Annals of Library and Information Studies
Vol. 73, June 2026, pp. 195-204
DOI: 10.56042/alis.v73i2.31022

AI Governance in Scholarly Publishing: A Computational Analysis of Policy Structures and Gaps

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Received: 01 May 2026; Accepted: 26 May 2026

The study examines the emerging landscape of artificial intelligence (AI) tools usage guidelines in scholarly publishing. It focuses on structure and gaps in existing policy frameworks through the analysis of twenty policy documents from academic publishers, research societies, open-access platforms, and universities. An integrated computational text analysis approach is used, including topic modeling, sentiment analysis, TF-IDF lexical analysis, and co-occurrence network analysis. The results indicate a pattern of structural convergence across publishers; however, this convergence is superficial and not seen in enforcement-oriented elements such as prohibition sections. The policy discourse is predominantly found in a neutral-positive tone. The discourse is conceptually rooted in legal and ethical terms, including authorship, privacy, and copyright. The thematic integration is limited, and a fragmented policy design is reflected in the documents. The study lays emphasis on data-driven, computational mapping of AI tools usage guidelines and policies in scholarly publishing. The current approaches reflect gradual institutional adaptation rather than coherent regulatory design.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Scholarly Publishing; AI Guidelines; Policy Analysis; Text Mining; Sentiment Analysis

1. Introduction

These days, Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool which is effective for all types of computational tasks and become highly essential for routine work[1]. The concerns regarding the risks and negative effects of AI are growing due to its ability to automate the academic, healthcare, finance, etc.[2]. Various ethical guidelines are recently used during development and implementation of AI systems for maximising AI transparency, fairness, accountability, and inclusivity[3]. The responsible use of AI always promotes development and deployment to lower the potential risks and negative impacts related to bias, discrimination, and lack of transparency in performing the task[1]. The ethical use of AI is guided by moral principles during design and utilisation of AI systems to avoid invasion of privacy or human dignity[3]. It is found that both ethical and responsible use of AI is necessary to build trust with users for controlled progress of AI technology[3].

To address the potential risk of AI usage, the development of a robust AI governance framework is essential to direct the ethical and responsible use of AI technology. There needs to be a balance between innovation and ethical behaviour to avoid any unforeseen negative effects[4]. AI governance consists of a set of regulations, procedures and technological mechanisms that are required for the creation and dissemination of AI technology in an organization which align with its strategies, principles and goals[1]. AI governance in scholarly publishing involves balancing innovation with ethical considerations, which is required to maintain the integrity of academic communication. With the rise of generative AI, the scholarly publishing landscape has transformed rapidly. There is an increase in the quality and transparency in research process like plagiarism detection, peer review and formatting of manuscript[5]. This rapid transformation has brought challenges linked with authorship, accountability, and ethical use. There is a need for re-evaluation of policy within academic institutions and publishers[7] and inconsistent application of AI policies makes this more complex. It calls for proper guidelines related to transparency, to strengthen AI literacy and support

collaborative approaches for policy development[8]. The existing governance framework encourages the use of AI; at the same time, it also focusses on transparency and ethical principles that recommends human supervision to ensure the reliability of scientific records[9]. In addition, AI is considered ~~as~~ a tool to assist humans, rather than replacing them as an independent author[10]. As AI continues to reshape scholarly publishing, ongoing supervision and ethical implementation are important to mitigate biases and ensure that AI-driven solutions remain fair and accountable[6].

In a previous study, Correa *et al.*[11] reviewed 200 documents on guidelines of AI governance. The findings highlight the importance of these guidelines for the creation of policy frameworks and recommendations on how AI can be regulated. Wang et al.[12] explored the use of AI governance in child social care within an interlinked framework of various layers of AI, including technological, ethical, regulatory, and implementation aspects, to support child resilience, well-being, and public services. Kreutz and Jahankhani[13,] in a systematic literature review, explored 40 publications on security challenges and dimensions of AI. The study revealed that the majority of AI security challenges are not considered, and only a few have been addressed by existing ISO standards. They proposed six new AI security control features focused on real-time lifecycle security, governance, enhanced defences, explainability, diversity and privacy protections. Alsaigh *et al.*[14] conducted a study on different stakeholders, like governments, industry, and academics to understand the current AI landscape within the energy sector. Similarly, Stogiannos *et al.*[15] executed a targeted literature review on governance of AI frameworks to guide organisations for adopting AI usage in medical applications in United Kingdom. Further, they created an AI framework for governance of medical imaging and radiotherapy field. In a review, Abbas *et al.*[16] explored the uses of AI governance in higher education by PRISMA systematic literature method.

