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# Uncovering the Landscape of Privacy Concern Research from 2011 to 2020: A Bibliometrics Study

Ruilin Zhu

Youyou Tao

Loyola Marymount University, youyou.tao@lmu.edu

Ace Vo

Loyola Marymount University, ace.vo@lmu.edu

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# **Uncovering the Landscape of Privacy Concern Research from 2011 to 2020: A Bibliometrics Study**

*TREO Talk Paper*

**Ruilin Zhu**

Lancaster University  
ruilin.zhu@lancaster.ac.uk

**Youyou Tao**

Loyola Marymount University  
youyou.tao@lmu.edu

**Ace Vo**

Loyola Marymount University  
ace.vo@lmu.edu

## **Abstract**

Propelled by the digital innovation unwittingly caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the sophisticated advancement of digital technologies, such as digital twin and metaverse, privacy concerns have been dominating the headlines throughout the globe. Privacy concern refers to an individual's awareness and assessment of potential privacy risks to their privacy; for instance, the public has expressed unease about using COVID contact tracing apps and the extensive application of data-based solutions. The Information Systems (IS) community spares no efforts to keep abreast of these developments with heightened attention to privacy concern research. IS scholars have continued to examine, analyze, and apprehend pertinent issues, leading to various research results that have impacted the IS research landscape. Despite the attempts to understand the complex and contextual nature of privacy in various practical settings, a comprehensive understanding of the most recent research trends and the emerging research topics is still needed.

This study employed bibliometric-based longitudinal research to summarize the most up-to-date privacy concern research, encompassing the research surrounding the latest digital technologies. Bibliometrics, a widely adopted mathematical and statistical analysis method, was used to detect homogenous research tracks and assess the interactions within/across fields. Three bibliometrics methods were used, including bibliographic coupling analysis, co-citation analysis, and co-word analysis, to illustrate the development in the focal area and signpost its future directions. The approaches enabled us to systematically examine privacy concern research and to uncover the underlying intellectual base of the articles from 2010 to 2020. This period was chosen primarily due to two reasons: (1) research prior to 2010 was systematically examined in several influential privacy literature review studies whereas there is no such leading review concentrating on the works after 2010; and (2) the digital technologies have been rapidly and persistently advancing and the privacy issues thus become increasingly prevalent and complicated, necessitating renewed efforts to analyze and summarize literature. This research thus aims to uncover emerging cluster(s) of research themes that have (re)gained momentum during the last decade and unearth the developing academic structure to corroborate the privacy concern research amidst new technologies.

In order to study the longitudinal trends, we divided the timeline into two equal periods: (1) Period I: 2011-2015, and (2) Period II: 2016-2020. For Period I (2011-2015), information on 75 papers and 4,750 references was collected, of which 3,257 were unique; and for Period II (2016-2020), information on 135 papers and 9803 references was collected, of which 6,881 were unique.

We seek to gain an understanding of the clustered research themes with the specified linkages amongst them, identify possible research gaps and the potential research directions, and extend our existing knowledge on the topic of privacy in the IS domain. This research has practical implications as it offers a roadmap to facilitate consistent research activities among privacy researchers and provides recommendations to foster the overall advancement of privacy research across disciplines.