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Gatekeeping Knowledge: Editorial Influence in Tourism, Leisure, and Hospitality

Maria do Mar Bettencourt Bazaliza

Master Thesis

presented as partial requirement for obtaining a Master's degree in Statistics and Information Management

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Instituto Superior de Estatística e Gestão de Informação

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by

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Master Thesis presented as partial requirement for obtaining the Master's degree in Statistics and Information Management, with a specialization in Information Management

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July, 2025

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

I hereby declare having conducted this academic work with integrity. I confirm that I have not used plagiarism, any form of undue use of information or falsification of results along the process leading to its elaboration. I further declare that I have fully acknowledged the Rules of Conduct and Code of Honor from the NOVA Information Management School.

Lisbon, July 2025

Maria do Mar Bazaliza

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the gatekeeping role of editorial boards in academic publishing within tourism, leisure, and hospitality research. Focusing on five leading journals, it applies an *editormetrics* approach and Social Network Analysis (SNA) to analyse gender representation, geographic distribution, institutional affiliation, and research performance (H-index) among editorial board members. Findings reveal a high concentration of editorial power among male scholars, editors from the United States and the United Kingdom, and individuals affiliated with elite institutions. Women and scholars from underrepresented regions remain significantly marginalized. A strong correlation was found between the research performance of editors and the impact of the journals they serve. SNA identified three key patterns: editorial overlap across journals, editors holding multiple roles within the same journal, and repeated past editors serving across different time periods. These patterns point to a tightly connected editorial core that influences scholarly discourse and shapes knowledge production. The study highlights the structural inequalities embedded in editorial governance and calls for increased transparency and diversity in editorial board composition. By revealing who decides what gets published, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of academic gatekeeping in the tourism, leisure, and hospitality fields.

KEYWORDS

Gatekeeping; Editorial Board; Tourism, Leisure, and Hospitality; Social Network Analysis

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG):

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SNA	Social Network Analysis
EB	Editorial Board
EBM	Editorial Board Member
EBI	Editorial Board Interlocking
ATM	Annals of Tourism Research
TM	Tourism Management
LS	Leisure Studies
IJHM	International Journal of Hospitality Management

1. INTRODUCTION

Gatekeeping refers to the information management process where filters decide what data can be released to public view and what data will stay hidden (Barzilai-Nahon, 2009). Gatekeepers serve as fundamental influencers who shape "what becomes a person's social reality, a particular view of the world" as mentioned by Shoemaker & Vos (2009, p. 12). Gatekeeping Theory was initially developed in the context of mass media to explain the selection process through which institutional barriers choose which events and information will flow to public awareness, while filtering out others (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009).

In academic publishing, editorial board members, through their vital gatekeeping function, determine which research is published and which is not, thereby filtering which academic knowledge becomes available. This means that they end up operating as "research intermediaries" (Mendonça et al., 2018, p. 17) as they effectively choose what is published and also largely frame the academic content scope.

Several studies have analysed the structure and influence of editorial boards (Mendonça et al., 2018; Baccini & Re, 2024). However, no studies were identified that focus specifically on editorial boards in the fields of Tourism, Leisure, and Hospitality.

This work adopts the *editormetrics* approach, defined by (Santos & Mendonça, 2022) as a set of quantitative methods used to investigate the composition and structure of editorial boards. By applying *editormetric* techniques, this study analyses patterns of gatekeeping, influence, and representation to contribute to a broader understanding of how academic publishing is shaped within these interconnected fields.

Specifically, this study aims to: examine the geographic distribution, gender representation, and institutional affiliation of editorial board in some of the main journals in Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality; evaluates the research performance of these individuals to determine whether it aligns with, or contributes to, the performance of the journals they serve; examine how several journals are linked, who plays various roles within each journal and how editorship is passed over time, using Social Network Analysis.

The analysis offered here provides a fresh look at Tourism, Leisure, and Hospitality research by shedding light on the gatekeepers who influence what knowledge enters the academic domain. These fields continue to grow in global importance, yet there is limited scrutiny of how editorial structures may perpetuate systemic inequalities or shape research directions. By studying the composition and connections of editorial boards—where editors are based, their gender, institutional affiliation, and research output—this study offers helpful insights for authors, editors, and academic institutions. The findings can inform more inclusive publishing practices and guide the development of new scholarly journals.