Existing literature on AI in scholarly communication has focused on ethical concerns such as authorship, transparency, and research integrity, as well as the risks such as hallucination, bias and copyright issues. While these studies provide important insights, they remain largely descriptive and lack systematic empirical analysis of policy texts as objects of study. There is no prior work that examines how AI policies are structured across publishers, how governance priorities are reflected in policy language, or how different dimensions of AI use are selectively highlighted or omitted. Our study addresses these gaps by applying a multi-method computational text analysis framework. We have applied this framework to a corpus of AI policy documents drawn from academic publishers, professional societies, open-access platforms, Indian publishers, and a university. We have integrated topic modeling, sentiment analysis, lexical analysis, section-level classification, co-occurrence network analysis, and gap analysis for the analysis of AI policy in scholarly communication.

Based on the identified gaps, the study aims to find answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: What thematic clusters characterise AI policy discourse in scholarly publishing?

RQ2: How do AI policies vary in tone and sentiment across publisher categories?

RQ3: What policy dimensions are covered or absent across publisher types?

RQ4: What are the policy gaps, particularly for Global South publishers?

2. Material and Methods

2.1 Research Design

The discursive characteristics of artificial intelligence (AI) policies across scholarly publishers are examined through a multi-method computational text analysis. Multiple dimensions of policy documents, including structure, tone, thematic content, and conceptual relationships, are analysed through an integrated framework. The analytical framework consists of multiple layers: section parsing, sentiment analysis, TF-IDF-based lexical analysis, topic modeling, and co-occurrence network. Each method contributes to an integrated interpretive analysis. Table 1 presents the analytical framework adopted in the study, including the computational methods and their respective purposes.

2.2 Data Collection

The analysis consists of 20 documents manually retrieved from major scholarly publishers, research societies, university-based publishers, and open-access platforms. Official publishers' websites were consulted and publicly accessible AI publication policy guidelines for the usage of AI tools were collected. The unit of analysis was then separated publisher-wise. These documents were of varying length, structure, and level of detail, revealing the institutional approaches to AI policy for scholarly publication. Table 2 presents the sources of AI policy

Table 1. Analytical Framework

Analytical Layer	Method Used	Purpose
Structural Analysis	Section Parsing	Identify presence/absence of policy components
Sentiment Analysis	VADER	Examine institutional tone and rhetorical positioning
Lexical Analysis	TF-IDF	Identify salient terms across publisher categories
Topic Modeling	BERTopic	Extract latent thematic structures
Network Analysis	Co-occurrence Network	Map conceptual relationships between key terms

Table 2 — Sources of data

ID	Source Name	Category	Region	Country	Policy Exists	Word-count	Length Band
1	Elsevier[18]	Academic Publisher	Europe	Netherlands	Yes	1381	Medium (500–1499w)
2	Springer Nature[19]	Academic Publisher	Europe	Germany/UK	Yes	703	Medium (500–1499w)
3	Wiley[20]	Academic Publisher	USA	USA	Yes	6691	Very Long (≥3000w)
4	Taylor and Francis[21]	Academic Publisher	UK	UK	Yes	1193	Medium (500–1499w)
5	SAGE[22]	Academic Publisher	USA/UK	USA	Yes	385	Short (100–499w)
6	Cambridge University Press[23]	Academic Publisher	UK	UK	Yes	572	Medium (500–1499w)
7	Oxford University Press[24]	Academic Publisher	UK	UK	Yes	1415	Medium (500–1499w)
8	Emerald Publishing[25]	Academic Publisher	UK	UK	Yes	3343	Very Long (≥3000w)
9	De Gruyter[26]	Academic Publisher	Europe	Germany	Yes	684	Medium (500–1499w)
10	Lippincott/Wolters Kluwer[27]	Academic Publisher	Europe/USA	Netherlands	Yes	754	Medium (500–1499w)
11	DESIDOC/DJLIT[28]	Indian Publisher	South Asia	India	Partial	327	Short (100–499w)
12	SRELS/SJIM[29]	Indian Publisher	South Asia	India	Partial	492	Short (100–499w)
13	IEEE[30]	Society Publisher	USA	USA	Yes	168	Short (100–499w)
14	ACM[31]	Society Publisher	USA	USA	Yes	480	Short (100–499w)
15	APA[32]	Society Publisher	USA	USA	Yes	951	Medium (500–1499w)
16	Royal Society[33]	Society Publisher	UK	UK	Yes	1136	Medium (500–1499w)
17	American Chemical Society[34]	Society Publisher	USA	USA	Yes	642	Medium (500–1499w)
18	PLOS[35]	Open Access Publisher	USA	USA	Yes	796	Medium (500–1499w)
19	MDPI[36]	Open Access Publisher	Europe	Switzerland	Yes	243	Short (100–499w)
20	University of Cambridge[37]	University	Europe	UK	Yes	4055	Very Long (≥3000w)

