

GENDER DISPARITY ON EDITORIAL BOARDS OF INDIAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE JOURNALS

Vinay R S

Research Scholar

Department of Studies and Research in Library and Information Science, Tumkur University,
Tumakuru, Karnataka, India

Sampath Kumar B T

Senior Professor

Department of Studies and Research in Library and Information Science, Tumkur University,
Tumakuru, Karnataka, India

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyse trends in the gender distribution of various editorial roles, affiliations, and occupations of those who perform these roles, as well as the gender makeup of journal editorial boards in the field of library and information science. Data on 243 editors and editorial board members were collected from the websites of the ten most prominent India LIS journals chosen for the study. Data were assessed by role, gender, country, affiliation, and occupation. In Selected Indian LIS journals, researchers discovered that women were significantly underrepresented in editorial roles. This was especially noticeable at the most senior level of editing, that of the editor-in-chief. Most editorial staff were teachers, with few support staff or researchers. In particular, the study looks at the position of women in the field of library and information science. The study's conclusions are based on the proportion of women on the editorial boards of journals related to library and information science. The study is the first of its type to highlight the participation of female scholars and track their impact in the field of library and information science research. From the findings of the study, it is found that there exists a gender disparity in Indian Library and Information Science journal's editorial boards.

Keywords: Gender, Gender Disparity, Women, Editorial board, Library and Information Science

1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of science, women have historically been and still are predominantly underrepresented. Even though the proportion of women working in scientific fields varies from country to country, women make up only 28.4% of the workforce in research and development across the world (UNESCO, 2020). In the scientific faculty of numerous institutes and universities, just 25% of the members are women. Institutions engaged in biological research are an exception. "Only 14% of the 2.8 lakh scientists, engineers, and technologists working in India's R&D institutions are women". Contrarily, the global average is 28.4%. Even if there are more women enrolled in PG and Ph.D. programs, according to female scientists, the biological clock and family obligations prevent them from turning their degrees into careers (The Times of India, 2018).

The position, status, and experiences of women in academia have attracted the attention of academics in recent years. Despite an increase in female student enrolment in higher education across the globe, women continue to face major challenges in moving up the academic ladder and occupying top leadership positions (Abreu, et al., 2008; Aiston and

Jung, 2015). However, in the present Indian context, women are underrepresented in top academic leadership roles, with the vast majority (66.22%) remaining in mid-level jobs (Banker & Banker, 2017; Ghara, 2016). According to Banker & Banker (2017), only 6.67 percent of India's vice-chancellors, directors, and deans were women. When the ranks of Principal, Professor, and Associate Professor were added to those already stated, the percentage rose to 15.64 percent (Ghara, 2016). Even if the lack of female participation in top positions in higher education is a worldwide problem (Banker & Banker, 2017), the situation is particularly dire in South Asia (Morley & Crossouard, 2014), and in India in particular (Banker & Banker, 2017).

Peer review is a crucial step in scientific journals that determines whether new results and supporting evidence should be accepted or rejected. This procedure establishes who may make contributions to the literature on a certain topic (Bedeian et al., 2009). Peer review must adhere to the fundamentals of research ethics by attempting to prevent inequity (Parabhoi, et al., 2022). Many people view the role of a journal editor as being prestigious and having great influence. People are chosen for these positions based on their prior academic achievements, and they are likely to have written numerous peer-reviewed publications that are frequently cited themselves (Stegmaier et al., 2011; Feeney et al., 2019, Parabhoi, et al., 2022). Throughout their careers as academic editors, editors have probably made a considerable contribution to the peer-review process, and excellent editors will have done so proficiently and responsibly. Being offered and accepting a position on an editorial board is a good way to advance one's professional experience, level of prominence and esteem, and ability to establish and join a new professional network. This can frequently lead to or initiate significant career advancements in other fields of work (Parker, 2007; Grod et al., 2010; Hafeez et al., 2019).