To achieve this, a literature review was conducted to identify existing knowledge and gaps on the topic. Subsequently, data on the composition and characteristics of editorial boards were collected and analysed using descriptive methods. A Social Network Analysis (SNA) was also applied in three different aspects of our work:

- → Editorial overlap across journals
- → Editors with multiple roles within a single journal
- → Past editors who appeared multiple times over the years

The work is structured as follows: Chapter 2 reviews the relevant literature across four thematic areas; gatekeeping in journals, editorial board diversity, editorial board networks, and the tourism, leisure, and hospitality context. Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology, including journal selection, data collection, and the application of social network analysis. Chapter 4 presents the results and discussion, structured into four main parts: a descriptive analysis of editorial board characteristics (journal, gender, geographic distribution, institutional affiliation, and research performance), editorial overlap across journals, multiple editorial roles, and the recurrence of past editors. Finally, Chapter 5 provides concluding reflections and proposes directions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. GATEKEEPING IN JOURNALS

The editorial board (EB) are in a critical position in the Journal of Review process, and many in the scientific community may refer to them as "gatekeepers of knowledge" (de-Marcos, Goyanes, & Domínguez-Díaz, 2024, p. 1). Journals with high editorial boards ensure a high level of publication and promote researchers to produce specific requirements (outcome) work (Besancenot et al., 2012). If the editorial board consists of a homogenous group of extremely picky editors, this journal is going to have an excessive number of high-quality papers (Besancenot et al., 2012). Studies have documented that such state-of-the-art journals are typically headed by some famous scholar with a higher level of expertise and knowledge in his/her field (Goyanes & de-Marcos, 2020).

Research on the roles and composition of editorial boards has expanded in recent years, largely driven by the increasing importance of publishing in academic journals (Petersen et al., 2017). Members of editorial boards are usually appointed based on the ability to evaluate the quality of articles submitted as evidenced by publication pedigree in top journals (Kumar & Srivastava, 2013). High citation count is considered as important indicator of research performance and is often associated with other kinds of recognition as well as to other related bibliometric indicators (Kumar & Srivastava, 2013). It has been shown that the cohesiveness of the editor's board is desirable in such contexts as it increases the number of good papers published in journals whose editorial boards consist of high selectivity editors (Besancenot et al., 2012). However, editorial boards may be so homogeneous that they will not be able to publish diverse research. For this reason, it is important to realize what factors determine editorial board diversity (Harzing & Metz, 2012). Specifically, we analyse the composition and concentration of individuals on the editorial boards of highly ranked academic journals (Kumar & Srivastava, 2013).

2.2. EDITORIAL BOARD DIVERSITY

Researchers have focused on the make-up of editorial boards to draw attention to how factors like gender, background regions and institutions for team members can influence editing decisions and how editorial teams change across the years (Metz & Harzing, 2009; Goyanes, 2020; Petersen et al., 2017). Also, studies in editorial boards have been harnessed to assess journal internationalization and gender diversity, which are indicators of research impact across geographical areas, institutions, and gender circles (Baccini & Re, 2024).

The analysis of editorial board composition and the principles guiding their selection has gained increasing attention in academic research (Mazov et al., 2018). In their study Petersen et al. (2017) identify two major areas of research concerning editorial board characteristics and overall journal performance. The first concerns the reputational status of editors and their institutions, often showing a concentration of roles among a small elite group of scholars

associated with high-impact journals. The second focuses on how socio-demographic diversity, particularly gender and geographic representation, as well as board size, can broaden the scope of published research and enhance journal impact.

For example, male scholars from institutions in Global North such as in the United States still dominate editorial boards of leading journals in multiple disciplines (Goyanes & de-Marcos, 2020). As for example, and in the case of Italy, women are strikingly under-represented amongst the editorial boards of the economic journals in relation to their overall presence in the discipline and among leading faculty (Addis & Villa, 2003). Moreover, the number of women is declining at higher levels of the career ladder within an academic career, and also in decision-making positions in the scientific community (Mauleón et al, 2013). Baccini and Re (2024) also highlight the gatekeeping position of editorial board members of economics journals, with special regard to the recurrent challenges related to gender, geographic heterogeneity, and institutional connections.

Additionally, to these structural factors, research performance is a key variable in explanation of editorial influence. In essence, performance analysis accounts for the contributions of research constituents, whereas science mapping focuses on the relationships between research constituents (Donthu et al., 2021). The H-index is commonly used in this context, as it combines both citation counts and publication output to assess scholarly impact. In particular, the H-index shows the number of papers (H) each with at least H citations (Merigó et al, 2020). The H-index for any researcher may be obtained from Scopus, the Thomson Reuters Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) Web of Science, and Google Scholar (Kulkarni et al., 2009).