documents analysed in this study across different categories of publishers.

2.3 Data Preprocessing

A standardised preprocessing pipeline was designed to ensure analytical consistency. A custom list of stop words was also developed to remove generic domain-specific terms such as 'journal', 'manuscript', etc., to lower the dominance of domain-generic keywords in the analysis. The pipeline included: conversion to lowercase; removal of punctuation and special characters; tokenization; stop-word removal (standard English and domain-specific) and normalisation of text.

2.4 Section Parsing and Structural Encoding

A rule-based segmentation of policy guidelines was applied for section-level parsing of the documents within each institution. Based on the classification of segmentation, seven core policy sections were identified. The classification relied on recurring structural patterns observed in the texts across publishers. Each section was encoded using a binary method where 1 indicated presence of a section and 0 indicated absence in the document. Table 3 shows the policy section classification scheme used for structural encoding of policy documents.

Table 3 — Policy Section Classification Scheme

Section Type	Description
Policy Scope	Defines the scope and applicability of AI use
Core Principles	Ethical or conceptual foundations
Restrictions	Limitations on AI usage
Disclosure Rules	Requirements for declaring AI use
Ethical Risks	Consideration of bias, privacy, and misuse
Allowed Uses	Permissible applications of AI
Prohibited Uses	Explicitly disallowed uses

2.5 Sentiment Analysis

Sentiment analysis was conducted using the Valence Aware Dictionary and Sentiment Reasoner (VADER). The lexicon and rule-based model was created to achieve efficiency and interpretability when quantifying the sentiment of a particular language sample. While it was initially intended for use on social media posts, it can now be used for other types of formal text due to its strength in analyzing polarity and intensity based on pre-set lexicon scores and syntactic rules. For the purposes of this paper, there is no need to analyze affective nuances; therefore, the primary focus is on the overall tone and rhetoric of the policies issued by the institutions. Table 4 summarises the sentiment metrics used in the VADER-based sentiment analysis.

Table 4 — Sentiment Metrics

Metric	Description
Compound Score	Overall sentiment (-1 to +1)
Positive Score	Proportion of positive language
Negative Score	Proportion of negative language
Neutral Score	Proportion of neutral language

2.6 TF-IDF-Based Lexical Analysis

The Term Frequency-Inverse Document Frequency (TF-IDF) was applied to identify the lexical features across policy frameworks of publishers. Based on the source of data collection, the documents were classified into five categories: academic publishers, society, open-access, Indian publishers, and universities. A minimum feature limit of 5000 was chosen and vectorisation was performed using unigrams and bigrams. Unlike raw frequency measures, TF-IDF was used to highlight the characteristic terms, enabling comparison of the framing of AI policy across document groups.

2.7 Topic Modeling

A transformer-based topic modeling approach (BERTopic) was used to integrate semantic embeddings, dimensionality reduction, clustering, and class-based TF-IDF. Table 5 presents the configuration settings employed for BERTopic-based topic modelling.

Table 5 — Topic Modeling Configuration

Component	Setting
Embedding Model	all-MiniLM-L6-v2
Dimensionality Reduction	UMAP
Clustering Algorithm	HDBSCAN
Topic Reduction	Automatic
Probability Calculation	Enabled

2.8 Co-occurrence Network Analysis

To analyse the conceptual relationships between frequently occurring terms, a term co-occurrence network was constructed. A document-term matrix and co-occurrence matrix were developed using CountVectorizer and matrix multiplication, respectively. Only significant co-occurrences were retained through the filtering of edges, and the size of the nodes was scaled for visual representation.