Women have long been underrepresented in the role of journal editor for scholarly publications worldwide. Numerous studies have shown that reviewers on editorial boards behave differently depending on their gender, suggesting that increasing the number of women on editorial boards could increase both the quality and variety of reviews. Therefore, it is interesting to see how many women now serve on the editorial boards of library and information science journals, especially compared to the editorial boards of peer-reviewed library and information science journals.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The gender gap in library and information science research has been extensively studied by many academics, professionals, and researchers both in India and overseas. The gap in the representation of men and women on editorial boards has been explained in previous research in a variety of ways.

Parabhoi, *et al.*, 2022 did a study to determine the gender balance of library and information science journals' editorial boards. Women were found to be underrepresented on the editorial boards of 10 of the 13 LIS journals studied, especially in the post of editor or editor-in-chief. It turns out that the majority of the editorial board consists of teaching professionals rather than support staff or researchers. The study's findings show that men and women are still treated differently in the academic workplace.

Harries, et al., (2019) identified that the number of women serving on surgical journal editorial boards is increasing, and it has been established that there is a correlation between the length of time men and women spend in training and working in the profession. The percentage of women serving on editorial boards climbed from 5% to 19% over a period of two decades.

Pinho-Gomes, et al. (2021) investigated the gender breakdown of the chief editors of the top medical journals. In all, women made up 21% (94 of 44) of the editors-in-chief, with differences ranging from 0% to 82% among medical specialties. According to this survey, women make up only 1 in 5 editors in chief of prestigious medical journals, a significant underrepresentation compared to men.

Henriques and Garcia (2022) evaluated 53 open-access geology journals included in the Web of Science Core Collection to determine the percentage of women serving on editorial boards. Among the publications studied, the results of the study found that men make up 85% of the editorial boards and women make up 15%. The editorial boards of these same journals also overwhelmingly feature men (80% to 20%). Women continue to be underrepresented in the editorial boards of top-ranking general surgery journals, with only 20.2% of the total editorial board staff being recorded as female, as found by Gallivan et al. (2021).

Palser et al. (2022) examined the top 50 journals in the fields of psychology and neuroscience to better understand gender gaps in editorial positions. Furthermore, the study discovered that more than half of the editors for 76% of psychology journals and 88% of neuroscience journals were male, compared to 20% and 10% for journals with a similar percentage of female editors. According to the study, the ratios of male and female editors in each editorial function as well as across different role categories were significantly different.

In 2016, Topaz and Sen investigated gender representation on the editorial boards of 435 mathematical journals. Only 8.9% of the 13067 editorships were held by women, while 90.3% were held by men. The study also found that both men and women from developed countries mainly serve on editorial boards. Only 9% of women held top editorial positions such as editor and editor-in-chief.

In a study of 119 psychiatry publications, Hafeez et al., (2019) discovered a striking gender gap (30.4% women). Men were more likely to be psychiatrists with a medical degree, whereas women were Ph.D. psychologists. Less women held leadership positions on editorial boards when there were more women in editorial leadership roles. The average number of publications by women was half that of men, yet their average impact factor at their respective journals was nearly the same as that of men.

Women make up only 14.8% of editorial board members, according to a study by Ioannidou and Rosania, (2015) that analysed 64 leading dental journals. There was a positive correlation ($p = 0.03$) between the percentage of women on advisory boards and the number of women in editorial leadership roles in journals. According to the research conducted by Rodriguez Faneca et al. (2022), there are no significant differences between the number of male and female members serving on the editorial board.

The gender distribution of editorial boards and editors-in-chief roles in paediatric journals was examined by Alonso-Arroyo et al, in 2021. According to the study findings, just 19.44% of editorial boards are made up of women, and only 33.05% of editors-in-chief are female. In paediatrics journals, just one-third of the editorial board members and one-fifth of the editors-in-chief are women, according to the study.

Liu, et al., (2023) conducted research spanning five decades and analysed more than a thousand journals from fifteen different disciplines. According to the findings of the study, women make up only 26% of authors, and the survey identified an even smaller percentage of women working as editors (14%), and even fewer working as editors-in-chief (8%). In addition, the research looked at the publications of 20,000 editors and found that 12% of

them publish at least one-fifth of their articles in the journal that they edit, while 6% publish at least one-third of their papers there.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the representation of males and females on the editorial boards of selected LIS journals?
2. To what extent are teaching professionals, LIS working Professionals, Scientists, and administrative staff represented on the editorial boards of LIS journals?
3. Which countries have better gender representation of editorial and board members?

