Editorial boards of information science and library science journals: roles, terminology, origin, and internationalization

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Abstract

The objective of this work is to identify the different names, positions, and roles of editorial board members (EBMs) of journals in the Information Science and Library Science (ISLS) field of the *Journal Citation Reports* (*JCR*) and to establish a classification of the different roles to improve communication between editors and researchers. Among the 86 journals included in the ISLS field, the first and last names, position, and institutional affiliation of each EBM were extracted from 84 journals that allowed access to committee information. The information was standardized, and the positions were classified by consensus into major groups according to the role they play in the journals. The 84 journals included 4,122 positions held by EBMs, distributed in 201 positions and classified into 11 broad categories. The majority of positions were included in the Editorial Board category (*n* = 1,516), followed by Editorial Advisory Board (*n* = 734) and Associate Editor (*n* = 566). The journals were published by 36 publishers, with *Elsevier* and *Taylor & Francis* contributing the most journals (11 each). The journals in which the EBMs had the highest percentage of foreign members were those published in the Netherlands. This study provides a picture of the broad distribution of the roles and terminological titles that EBMs have in Information Science and Library Science journals. Because of this diversity, it is advisable to develop a guide to good editorial practices that includes both a description of the complex range of roles performed by EBMs and a unified nomenclature for these universal positions.

Keywords

Journals; Scholarly journals; Academic journals; Information Science and Library Science; Editorial Boards; Editorial teams; Editorial Board Members; Editors; Journal sections; Internationalization; Terminology; Geographical origin; Multipresence.

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1. Introduction

Scholarly journals are one of the main channels for the dissemination of scientific activity and its progress, as they gather the most original and innovative contributions of science and have a profound social and academic impact (**Mauleón** *et al*., 2013). Thus, publication in the most prestigious scientific journals has become a fundamental requirement in the academic world (**Xu**; **An**; **An**, 2021). The scientific development of recent times has produced profound changes in the world of journals, mainly due to the Internet and technological development, which have had a substantial impact on their business models, structures, and general processes (**Abadal**, 2020). One of the consequences has been the birth of new professional roles to carry out the different activities involved in editing and publishing research results. Journals aspire to attract foreign readers, authors, reviewers, and editors, and to this end they are undertaking changes in their infrastructure and equipping themselves with personnel trained for the new communication demands required by the digital environment (**Diniz**, 2017).

In the editing of journals, different professionals contribute to selecting the topics and deciding which papers should be published, activities that guarantee their quality and survival; some of these professionals are part of the Editorial Eommittee (EC), and most of them work at a high scientific and academic level (**Taşkın** *et al*., 2021), in addition to having experience, knowledge, research, and publications (**Dotson**, 2012a; 2012b).

Editorial Board Members (EBMs) have been called "gatekeepers of science", (**Mauleón** *et al*., 2013) as they have the power to suggest and improve the development plans of scientific journals (**Willett**, 2013), maintain their quality (**Mauleón** *et al*., 2013), participate in the process of paper selection (**Heckenberg**; **Druml**, 2010), evaluate and/or criticize scientific studies (**Dotson**, 2012a; 2012b), filter knowledge (**Lindsey**, 1976), select authors and reviewers, or raise important and novel topics (**Dotson**, 2012a; 2012b). Furthermore, EBMs are often experts who have achieved professional success (**Kaji** *et al*., 2019) and academic leadership. They have extensive experience in scientific fields and great expertise. Scientific journals with high-level EBMs are better able to publish high-quality scientific articles (**Walters**, 2016).

> "The positions and activities of EBMs as intermediaries between research and professional activity require terminological standardization to help reduce barriers in communication between all those involved in scientific publication"

All this makes it necessary to name these new roles, but above all to standardize and establish new titles that allow for communication between specialists in a precise and unambiguous manner (**Afzal**, 2023) and that are easily understood by the researchers who submit their work to these journals. It has been reported that one of the gaps preventing effective communication of research results into practice is terminology (**Haddow**; **Klobas**, 2004), along with other cultural, motivational, relevance, immediacy, and educational aspects. Therefore, the positions and activities of EBMs as intermediaries between research and professional activity require terminological standardization to help reduce barriers in communication between all those involved in scientific publication.

Moreover, the activities of Editorial Eommittee are not exempt from criticism. In fact, a study has shown that, in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS), when an EBM from a journal submits an article for publication, the time elapsed between submission and publication is shortened (**Taşkın** *et al*., 2021). Another study analyzing whether EBMs from 30 LIS journals are more likely to publish in the journals in which they are EBMs shows that 36% of EBMs publish more articles than expected in the journals they are part of, based on the publication patterns of the authors who published in the 30 journals in the field (**Walters**, 2015). Likewise, EBMs tend to occupy higher positions in the authorship order of papers (**Xu**; **An**; **An**, 2021) and are also more cited (**Frandsen**; **Nicolaisen**, 2010; **Medoff**, 2003).

