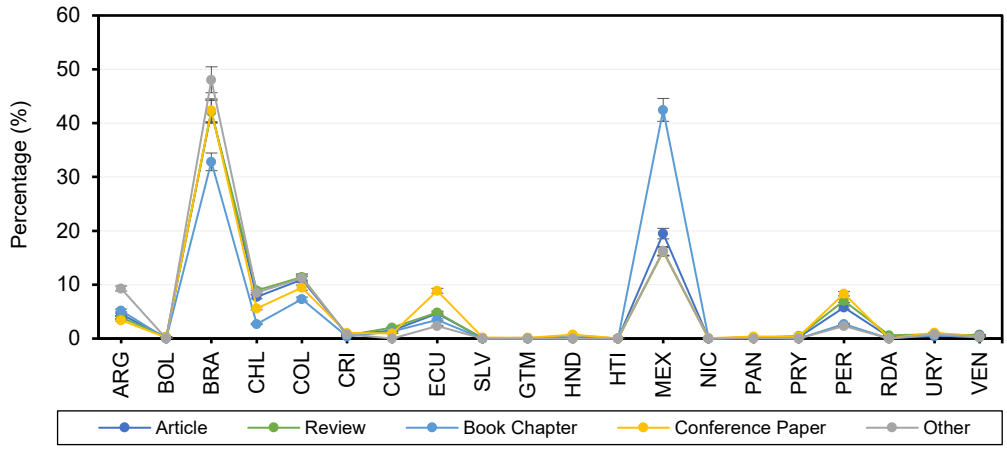

Figure 11. Percentage by type of AI document in Latin America (FWCI ≤ 0.5).

Brazil's dominance in the low-impact segment is linked to a large number of documents that fall into the "other" category, such as technical documents, manuals, and policy briefs. This diversification shows that people are trying to make knowledge more accessible by making it available to everyone. Policies like Brazil's "Plano IA para o Bem de Todos" and national AI strategies in Mexico and Colombia have led to the creation of collaboration networks, editorial platforms, and institutional capacities [23], [24]. Peru consistently contributes, especially in the form of journal articles and conference papers, indicating increasing efforts to enhance national research capacity in AI. Recent studies show that academic networks related to disruptive technologies are growing in Peru and Argentina. This is because institutions are working together more and access to digital infrastructure is getting better [25], [26].

Figures 9, 10, and 11 show that low-impact publications are a good way to start and develop AI scientific production in Latin America. They show how countries use lower-impact formats, such as book chapters, briefs, and whitepapers, to gain experience, share knowledge, and make connections. At this level, improving editorial skills, fostering cross-border collaborations, and supporting open access policies accelerate progress towards more impactful outcomes and decrease differences in AI scientific production across regions.

CONCLUSIONS

The bibliometric analysis carried out between 2020 and 2025 in Latin America allows the following conclusions to be drawn:

1. Scientific production and structural disparities.

   This study fulfilled its objective of analyzing scientific production on AI in Latin America through a bibliometric approach that classified publications by document type, country of affiliation, and impact level (FWCI). The findings confirm an overall increase in research activity in the region, although this growth remains highly concentrated in a small number of countries. Brazil (45.87%), Mexico (18.46%), Colombia (9.41%), and Chile (8.93%) consistently lead across all impact categories. This concentration reveals enduring structural disparities related to research infrastructure, international cooperation, and the implementation of national policies for scientific development.

2. Diversification and early progress.

   The study identified a diversification of publication formats, particularly in countries that have implemented policies aimed at democratizing access to knowledge, such as Brazil. At the same time, countries including Ecuador (5.09%), Peru (4.12%), and Argentina (3.12%) are demonstrating early progress, supported by the development of emerging academic networks and improved access to digital research platforms. However, the limited participation of several Central American and Caribbean nations underscores the urgent need for coordinated regional strategies to reduce inequality in the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

3. Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals.

   The contribution of this study aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) and Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), as it provides empirical evidence to inform public policies and regional cooperation frameworks in science and technology. In this context, promoting collaborative research environments, ensuring sustained investment in research and development, and expanding equitable access to knowledge are essential steps toward consolidating an inclusive, ethical, and context-sensitive approach to AI in Latin America.

4. Recommendations to strengthen underrepresented countries.

   To address the gaps identified, the study recommends:

   - Establishing regional AI research consortia to pool resources, share infrastructures, and support collaborative projects involving sub represented countries.
   - Developing targeted funding programs (national and international) to support early-career researchers and laboratories in emerging AI hubs, enabling them to access high-performance computing, data repositories, and specialized training.
   - Implementing regional training and exchange programs focused on AI methodologies, generative AI, and ethical frameworks to build human capital and strengthen institutional capacity.
   - Supporting open-access and multilingual publication platforms to enhance the visibility of research from smaller countries, ensuring broader dissemination and citation.
   - Encouraging public–private partnerships to link universities, innovation centers, and industry in sub represented nations, thus facilitating technology transfer and practical applications of AI research.

These recommendations provide actionable steps to reduce disparities in AI research capacity, improve international visibility, and foster a more balanced, globally competitive AI scientific production across Latin America.

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