3. Results

3.1 Structural Convergence in AI Policy Frameworks

Figure 1 gives insight about the structural convergence in AI usage guidelines by publishers. In foundational sections such as policy scope, disclosure, and ethical considerations, a significant pattern of structural convergence can be observed. This uniformity in the structure can be attributed to institutional isomorphism[17], where organisations adopt similar structures to maintain legitimacy across the scholarly ecosystem. This uniformity is seen only in sections that are safe and low-risk declarations like disclosure and ethical considerations. In contrast, sections based on enforcement-oriented concepts such as ‘prohibited use’ are not consistently present. This misalignment in structural distribution may be because publishing houses have prioritised symbolic compliance over operational governance. This misalignment indicates a strategic avoidance of firm regulatory commitments due to legal

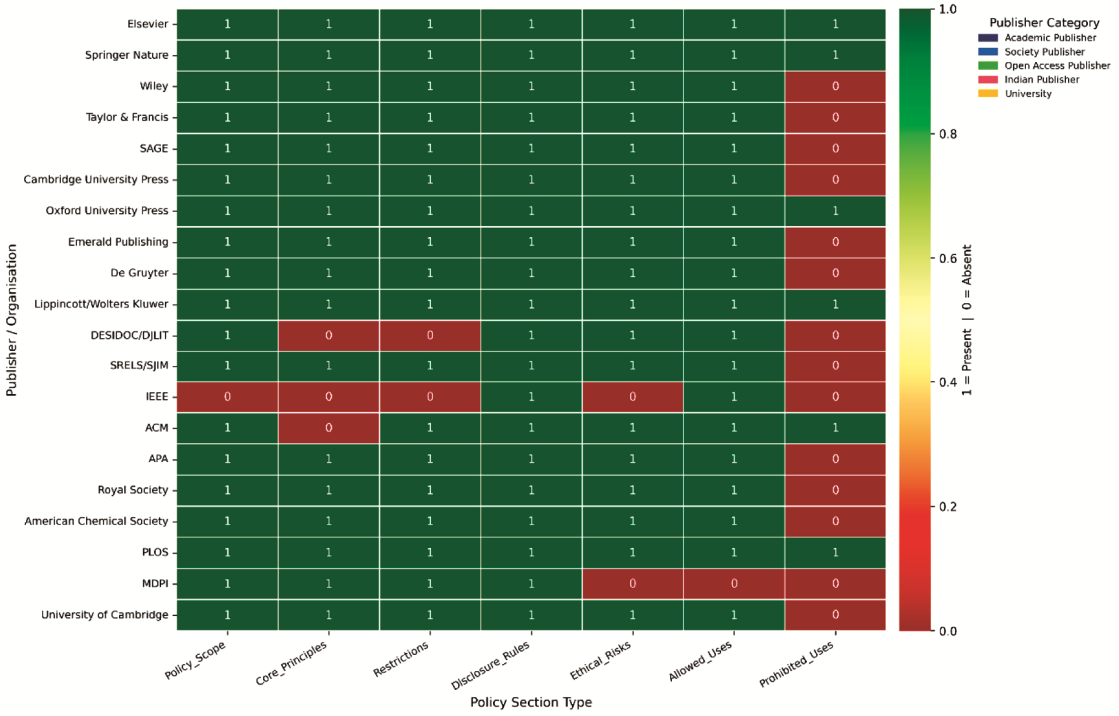

Fig. 1 — Section Coverage Matrix of AI Policies Across Scholarly Publishers (1 = Present, 0 = Absent).