The current study is based on the hypothesis that there is a wide variety of EBMs positions in the journals in the Information Science and Library Science (ISLS) field that are unknown to both publishing professionals and researchers, and that their classification and knowledge can contribute to improving communication between both. The results obtained can provide a starting point for the development of a standardization in the names of the roles and positions of scientific journals of any publisher, regardless of the area of knowledge and the geographical area where they are published. Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

a) to detail and group the titles, positions, and roles of the EBMs of journals in the ISLS field;

b) to determine the publishers and countries of publication of these journals;

c) to identify the professionals and institutions with the greatest presence on these committees; and

> The current study is based on the hypothesis that there is a wide variety of EBMs positions in the journals in the Information Science and Library Science (ISLS) field that are unknown

d) to establish the degree of internationalization that exists. All this will have an impact on improving the knowledge of EBMs and their professionalization.

2. Methodology

The database used to obtain the journals specialized in Information and Documentation was the *Journal Citation Reports* (*JCR*), *Social Sciences Citation Index* (*SSCI*) 2020 edition, filtering by the information science and library science (ISLS) subject category.

On the basis of the journal information included in the *JCR*, a database was generated in Microsoft Access where the following variables were entered for each journal: name of the journal, publisher, and country where it is published.

In a second phase (April 2021), the web pages of the journals were consulted and the following information was extracted for each of the EBMs: first and last names, position held, and institutional affiliation. Of the total 86 journals included, it was not possible to obtain EBMs information for two of them, in one case because access was restricted due to payment (*Law Library Journal*) and in the second because it did not contain the necessary information (*Ecotent*), so the final sample consisted of 84 journals. Of these, 75 offered complete information, while the other 9 lacked some data.

Subsequently, the information collected was standardized. In the case of the EBMs, we proceeded to: (a) use the initials of the names, consulting both academic social networks such as *ResearchGate*, *Academia.edu*, and *Google Scholar* and the institutional website; and (b) homogenize the various names (for example, M. N. Ravishankar or Ranvishankar M. N.; Robin L. Wakefield or Robin Wakefield). In addition, the institutions of the EBMs were standardized and the names of the same institution were grouped together. Table 1 presents some examples of the variants of the same institution and their standardized names.

Table 1. Examples of institutions from several locations

Standardized institution	Variants of the same institution
The University of Texas System (UT System)	*The University of Texas at San Antonio*
	The University of Texas at Austin
	The University of Texas at Arlington
	The University of Texas at Dallas
	The University of Texas at El Paso
	The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
	The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
	The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV)
	The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
State University of New York (SUNY)	*University at Albany*
	University at Buffalo (UB)
	State University of New York at New Paltz
	Stony Brook University (SBU)
Indian Institute of Management (IIM)	*Indian Institute of Management Raipur*
	Indian Institute of Management Nagpur
	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta
	Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB)
	Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad
	Indian Institute of Management Rohtak
	Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode
	Indian Institute of Management Tiruchirappalli
	Indian institute of Management Ranchi
	Indian Institute of Management Kashipur

The titles of the positions held by the EBMs were collected as they appeared on the journals' web sites, and they were then unified by eliminating hyphens and parentheses and grouping singulars and plurals, which resulted in 201 EBMs position titles. Subsequently, three authors of this work, all information and documentation professionals, classified the positions by the consensus method into large groups or categories according to the role they played in the journals. To ensure consistency in the classification of the EBMs, the definitions of the terms appearing in the ECs of the main scientific publishers (*Elsevier*, *Taylor & Francis*, *Emerald Group Publishing*, *Springer*, *American Library Association*) and on the websites of *SAGE Support* (*University of Washington*), *China National Knowledge Infrastructure* (*CNKI*), *Publishers Asso-*

ciation, and *Euroinnova* were consulted to ensure consistency in the classification of the database.

An analysis was carried out of several variables from the database, such as publishers and country of publication, presence of the terminological groupings of EBMs in the journals, internationalization, and identification of EBMs and institutions that contribute a representative to the editorial committees.

3. Results

The 84 journals analyzed included 4,122 EBMs distributed in 201 positions, which were classified into 11 major groups:

(1) Administration, Marketing, and Communication;
(2) Assistant Editor;
(3) Associate Editor;
(4) Co-editor and Editor-in-Chief;
(5) Collection Special Issue Eeditor;
(6) Editorial Advisory Board;
(7) Editorial Board;
(8) Regional Editor;
(9) Emeritus, Former, Founding, and Honorary;
(10) Reviewer;
(11) Other.