4. HYPOTHESES

H1. There is a significant difference between male and female editorial board members.

H2. There is a positive correlation between the number of articles and authors.

H3. There is a significant difference between the male and female authors' productivity.

5. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

5.1. Selection of Journals

The study is based on the research works published in ten prominent Indian Library and Information Science journals viz.,

- i) Annals of library and information studies
- ii) DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology
- iii) KELPRO Bulletin
- iv) World Digital Libraries is an international Journal
- v) Journal of Information and Knowledge
- vi) Library Herald
- vii) Pearl: A Journal of Library and Information Science
- viii) Gyankosh: The Journal of Library and Information Management
- ix) Library Progress (International)
- x) International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology

The above Indian LIS journals have been considered for the study since they have a long traditional history of scholarly publications in the Indian LIS discipline. A total of 243 editorial members are studied from the perspective of editorial roles of the LIS researchers and the members' gender and the influence of gender were assessed. The required details were extracted from the articles and saved in a separate MS- Excel file for further analysis.

5.2 Categorisation of roles and designations

Editors-in-chief, editors, associate editors-in-chief, associate editors, joint editors, managing editors, assistant editors, guest editors, editorial assistants, and editorial board members were put into three groups.

Chief editors and Editors: are at the top of the hierarchy, and they decide whether a manuscript will be published or not.

Associate editor-in-chief and Associate editors: are the second level in the hierarchy and help the editor. They are below the editor but above editorial board members.

Assistant editors, managing editors, guest editors, and editorial board members: a group of assistants to the editor and associate editor.

The editors, associate editors, and editorial board members were categorised by their occupation or academic role, that is, Teaching professionals, LIS working Professionals, Administrative Staff, Scientists, and others.

5.3 Gender identification

The details regarding the number of articles, authors, gender of editors-in-chief, and editorial board members were collected from the journals' official websites. Gender identification was conducted using a two-step method based on the available information. The first step was to extract the title of the editorial board member (e.g., "Mr." or "Mrs.") and use this if it identified the gender of the person. The second step consisted of using the editorial board member's name. We conducted a Google search of the name and affiliation to identify the person's gender. In case of doubt or where information was missing, the researcher visited editors' profiles available on institutional websites, personal websites, ResearchGate, Academia.edu, LinkedIn, and similar sources. Furthermore, the professional status of editors has been analysed. Further, SPSS (version 26) was used for statistical analysis.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Gender composition of the editorial boards of each journal

Name of the Journal	Number of Editorial Board Members	Male	Female
Annals of library and information studies	11	10 (90.90)	1 (9.09)
DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology	22	17 (77.27)	5 (22.72)
KELPRO Bulletin	21	19 (90.47)	2 (9.52)
World Digital Libraries is an international Journal	29	22 (75.86)	7 (24.13)
Journal of Information and Knowledge	21	15 (71.42)	6 (28.57)
Library Herald	23	17 (73.91)	6 (26.08)
Pearl: A Journal of Library and Information Science	16	12 (75)	4 (25)
Gyankosh: The Journal of Library and Information Management	31	29 (93.54)	2 (6.45)
Library Progress (International)	36	30 (83.33)	6 (16.66)
International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology	33	23 (69.69)	10 (30.30)
Total	243	194 (79.83)	49 (20.16)

The gender-wise representation of male and female editorial members of selected prominent Indian LIS Journals is presented in Table 1. The highest proportion of men was found in Library Progress (International) (93.54%), followed by Annals of library and information studies (90.90%), and KELPRO Bulletin (90.47%) whereas the highest proportion of women

was found in SRELS Journal of Information Management (28.57%), and Library Herald (26.08%). A closer inspection of the data shows that men were more populous than women in all selected journals. To Identify the difference between male and female editorial board members, the t-test has been applied. The result of the t-test reveals that there is a significant difference between male and female editorial board members ($t=7.089$, $p=.000$) because the p-value is less than the accepted value ($\alpha = 0.05$). It clearly indicates that females are underrepresented in the field of Library and Information Science Research.