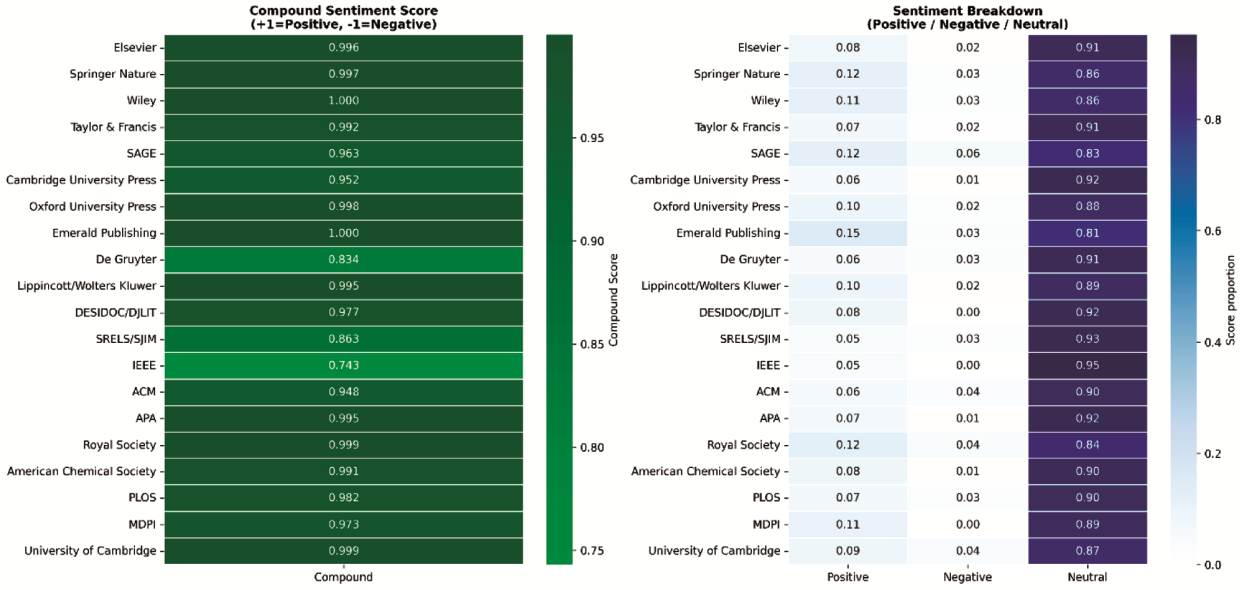

Fig. 2 — Sentiment Heatmap of AI Policy Documents Across Publishers.

uncertainty and rapid evolving AI technologies. Thus, structural convergence is more superficial rather than substantive accountability and enforcement.

3.2 Multi-Dimensional Sentiment Structure of AI Policy Discourse

Figure 2 indicates the institutional tone and rhetorical composition of various publishers. The heatmap shows the variations in sentiment composition across these publishers, Indicating controlled neutrality across documents, the compound score consistently remains high. The Figure reveals high neutral score dominance across all publishers. While positive sentiment is distributed thinly, and negative sentiment is rarely yet minimally present in non-zero amount in some places. The distribution

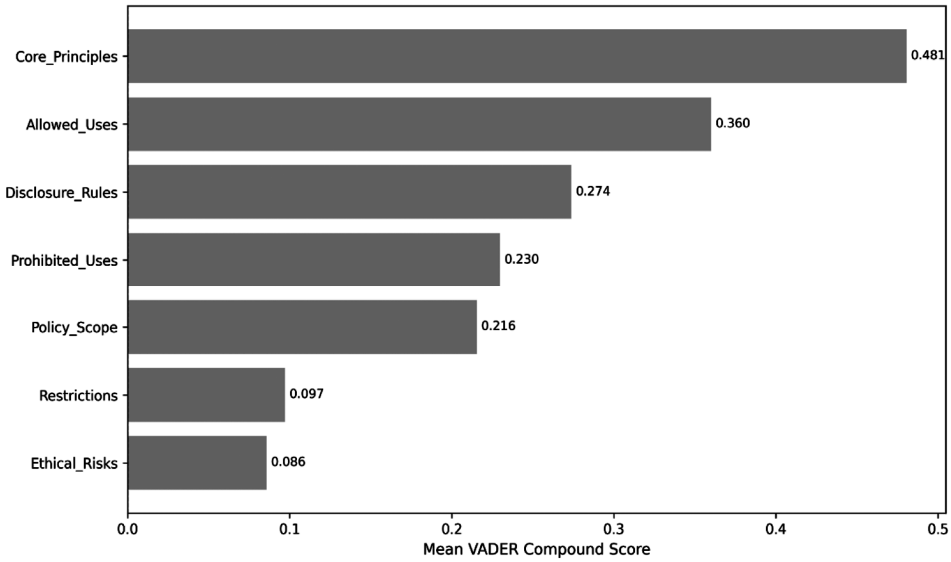

Fig. 3 — Section-wise Sentiment Distribution Across AI Policy Components.

reflects the nature of legal texts, policy documents, and institutional communication. The finding indicates that AI usage guidelines are not emotionally expressive but rather strategically presented linguistic framework.