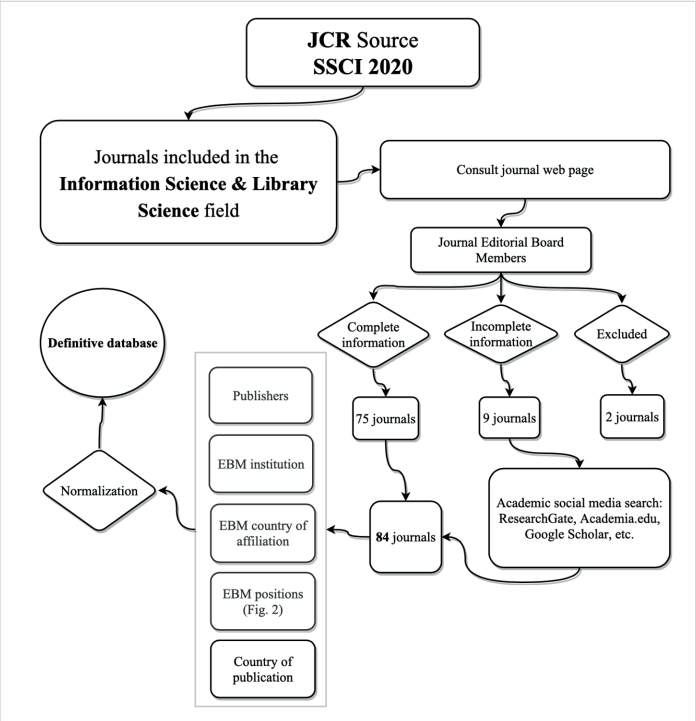

Figure 1. Database creation flowchart

The majority of the positions were included in the Editorial Board category (*n* = 1,516), followed by Editorial Advisory Board (*n* = 734) and Associate Editor (*n* = 2).

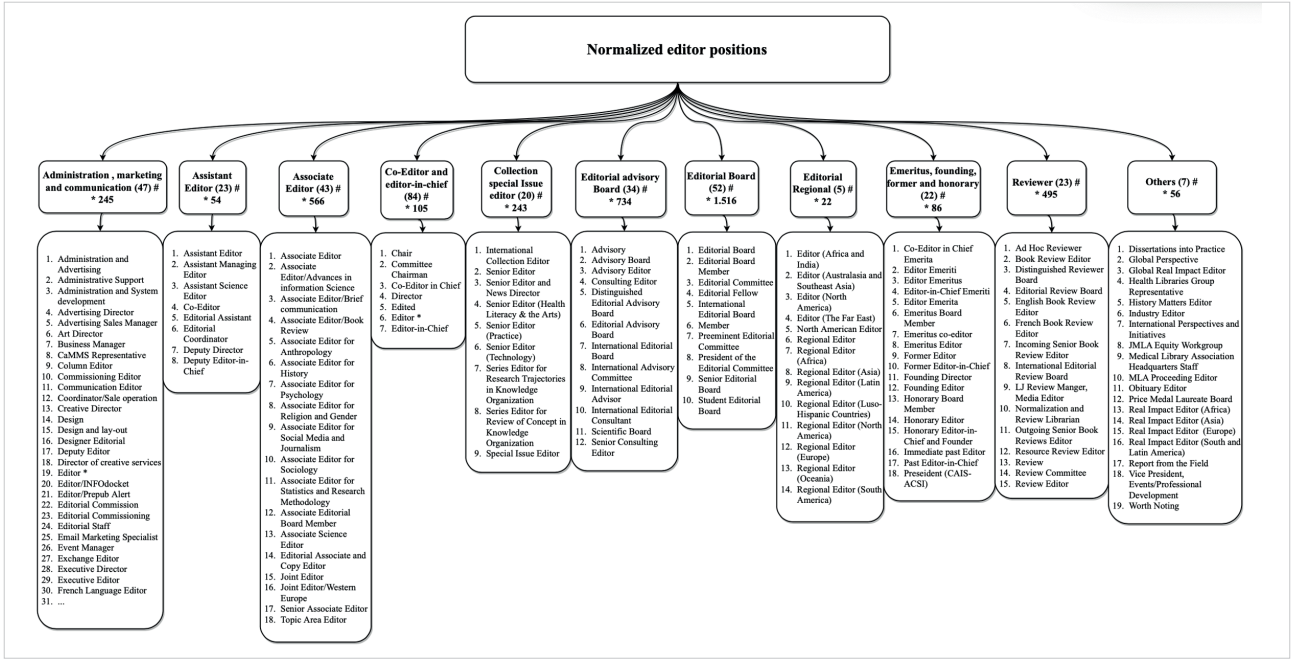

Figure 2. Classification of the various terminological names of the editorial committee positions in the Information Science and Library Science field