Table 2: Total Number of Articles Published by Authors by Gender

Name of the Journal	Number of Articles	Number of Authors	Male	Female
Annals of library and information studies	306	586	445	141
DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology	556	1158	820	338
KELPRO Bulletin	202	362	227	135
World Digital Libraries is an international Journal	103	196	155	41
Journal of Information and Knowledge	546	1022	766	256
Library Herald	304	535	350	185
Pearl: A Journal of Library and Information Science	406	724	521	203
Gyankosh: The Journal of Library and Information Management	129	224	159	65
Library Progress (International)	295	559	383	176
International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology	482	1009	755	254
Total	3329	6375	4581	1794

Table 2 reveals a total of 3329 papers published between 2012 and 2021. During the study period, 6375 authors contributed to selected LIS journals. Of these 4581 authors are males and 1794 are females. The Pearson correlation indicates that there is a highly positive correlation between the number of articles and the number of authors ($r=.991$), and the correlation is significant ($p=.000$), it is found that the number of articles written by female authors is comparatively less when compared to male authors. Therefore, based on the statistical result it may be concluded that *Hypothesis 1 "There is a positive correlation between the number of articles and authors" is accepted*. To identify the difference between the number of articles vs male authors' productivity, the number of articles vs female authors' productivity, and male vs female authors' productivity the t-test has been applied. The result shows that there is a significant difference between the number of articles written by the number of articles vs male authors' productivity ($t=-4.135$, $p=.003$) and the number of articles vs female authors' productivity ($t=6.090$, $p=.000$), and the number of male authors vs female authors productivity ($t=5.179$, $p=.001$). *Hypothesis 2 "There is a significant difference between the male and female authors' research productivity" has been accepted*.

Table 3: Characteristics of editorial board members by Professional engagements cross-tabulated by gender

Academic Rank	Total Number of Members	Male	Female
Professor	97	78 (80.41%)	19 (19.58%)
Associate Professor	16	16 (100)	-
Assistant Professor	10	6 (60)	4 (40)
Senior Lecturer	2	-	2 (100)
Chief Librarian	9	8 (88.88)	1 (11.11)
University Librarian	6	6 (100)	-
In-Charge Librarian	3	2 (66.66)	1 (33.33)
Librarian	29	23 (79.31)	6 (20.68)
Deputy Librarian	6	5 (83.33)	1 (16.66)
Teacher Librarian	1	1 (100)	-
Web Librarian	1	1 (100)	-
Assistant Librarian	6	3 (50)	3 (50)
Chief Scientist	3	2 (66.66)	1 (33.33)
Scientist	8	6 (75)	2 (25)
Visiting Scientist	2	2 (100)	-
Others	41	32 (78.04)	9 (21.95)
Unidentified	3	3 (100)	-
Total	243	194 (79.83)	49 (20.16)

Table 3 shows the representation of the editorial boards and the Academic ranks of male and female LIS researchers. The table reveals that out of 243 editorial board members of the selected journals, most of the editorial board members are Professors (97) followed by Librarians (29) and Associate Professors (16) the table also shows that 41 members are grouped under the “other” category. As shown in the table, it was found that teaching professionals dominated editorial board members in all selected Indian LIS journals. It is evident from the table that male professionals are predominated over female professionals associated with editorial board members.

Table 4: Categorisation of editorial roles by gender

Editorial role	Total editors/members	Male	Female
Editor-in-Chief	6	5 (83.33)	1 (16.66)
Editor	6	6 (100)	-
Joint Editors	4	3 (75)	1 (25)
Associate Editor-in-Chief	1	-	1 (100)
Associate Editor	13	9 (69.23)	4 (30.76)
Assistant Editor	5	3 (60)	2 (40)
Editorial Assistant	5	5 (100)	-
Managing Editor	3	3 (100)	-
Guest Editor	1	1 (100)	-
Members	199	159 (79.89)	40 (20.10)