3.3 Discursive Hierarchy in AI Policy Language

In Figure 3, the section-wise distribution of sentiment composition across policy components can be seen. Here not all policy components are equally treated at the discursive level. Some sections, like 'core principles,' exhibit consistently high sentiment scores, indicating confident and affirmative rhetorical stance, while other sections like ethical risk and restrictions display comparatively lower scores. This can be associated with the linguistic problems and regulatory issues among publishers. The finding indicates that publishers are majorly assertive when indicating values but exercise silence in addressing risk or restrictions. The aspirational guidelines on the use of AI tools are mentioned clearly, whereas operational guidelines reflect a degree of hesitation on uses.

3.4 Conceptual Architecture of AI Policy Discourse

The co-occurrence network of AI policy guidelines across documents can be seen in Figure 4. The network has a core-periphery structure with a small set of highly connected terms dominating the conceptual framework, while the majority of terms remain weakly linked at the margins. At the centre of the network, privacy, copyright, and authorship terms are present and function as conceptual anchors. This orientation indicates the guidelines of AI usage in scholarly publishing are primarily framed as a containment exercise rather than an innovation-oriented agenda. Terms related to AI tools and technologies that are presents in the network such as 'generative system', occupy peripheral positions in the network and are weakly connected to the central concepts. This indicates that such technologies are acknowledged; however, they are not coherently integrated into a policy framework.

3.5 Fragmentation and Gaps in AI Policy Governance

The analysis presents the distribution of critical policy components among different publishers. The gap matrix shows selective and unstable structural convergence. Some publishers are lacking in core conceptual section such as principles and ethical framing, while other publishers do not include operational components such as allowed usage and prohibited usage. Both conceptual section and enforcement sections are missing in some cases, which indicates AI policy guidelines development instead of systematic design. The gaps reflect differing institutional priorities, with strong legally oriented publishers highlighting risk and disclosure, while others prioritized flexibility avoiding explicit prohibitions. Thus, it can be summarized from the findings that there is an absence of shared baseline of policy completeness, and key regulations are distributed unevenly. In scholarly communication, policy formulation is largely fragmented and reflects a lack of standardised regulatory environment rather than a consolidated policy regime.