Administration, marketing, and communication continues with: 31. Graphic designer; 32. Group publisher; 33. IT student technician; 34. Journal editorial office; 35. Manager editor; 36. Manager, research/customer insight; 37. Managing editor; 38. Managing editor and copy editor; 39. Marketing director; 40. MLA board liaison; 41. MLA domain liaison; 42. News editor; 43. Newsletter editor; 44. Operation editor; 45. Operation coordinator; 46. Operation specialist; 47. PARS representative; 48. Production manager; 49. Production office; 50. Production/art director; 51. Production/design director; 52. Proofreading; 53. Publications manager; 54. Reference and professional reading editor; 55. Sales director; 56. Secretary; 57. Senior account executive; 58. Senior webinar program manager; 59. Social media editor; 60. Special project; 61. Staff liaison; 62. Staff writer/editor; 63. Statistical editor; 64. Style correction; 65. Supplier project manager; 66. Teaching and learning in action; 67. Team lead/operation team; 68. Team lead/sales operation; 69. Technical support; 70. Translator; 71. Virtual project editor

Editor*: Editor-in-chief if the name editor-in-chief does not appear in the editorial committee. If editor-in-chief is listed, editor is included in administration, marketing, and communication.

#For each group, the number of journals in that category is specified in parentheses.

*Number of positions.

Table 2. Publishers that publish two or more journals in the ISLS field

Journal publisher	Journal name
Elsevier (n=11)	*International Journal of Information Management*
	Telematics and Informatics
	Journal of Strategic Information Systems
	Journal of Informetrics
	Information & Management
	Telecommunications Policy
	Government Information Quarterly
	Library & Information Science Research
	Information and Organization
	Journal of Academic Librarianship
	Information Processing & Management
Taylor & Francis (n=11)	*Journal of Management Information Systems*
	Journal of Health Communication
	Information Society
	Knowledge Management Research & Practice
	European Journal of Information Systems
	Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association
	Information Technology for Development
	Serials Review
	International Journal of Geographical Information Science
	Library Collections Acquisitions & Technical Services
	Journal of Global Information Technology Management
Emerald Group Publishing (n=10)	*Journal of Knowledge Management*
	Aslib Journal of Information Management
	Journal of Enterprise Information Management
	Journal of Documentation
	Information Technology & People
	Data Technologies and Applications
	Library Hi Tech
	Electronic Library
	Online Information Review
	Reference Services Review
Sage Publications (n=7)	*Journal of Information Technology*
	Information Development
	Social Science Computer Review
	Journal of Librarianship and Information Science
	Journal of Information Science
	Social Science Information Sur Les Sciences Sociales
	Qualitative Health Research
Springer (n=4)	*International Journal of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning*
	Scientometrics
	Ethics and Information Technology
	Information Technology & Management
Wiley (n=4)	*Information Systems Journal*
	Learned Publishing
	Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology
	Health Information and Libraries Journal
American Library Association (n=3)	*Information Technology and Libraries*
	Reference & User Services Quarterly
	Library Resources & Technical Services
Oxford University Press (n=3)	*Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*
	Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association
	Research Evaluation
Igi Global (n=2)	*Journal of Organizational and End User Computing*
	Journal of Global Information Management
Johns Hopkins University Press (n=2)	*Library Trends*
	Portal-Libraries and The Academy
Walter De Gruyter (n=2)	*Libri - International Journal of Libraries and Information Studies*
	Restaurator - International Journal for the Preservation of Library and Archival Material