Total	243	194 (79.83)	49 (20.16)
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Table 4 shows the Categorisation of editorial roles by gender. A total of 243 individuals, 194 males, and 49 females. In general terms, it can be said that the under-representation of females in the Library and Information Science field extends to specific aspects such as scientific and editorial activities, whether as members of editorial boards or as editors-in-chief. Results show that in the selected 10 Indian prominent LIS journals, the number of members per gender that make up the editorial board is almost 80% males and 20% females. The study revealed the gap between males and females in association with participation in editorial activities. This gap is greater when considering the position of editors (100%) of males and Editor-in-Chief 83.33% males and 16.66% females.

Table – 5: Distribution of editorial board members by affiliation country cross tabulated by Professional engagement

Country/ region	Members of the editorial board	Administrator / administrative staff	Librarians	Teachers	Scientists	Unidentified
India	181 (74.48)	35	50	81	12	3
USA	9 (3.70)	1	0	8	0	0
UK	4 (1.64)	1	0	3	0	0
Brazil	3 (1.23)	0	0	3	0	0
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	3 (1.23)	0	1	2	0	0
Nigeria	3 (1.23)	0	2	1	0	0
Australia	2 (0.82)	1	0	1	0	0
Iran	2 (0.82)	0	0	2	0	0
Bangladesh	2 (0.82)	0	0	2	0	0
Belgium	2 (0.82)	0	0	2	0	0
Japan	2 (0.82)	0	1	1	0	0
Portugal	2 (0.82)	0	0	1	1	0
Mexico	2 (0.82)	0	0	2	0	0
Spain	2 (0.82)	0	0	2	0	0
Sri Lanka	2 (0.82)	0	2	0	0	0
Canada	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
China	1 (0.41)	1	0	0	0	0
Finland	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
France	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Germany	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Greece	1 (0.41)	1	0	0	0	0
Hungary	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Italy	1 (0.41)	0	1	0	0	0
Austria	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Kuwait	1 (0.41)	0	1	0	0	0

Malaysia	1 (0.41)	0	1	0	0	0
New Zealand	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Norway	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Pakistan	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Philippines	1 (0.41)	0	1	0	0	0
Singapore	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
South Africa	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
South Korea	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Taiwan	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
Thailand	1 (0.41)	0	0	1	0	0
UAE	1 (0.41)	0	1	0	0	0
Uganda	1 (0.41)	1	0	0	0	0
Total	243	41	61	125	13	3

Table 5 shows the distribution of editorial board members by affiliation country. There were 243 editorial board members from 37 countries in total. A majority of editorial board members were from India (74.48%) followed by the USA (3.70%) and the UK (1.64%). It is evident from the table that since the journals are published in India not surprisingly most of the editorial board members are from India.

Table 6: Characteristics of editorial board members by country and by gender

Country/ Region	Members of the editorial board	Male	Female
India	181	146	35
USA	9	7	2
UK	4	4	0
Brazil	3	3	0
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	3	3	0
Nigeria	3	2	1
Australia	2	2	0
Bangladesh	2	2	0
Belgium	2	2	0
Iran	2	2	0
Japan	2	2	0
Mexico	2	1	1
Portugal	2	1	1
Spain	2	1	1
Sri Lanka	2	1	1
Austria	1	1	0
Canada	1	1	0
China	1	0	1
Finland	1	1	0
France	1	1	0
Germany	1	1	0
Greece	1	0	1

Hungary	1	0	1
Italy	1	1	0
Kuwait	1	1	0
Malaysia	1	1	0
New Zealand	1	1	0
Norway	1	0	1
Pakistan	1	1	0
Philippines	1	0	1
Singapore	1	1	0
South Africa	1	0	1
South Korea	1	0	1
Taiwan	1	1	0
Thailand	1	1	0
UAE	1	1	0
Uganda	1	1	0
Total	243	194	49

Table 6 depicts the country-wise representation of male and female researchers in the selected LIS journal's editorial board. The study identified a total of 243 individual editorial board members, of which 194 were males (79.83%) and 49 were females (20.16%). It clearly shows that female LIS researchers are underrepresented in the editorial responsibilities of the selected journals.