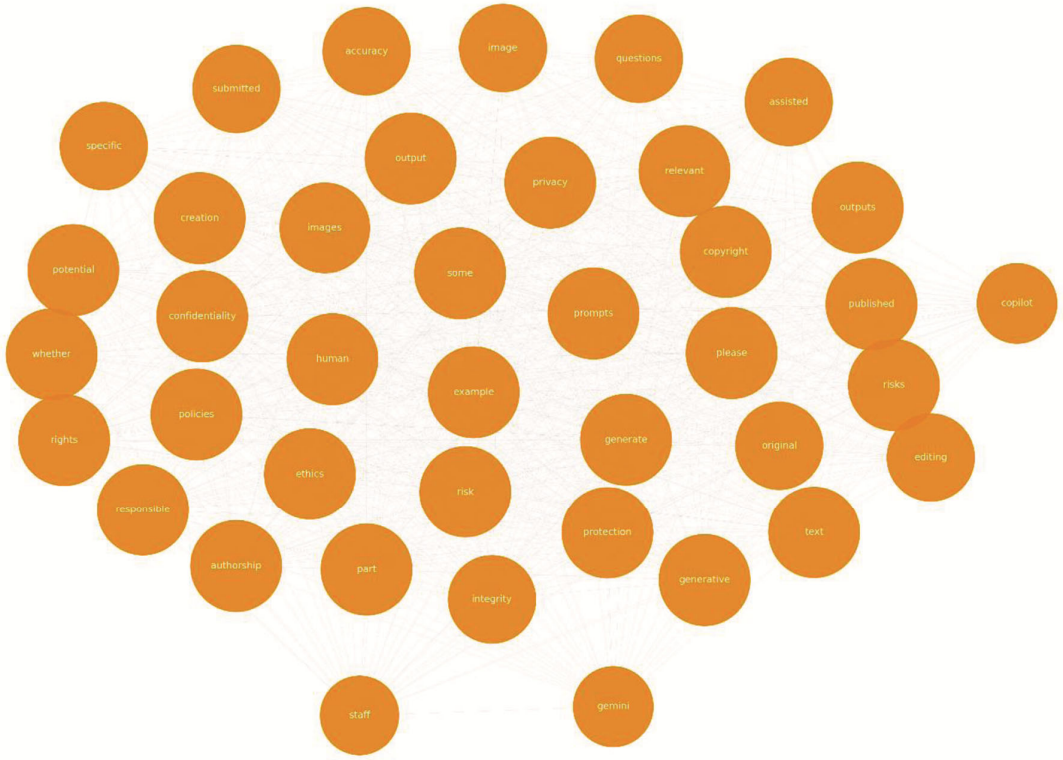

Fig. 4 — Term Co-occurrence Network of AI Policy Documents.

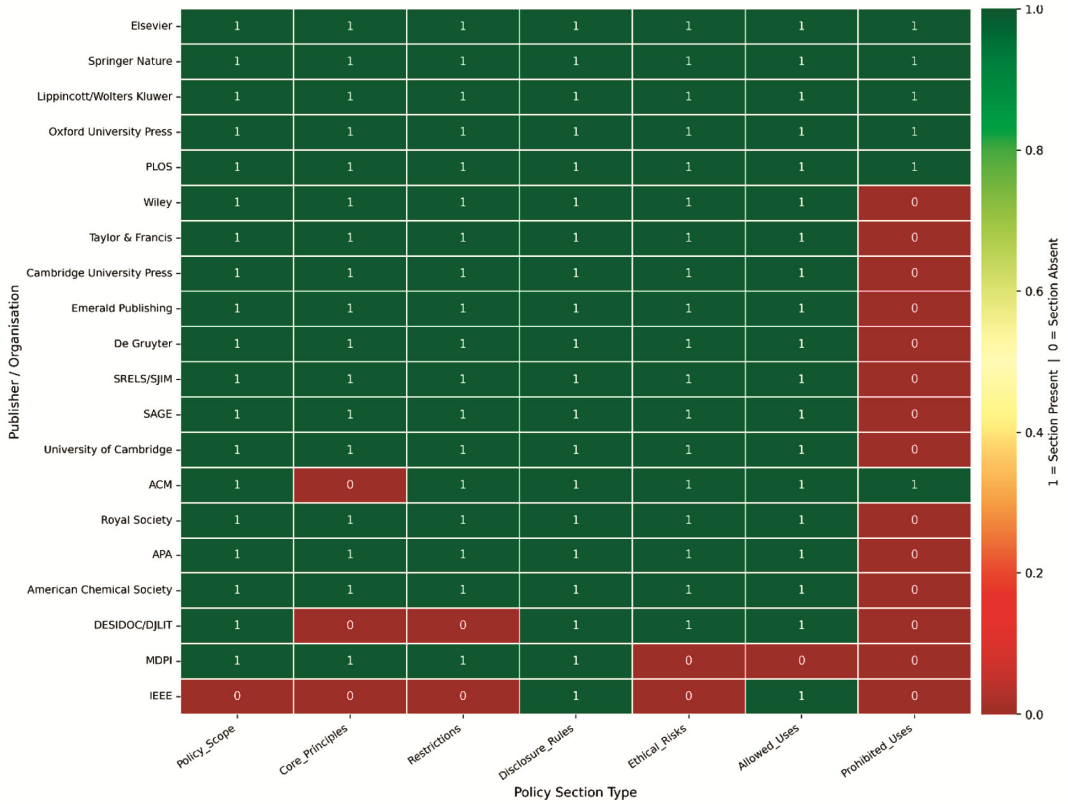

Fig. 5 — Gap Analysis Matrix of AI Policy Components Across Publishers.