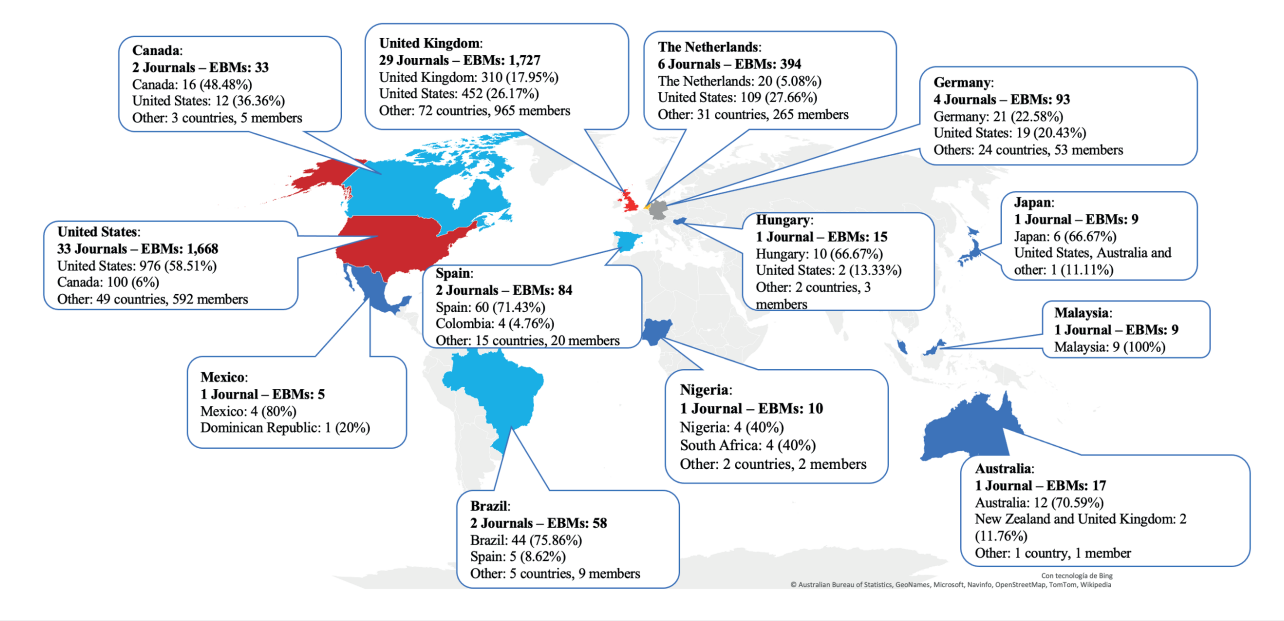

Figure 3. Distribution by country of journal publication in the ISLS field

3.1. Publishers and country of publication of the journals

The 84 journals are published by 36 publishers. Table 2 presents the 11 publishers that publish two or more journals. *Elsevier* and *Taylor & Francis* publish the most journals (11 each), followed by *Emerald Group Publishing* with 10, and *SAGE Publications* with 7.

Figure 3 shows the 13 countries in which the 84 journals analyzed were published, with the number of journals in each country, the number of EBMs, and their geographical origin. Three countries account for 81% of the journals: the United States (*n* = 33), the United Kingdom (*n* = 29), and the Netherlands (*n* = 6). Analyzing the EBMs' country of affiliation in relation to the journal of publication indicates that, in the Malaysian journal, all its members are from that country. Furthermore, the journals in which EBMs have a higher percentage of foreign members are those published in the Netherlands, since of the 394 members participating in the six journals published in this country, only 20 of them (5.08%) are from that country. The 29 journals published in the United Kingdom only contribute 310 autochthonous members (17.95%), while Germany, with 4 journals, contributes 22.58% autochthonous EBMs. The rest of the countries have percentages of members from their own country greater than 40%. EBMs from the United States are always represented after the members of the same country in which the journals are published in countries in the Northern Hemisphere such as Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Germany, with between 20% and 36% of members. Finally, another aspect to highlight is the wide participation of countries in the journals published in the United Kingdom, where in addition to the members from the United Kingdom and the United States, the remaining 56% are represented by 965 members from 72 countries.

In Spain, 28.57% of the EBMs come from other countries, with Colombia contributing the largest number of members (4.76%).

3.2. EC members and their positions

The EBMs belong to 79 countries, with the United States being the most represented with 38.23% (*n* = 1,576), followed by the United Kingdom with 10.16% (*n* = 419) and China with 7.06% (*n* = 291). The total number of members is 3,413, as there are 494 members (14.47%) who participate in the committees of several journals. Specifically, one member participates in ten journals, another in seven, two participants in six, and ten professionals participate in five. In addition, 32 members (0.94%) are listed in four journals, 100 members (2.93%) in three, and 348 members (10.20%) in two.

The analysis of the members shows that Sallie Gregson of *Emerald Group Publishing* and/or *West Dean College of Arts and Conservation* (UK) is the person who belongs to the most Editorial Committees (*n* = 10), generally occupying the position of commissioning editor. Table 3 presents the four professionals who appear on the committees of six or more journals, together with the name of the position they hold.