2.3. EDITORIAL BOARD NETWORKS

Baccini et al. (2020) found that the network of interlocking editorial board memberships closely resembles both the co-citation network and the interlocking authorship network. This phenomenon is called editorial board interlocking (EBI) where a scholar works for the editorial boards of several journals. This created a condensed "elite within an elite" which shapes the power relations and influences visibility in academic publishing (Goyanes et al., 2022, p. 3). The term describes a group of academics who sit on multiple editorial boards which gives them a strong hand in deciding what studies are published. Consequently, they have major control over what becomes part of academic conversations and support the current rankings among scholars (Burgess & Shaw, 2010, cited by Goyanes et al., 2022).

EBI leads to increased journal alignment and increased communication (Santos & Mendonça, 2022). A social network may be defined as a small set of persons or units that are linked using a variety of relationships or interactions (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Social network analysis is used to map the relationships between different fields of knowledge through editorial board interlocking; to explore gaps between social and general sciences; and to reveal the

institutional frameworks that support these connections (de-Marcos, Goyanes, & Domínguez-Díaz, 2024).

As a result, analysing journal communities within the EBI network produces findings similar to those from studying communities in the other two networks (Baccini & Re, 2024). Similar editorial board memberships among journals could be EBI and common editorial polices. This overlap can impede journals to act independently on their legitimate scholarly striving (de-Marcos, Goyanes, & Domínguez-Díaz, 2024). EBI can also cultivate a contingent of thinkers that are anchored on core journals hence directly altering their perspective and paradigms. Given that the opinions, proposals, visions, and reviews of EBs are cited in several journals, they can set definite patterns of knowledge production and dissemination. Consequently, editorial interlocks may lead to the formation of 'invisible colleges' that develop their own norms, values, and standards, also monitoring the progress of the field (Goyanes et al., 2022).

Several disciplines have analysed journals' governance more than others, but there is a general consensus that EBI creates a network structure of elite scholars, influencing the employment of particular research methods, topics, and theories (Goyanes et al., 2022).

Past research has explored editorial interlocks in such areas as Economics (Baccini & Barabesi, 2010), Information and Library Sciences (Baccini & Barabesi, 2011), Finance (Andrikopoulos & Economou, 2015), Innovation Studies (Santos & Mendonça, 2022), and Knowledge Management (Teixeira & Oliveira, 2018). However, according to Goyanes et al. (2022), communication studies have not yet been discussed in the context of EBI.

2.4. TOURISM, LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY

Tourism, leisure, and hospitality have experienced significant growth in academic interest over recent years, fueled by both increased research activity and the launch of numerous specialized journals (Merigó et al., 2020). Among these closely related fields, tourism often serves as a central focus due to its wide-ranging impacts on economies, societies, and cultures worldwide. The complex nature of tourism, involving diverse stakeholders and cross-disciplinary challenges, has made it a key area for scholarly exploration. As Lima Camargo (2019) points out, the boundaries and relationships between tourism, leisure, and hospitality are shifting, calling for broader discussions and integrative approaches to address emerging issues within these interconnected disciplines. This growing interest in tourism research reflects its vital role in understanding and shaping the development of leisure and hospitality sectors as well.

Even though the number of publications has been increasing, these fields still tend to be cited less likely because of the number of journals that are published is less. Nevertheless, citations will be increasing as more articles get published (Merigó et al., 2020). Mulet-Forteza et al. (2021) performed a bibliometric analysis of tourism, leisure, and hospitality journals published in Web of Science (WoS) in 2019 to analyse trends and suggest areas for future research based on contributions, particularly, from European institutions. Their bibliometric review revealed

that 87% of the best 100 most cited papers in these disciplines were issued in *Annals of Tourism Research* and *Tourism Management*.

According to a bibliometric analysis by António and Rita (2023), the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* ranks among the most influential journals in the field of hospitality. Similarly, Phillips et al. (2011) examined six major hospitality and tourism journals and identified the *International Journal of Hospitality Management, Annals of Tourism Research,* and *Tourism Management* as three of the most prestigious and widely cited publications in tourism research. These findings reflect a broader academic consensus on the leading journals in the field.