Table 7: Distributions of editorials board members by occupations

Name of the Journal	Members of the editorial board	LIS Working Professionals	Teaching Professionals	Administrators/ administrative staff	Scientists	Unidentified
Annals of library and information studies	11	0	7	2	2	0
DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology	22	5	7	6	4	0
KELPRO Bulletin	21	3	17	1	0	0
World Digital Libraries is an international Journal	29	5	15	9	0	0
Journal of Information	21	4	11	4	2	0

and Knowledge						
Library Herald	23	6	13	3	1	0
Pearl: A Journal of Library and Information Science	16	5	9	0	0	2
Gyankosh: The Journal of Library and Information Management	31	5	20	5	0	1
Library Progress (International)	36	12	19	3	2	0
International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology	33	16	7	8	2	0
Total	243	61	125	41	13	3

Table 7 represents the contribution of editorial board members based on their occupations in selected Indian LIS journals. As shown in the table, it was found that teaching professionals dominated in editorial board members in all selected LIS journals except the International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology, where LIS working professional contributions in International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology (16) were higher than teaching professionals. Further analysis of the table shows that there is no LIS working professional associated with editorial board members in the Annals of library and information studies.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research investigates the lack of female representation in Library and Information Science journals' editorial boards. This research found that women were underrepresented on editorial boards and published less research in the reviewed Indian LIS journals than men. According to the research, only 20% of editorial board members are women, compared to 80% of men, across all 10 of the most famous Indian LIS journals analysed in the study. The gender discrepancy in involvement in editing activities was highlighted by the research. Even more men than women hold the titles of the editor (100%) and editor-in-chief (83.33% to 16.66%). This is consistent with reports that women are underrepresented on editorial boards (Wing et al., 2010; Topaz and Sen, 2016; Metz et al., 2016; Parabhoi, et al., 2022; Liu, et al., 2023).

In addition, the research found that a total of 3329 papers were published between the years 2012 and 2021. During the study period, 6,375 authors made contributions to various Indian LIS journals. There are 4581 male authors, and 1794 female authors contributed to the selected journals. It clearly indicates that female authors are less productive in LIS research. These findings are also in line with earlier studies (Gul, *et al.*, 2016; Bisaria, 2018; Vinay & Sampath Kumar, 2021, Lund & Shamsi, 2022; Vinay & Sampath Kumar, 2022).

In all the selected Indian LIS publications, editorial board members who were teaching professionals (51.44%) dominated, as can be shown in Table 3. Additionally, it is discovered that the majority of editorial board members are male professionals (79.83%) as opposed to female professionals (20.16%). It was obvious that there is a lack of female LIS experts in the field of library and information science. The majority of editorial members were in the teaching and learning field, with the positions of librarians, administrative personnel, and researchers being filled by very few people. It's possible that academics who focus primarily on research and teaching are those who are considered to be teaching professionals. They devote the greatest time to pursuing research, teaching, and learning. In contrast, they have stronger intellectual backgrounds than individuals in auxiliary positions, such as administrative personnel, and librarians. In academic institutions, the function of librarians and administrative personnel typically includes carrying out specialized tasks needed to support teaching and learning or research activities, therefore these tasks take up less of their time. Editorial board members' responsibilities and actions are more directly related to academic pursuits like peer review and writing. As a result, these employees are likely to be more prevalent on the editorial boards of peer-reviewed periodicals.

The majority (74.48%) of the editorial staff hailed from India followed by the USA (3.70%). This could be due to the fact that all selected LIS journals are published in India. As a result, the publisher prefers to hire editors and editorial board members from their home countries.

In conclusion, the data pertaining to 243 editors and editorial board members were evaluated by role, gender, nation, the continent of affiliation, and occupation in a study of 10 chosen Indian LIS journals. In all the chosen LIS journals, it was discovered that women were underrepresented among editors and editorial board members. The highest-ranking position of editor or editor-in-chief was where this was most obvious. The survey also emphasized regional differences in research output between men and women in the field of library and information science. Male authors published more often than female authors overall for the cohort.

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