> The titles of the positions held by the EBMs were collected as they appeared on the journals' web sites, and they were then unified, which resulted in 201 EBMs position titles

Table 3. Distribution of the four professionals with the highest presence as EBMs

	Institutional affiliation	Journal name	Journal/Publisher country	Position title	Group of terminological names
Sallie Gregson	*West Dean College of Arts and Conservation*	*Aslib Journal of Information Management*	United Kingdom	Commissioning Editor	Administration, marketing and communication
	Emerald Group Publishing	*Data Technologies and Applications*			
		Electronic Library			
		Information Technology & People			
		Journal of Documentation			
		Journal of Enterprise Information Management			
		Journal of Knowledge Management			
	West Dean College of Arts and Conservation	*Library Hi Tech*			
		Online Information Review			
	Emerald Group Publishing	*Reference Services Review*	United States		
Monideepa Tarafdar	*University System of Ohio*	*Information & Management*	The Netherlands	Editorial Board	Editorial Board
	Lancaster University	*Information Systems Journal*	United Kingdom	Senior Editor	Collection Special Issue Editor
	University of Massachusetts	*Information Systems Research*	United States	Senior Editor	Collection Special Issue Editor
	Lancaster University	*Information Technology & People*	United Kingdom	Editorial Advisory Board	Editorial Advisory Board
		Journal of Management Information Systems	United States	Editorial Board	Editorial Board
		Journal of Strategic Information Systems	The Netherlands	Editorial Board	Editorial Board
		Journal of the Association for Information Systems	United States	Editorial Review Board	Reviewer
Jennifer E. Rowley	*Manchester Metropolitan University*	*Aslib Journal of Information Management*	United Kingdom	Editorial Advisory Board	Editorial Advisory Board
		International Journal of Information Management		Distinguished Editorial Advisory Board	Editorial Advisory Board
		Journal of Information Science		Editorial Board	Editorial Board
		Journal of Knowledge Management		Editorial Board	Editorial Board
		Library Hi Tech		Editorial Advisory Board	Editorial Advisory Board
		Online Information Review		Editorial Advisory Board	Editorial Advisory Board
Rudy Hirschheim	*Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College (LSU)*	*Data Base for Advances in Information Systems*	United States	Preeminent Editorial Board	Editorial Board
		Information Systems Journal	United Kingdom	Editorial Advisory Board	Editorial Advisory Board
		Information and Organization		Advisory Board	Editorial Advisory Board
		Journal of Strategic Information Systems	The Netherlands	Honorary Board Member	Emeritus, founding, former and Honorary
		Journal of Management Information Systems	United States	Editorial Board	Editorial Board
		Journal of Information Technology	United Kingdom	Advisory Board	Editorial Advisory Board

The institutions that contribute at least one member to the Editorial Committees number 1,366, distributed among 79 countries. Of the total number of institutions with which EBMs are affiliated, 28.63% (*n* = 394) belong to the United States, 9.23% (*n* = 127) to the United Kingdom, and 6.76% (*n* = 93) to China.

The three institutions that contribute the most members to the Editorial Committees are *The University of Texas System* (*UT System*) (*n* = 60), *University of California* (UC) (*n* = 60), and *University of London* (*Lond*) (*n* = 59), as presented in Table

Table 4. Institutions that contribute the most Editors-in-Chief by journal

Institution	EC	Journal	Journal Topic	Country of journal publication	N. of ECs	Name of EC	Affiliation	Country of affiliation
The University of Texas System (UT System)	3	*Telematics and Informatics*	Interdisciplinary journal (social, economic, geographic, political, and cultural impacts of digital technologies)	United States	One	Tony H. Grubesic	*The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Geography & the Environment*	United States
		International Journal of Geographical Information Science	GIScience	United Kingdom	One	May Yuan	*The University of Texas at Dallas, School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences*	United States
		Information Technology & Management	Information technology	United States	Two	Vijay Mookerjee	*The University of Texas at Dallas, Naveen Jindal School of Mnagement*	United States
						Yonghua Ji	*University of Alberta (U of A), Department of Accounting and Business Analytics*	Canada
University of London (Lond)	3	*Journal of Information Technology*	Information, management, and communications technologies	Uninted Kingdom	Two	Leslie Willcocks	*London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), Department of Managment*	United Kingdom
						Daniel Schlagwein	*University of Sydney (USYD) Business School*	Australia
		Information Technology & People	Information systems and cultural and geographic	United Kingdom	Four	Edgar A. Whitley	*London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), Department of Managment*	United Kingdom
						Kevin Crowston	*Syracuse University School of Information Studies, Information Science*	United States
						Jyoti Choudrie	*University of Hertfordshire, Hertfordshire Business School, Department of Information Science*	United Kingdom
						Yulin Fang	*City University of Hong Kong (CityU), HKU Business School, Institute of Digital Economy and Innovation (IDEI)*	China
		Knowledge Organization	Information Sciences	Germany	One	Vanda Broughton	*University College London (UCL), Department of Information Studies*	United Kingdom

EC: *Editor-in-Chief*

4. Additionally, the top two institutions contributing the most Editors-in-Chief are *UT System* and *Lond*, with three each. Table 4 also presents the Editor-in-Chief and Co-editor-in-Chief of these institutions by journal. There are three journals that have more than one Editor-in-Chief.