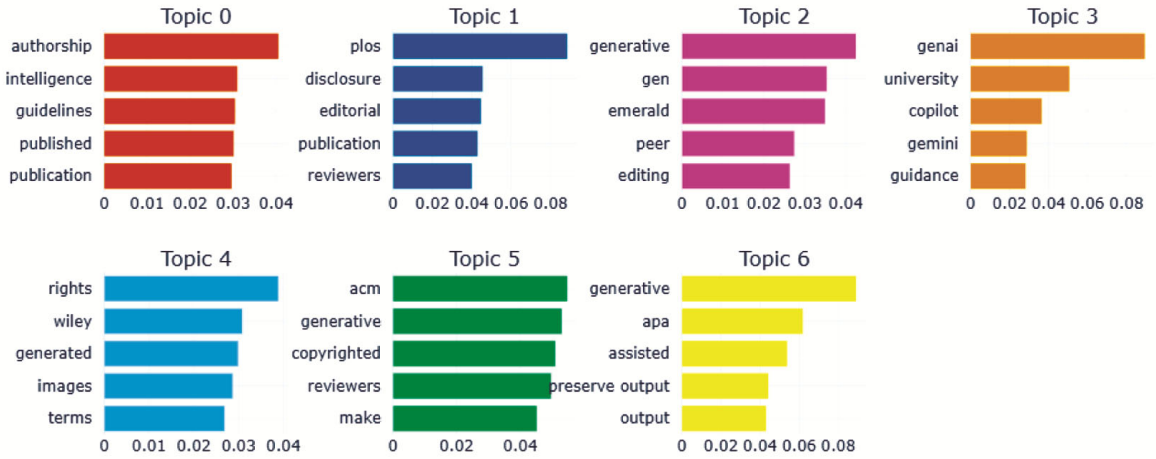

Fig. 6 — Top Terms Per Topic

3.6 Modular Structure of AI Governance Discourse

The topic model is divided into seven stable thematic clusters. The clusters show no outliers, which indicates that AI policy disclosure is internally coherent while remaining structurally segmented. Topic modeling was used to identify major themes in multiple layers, these layers include accountability layer, control layer, compliance layer, and operational layer represented by terms such as authorship, restrictions, reporting, platforms etc. AI governance is not presented as a single integrated framework, instead it is shown as modular system of loosely connected policy domains.

4. Discussion

The findings show a comprehensive representation of AI policy in the domain of scholarly publishing environment. This current landscape shows similar structural patterns and consistent discourse, but at the same time it remains fragmented in the key themes. Our analysis shows that policy landscape is developing in a structured manner. The concept of institutional isomorphism is reflected in how policy documents align with formal structures to preserve legitimacy. Several themes such as prohibitions and operationalisation appear uneven across policies. This suggests a ground-level alignment for effective policy framework. Sentiment analyses reveal dominant reflection of neutral and positive language, which indicates that these texts are designed to manage the uncertainty in technological advancement and evolution rather than fully resolve it. At the discursive level policy documents show several inconsistencies, which indicates that these frameworks are still in an early stage of institutional development. The co-occurrence network shows that AI-policy is grounded in closely linked legal and ethical areas such as copyright, authorship, and data privacy. This limited engagement may limit the adaptability of governance frameworks as AI capabilities continue to grow rapidly. The gap analysis highlights fragmentation across policy texts among published documents. Majority of the publications do not clearly state what is not allowed when we use AI. It shows lack of clear rules, authors may feel uncertain about acceptable and which need to be avoided. The analysis, highlights that AI policy formulation in scholarly publishing is in initial phase shaped by legitimacy, flexibility, and risk management.

5. Conclusion

The study demonstrates that AI governance in scholarly publishing is evolving through structurally similar yet conceptually fragmented policy frameworks. While institutions converge on ethical and disclosure norms, enforcement and operational clarity remain inconsistent. The predominance of neutral discourse reflects cautious institutional positioning amid technological uncertainty. Overall, AI policy development remains in a transitional phase, requiring greater standardisation, integration, and clarity to ensure effective, accountable, and future-ready governance. The present study has several limitations, including a limited dataset comprising a small number of policy documents. Additionally, the policy documents vary significantly in length, structure, and level of detail. The use of lexicon-based sentiment analysis captures institutional

tone but may not fully capture nuanced and context-dependent policy language. For future research, the temporal evolution of policy formulation can be studied. The dataset can be expanded to capture a larger and more diverse set of publishers globally. Furthermore, qualitative approaches such as expert interviews can be conducted to understand practical usage in real-world contexts, bridging the gap between formal documents and operational implementation.

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