The journals *Information Technology & Management*, *Journal of Information Technology*, and *Information Technology & People* include Editors-in-Chief from various countries according to their country of affiliation (Table 4).

4. Discussion

This work has made it possible to identify the different positions of EBMs in the journals of the ISLS field from the *Journal Citation Reports* (JCR), as well as their degree of internationalization in terms of geographical origin. Being an EBM entails a series of responsibilities that depend on the tasks to be performed within the wide range of committee functions. The EBMs role represents a personal recognition because it grants the status of "guardian" of a field's academic literature and a license to decide what is interesting

> "For the position of Editor-in-Chief there are usually coinciding titles in almost all journals, such as director, chair, or chairman. In the case of "chairman," no journal was found with the female equivalent "chairwoman"

enough to be published for the scientific development of the field. Their responsibilities are multidirectional: to the journal, to the editors, to the authors, and to the scientific community (**Parker**, 2007). Likewise, it can be an invitation to expand academic networks, gather information, develop policies, nurture emerging researchers, open new avenues of research, adopt new methodologies, and create knowledge (**Goyanes**; **Demeter**, 2020).

> The high percentage of EBMs from Western Europe, the United Kingdom, and above all the United States, highlights the lack of diversity in geographical representation of ISLS journals, an aspect that is most evident in the position of Editor or Director

4.1. Roles and terminology

One of the most striking results of our study is the identification of more than 200 titles for EBMs positions; 71 of these positions are classified in the administration, marketing, and communication group. At the opposite pole is the position of Editor-in-Chief, for which there are usually coinciding titles in almost all journals, such as director, chair, or chairman. In the case of "chairman," no journal was found with the female equivalent "chairwoman." Furthermore, not all journals have the same positions, and some are present in only a few journals, such as Regional Editors, Emeritus, and Honorary Editors.

Hardly any papers that analyze and discuss the terminology used for the composition and roles of EBMs can be found in the published literature, beyond the general functions of Editors, Directors, and Reviewers, which are broadly described. In a paper on EBMs of economics journals, the authors grouped the positions related to journal management into four positions: Editor, Co-editor, Associate Editor, and Consulting Editor. The Editor was the person who had the right of final decision after receiving decisions or recommendations from Co-editors or Associate Editor, as well as choosing referees or referring articles to others who, in turn, choose referees; the Co-editor had the task of choosing referees and preparing decisions for the Editor; the Associate Editor had the task of refereeing articles; and finally, an advisory editor had the role of advising on policy issues, rather than reviewing or deciding on manuscripts (**Ductor**; **Visser**, 2022). However, this terminology and the functions of each position may vary over time for any given journal and from one journal to another, while the same position may be involved in several of the previously described activities. In addition, not all journals necessarily have board members in all four positions described.

4.2. Internationalization

As seen in this study, most of the EBMs in journals published in Western countries belong to those countries, with the participation of US EBMs significant in almost all of them. A previous study analyzing the EBMs of journals in the information science category found that 71.97% were from the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada (**Cronin**, 2009), and in addition, in the *LIS Journal*, 74% were from these same three countries (**Walters**, 2016). Another study focusing on communication journals also identified a concentration in the United States (65%) and Western countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Germany, which together accounted for 80% of EBMs (**Goyanes**, 2020). This percentage reached almost 90% in another paper that analyzed the origin of EBMs from communication journals in the *Journal Citation Reports* (**De-Albuquerque** *et al*., 2020).

The high percentage of EBMs from Western Europe, the United Kingdom, and above all the United States highlights the lack of diversity in geographical representation of ISLS journals, an aspect that is most evident in the position of Editor or Director. Studies examining the geographic representation of EBMs of academic journals in other fields have yielded similar results (**Espin** *et al*., 2017; **Bhaumik**; **Jagnoor**, 2019; **Dada** *et al*., 2022). For example, an analysis of 24 ecology and environmental biology journals over three decades (1985-2014) revealed that almost 70% of all publishers in that period were based in the United States and the United Kingdom, while publishers based outside those countries were extremely rare (**Espin** *et al*., 2017). In another study of the top 10 international psychiatry journals, only 21 (3.5%) of the 607 EBMs were from low- or middle-income countries (**Pike** *et al.*, 2017). Even in journals that publish topics considered global in scope, such as global health, 73% of their EBMs were based in Europe, Central Asia, and North America (**Bhaumik**; **Jagnoor**, 2019). However, taking into account the indicators of the *Survey of Research and Experimental Development* from the *Unesco Institute for Statistics* (n.d.), countries with few researchers per million inhabitants, such as Sri Lanka, Ghana, Poland, and Colombia, contribute a high number of EBMs in the ISLS field in relation to the number of researchers in these countries. Furthermore, the representation of EBMs from certain countries also depends on the existence and activity of centers and institutions dedicated to training and research in the field.

The integration of EBMs from diverse backgrounds has a number of advantages, such as having a wider variety of approaches, an increase in the number of manuscripts received, increased prestige of the journal owing to its global nature, and increased capacity building of scholars from all socioeconomic backgrounds (**Espin** *et al*., 2017; **Pike** *et al*., 2017). However, despite frequent calls since the 2000s to de-Westernize research and the processes of scientific communication and publication, the practical outcome is proving to be unexceptional, as the proportion of non-Western countries participating in editorial boards remains minimal (**De-Albuquerque** *et al*., 2020).

4.3. Multipresence of EBMs in one or several journals

As observed in our study, about 15% of EBMs are part of more than one committee, a percentage similar to that found in a previous study of LIS journals (**Walters**, 2016), in which 9-15% of EBMs participated in two committees and between

2% and 5% in three. The degree of overlap between editorial boards is lower in LIS than in fields such as economics, information systems, and finance (**Baccini**; **Barabesi**, 2010; **Burgess**; **Shaw**, 2010). Previous studies found that 79-89% of EBMs were part of just one editorial board (**Cronin**, 2009), while the work of **Ni** and **Ding** (2010) found that 10% were part of two committees and that of **Willett** (2013) found that 2-5% held three positions while less than 1% held four or more. In our study, we found that one member participates in 10 EC positions, another member occupies 7 positions, two hold 6 positions, ten hold 5 positions, and so on, while 85.53% occupy a single position.

> "The integration of EBMs from diverse backgrounds has a number of advantages, such as having a wider variety of approaches, an increase in the number of manuscripts received, increased prestige of the journal owing to its global nature, and increased capacity building of scholars from all socioeconomic backgrounds"

The cross-presence of scholars in different journals is academically known as editorial board interlocking (**Baccini**; **Barabesi**, 2010) and represents, according to several studies, a growing threat to research diversity, as it may endanger the pluralism of academic publishing (**Youk**; **Park**, 2019; **Goyanes** *et al*., 2022).

4.4. Geographical and institutional origin

The concentration of EBMs in countries and in a particular group of institutions has also been reported in other studies, such as that of **De-Albuquerque** *et al*. (2020), which found a strong imbalance in favor of the United States and a specific group of US universities in particular, to the detriment of non-Western countries. For some authors, one of the reasons for this situation and for its continuation over time is the survival of the system for measuring the quality of journals on the basis of the *JCR* rankings from the private US company *Clarivate*, since it artificially introduces Western representation in the international publishing system and thus concentrates symbolic power in the hands of a few (**De-Albuquerque** *et al*., 2020).

In our study, the universities of *Texas*, *California*, and *Lond* are the institutions that contribute the greatest number of EBMs. Another study found that the University of Texas was also the leading institution in the field of communication, while the *University of California* was the leading institution in psychology and sociology and the *University of London* in political science (**Goyanes** *et al*., 2022). The *University of Texas School of Information* was founded in 1948, and its *iSchool* program is ranked among the top information studies programs internationally. *US News & World Report* (2023) ranks this graduate program fifth in the United States, and the *Center for World University Rankings* (*CWUR*) (2023) ranks it seventh among the best information schools in the world. The *University of California School of Information* was established in 1994, but its roots go back to the 1920s, when *UC Berkeley* founded its *School of Library Science*, although it began teaching library science courses in 1902 (*Berkeley School of Information*, 2023). The *University of London* is represented by the *Centre for Information Science* (*City University of London*, 2023), which began teaching documentation courses in 1961.

5. Conclusions

This work provides an in-depth look at the wide range of terminological titles assigned to EBMs in Information Science and Library Science journals, and is the first study to analyze all EC positions in the same field. Furthermore, due to the great diversity of positions and their titles, we recommend drawing up a guide to good editorial practices that includes both a description of the complex range of functions performed by EBMs in the editorial process and a unified designation of these universal positions.

6. Limitations

It should be taken into account that the composition of ECs is dynamic and may have varied throughout the study period, with the entry or dismissal/resignation of members. Likewise, there may have been an underrepresentation of EBMs, as some journals did not show all members on their web pages. Finally, the simultaneous presence of EBMs in different positions in the same or different journals has not been excluded.

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