In addition to these findings, *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel Research*, and *Tourism Management* have long been recognized as the most influential journals in tourism. Benckendorff and Zehrer (2013) argue that these journals have maintained their prominence over the past two decades, consistently ranking among the most important and most cited in the field (Chang & McAleer, 2012; McKercher et al., 2006; Pechlaner et al., 2004; Ryan, 2005; Sheldon, 1990; Zehrer, 2007). These journals have frequently achieved top positions in various ranking systems, described as "the best or leading journal[s] in [their] field [and] publish[ing] outstanding, original and rigorous research that will shape the field" (Harzing, 2012, p. 7).

3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the collection of data and ways of analysis of the editorial boards of leading journals in the field of tourism, leisure and hospitality are presented. A variety of bibliometric indicators and EBMs data as well as journal ranks are used to construct robust and relevant journal selections. It has also exposed the Social Network Analysis as a method to better achieve the expected results.

3.1. JOURNAL SELECTION

The journals selected are: *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Tourism Management*, *Journal of Leisure Research*, *Leisure Studies*, and the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. This selection was made considering the results obtained by Merigó et al. (2020), thus ensuring robustness and a more relevant selection. An overview of these journals, along with key bibliometric metrics, is provided in Table 1.

Each of these journals plays a pivotal role in advancing research in tourism, leisure, and hospitality:

- *Annals of Tourism Research*, (est. 1973, presently Volume 110) is concerned with both the social science of tourism and includes papers on travel behaviour, service industry management and socioeconomic implications.
- *Tourism Management*, is currently in Volume 109 (est. 1982) and is considered a leader in the field of traveller and tourist management, planning and policy.
- *Journal of Leisure Research*, (est. 1968, currently Volume 56, Issue 2) publishes multidisciplinary research on leisure patterns and their effects on health and wellness, including tourism.
- *Leisure Studies*, (est. 1982, currently Volume 44) is a leading international journal in the field of study of leisure in the social sciences and humanities, such as tourism, sports, media, and social justice.
- *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, (est. 1982, currently Volume 125) is devoted to research in areas related to important developments in hospitality, including human resources, marketing, economics, strategic management, and technology.

These are journals that always publish the most influential research in the field, and hence they have been chosen for this work.

Moreover, the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) of 2023 for the scientific influence isolates *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Tourism Management*, and the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* to the first quartile (Q1) and the *Journal of Leisure Research* and *Leisure Studies* to second quartile (Q2). The scientific influence of journals is evaluated using citation data and the SJR indicator which allows to evaluate the research impact.

Table 1 – Journal Overview and Key Metrics

Journal	Short Name	SJR	Quartile	H-index	Journals' Publisher
Annals of Tourism Research	*ATR*	3.45	Q1	216	Elsevier Ltd
Tourism Management	*TM*	3.35	Q2	255	Elsevier Ltd
Journal of Leisure Research	*JLR*	0.76	Q2	82	Taylor and Francis Ltd
Leisure Studies	*LS*	0.79	Q2	77	Routledge
International Journal of Hospitality Management	*IJHM*	2.92	Q1	169	Elsevier Ltd

Even though these five journals are well-known and highly respected in tourism, leisure, and hospitality research, as confirmed by their high rankings in the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) and according to Merigó et al. (2020), there are still some limits to this choice. Laying emphasis on these journals means other niche or growing journals with valuable, though infrequently cited, contributions from countries that are underrepresented or approaches that cross disciplines are disregarded. Even so, selecting these journals mainly looks at consistency, relevance, and their influence, putting together a stable groundwork for the analysis.

3.2. Data Collection and Sources

The editorial board members (EBMs) included in this study were selected based on their presence on the official editorial boards of five leading journals in tourism, leisure, and hospitality, as listed on the publishers' websites. The data were collected in January 2025, recording the composition of editorial boards at that point in time.

Information was gathered about the EBM from two websites, namely Science Direct and Taylor & Francis, depending on the publisher of each journal. These two platforms were primarily used to source the variables of Name and Institutional Affiliation, and also to source the variable role on the board. Information gathered through internet research was used to determine gender for information (if available) that would allow a conclusion of the gender of the members, such as internet institutional website, or the institutional online profiles of the members. For Geographic Distribution, the country of the institutional affiliation of the EBMs was used to infer. The Institutional Affiliation is the editor's named institution shown on the journal website at the time this information was collected in January 2025. It was sourced the

editors H-index from Scopus using the latest data there, or Google Scholar in the case it was not available in Scopus. The H-index attribute has 6 missing values and one of them with also missing values in the Geographic Distribution and Institutional Affiliation.

The total number of editors for the complete sample of five journals is 538, but there are only 484 unique individuals in the sample (538 – 53). This discrepancy exists because editors can be present on more than one journal, which gives rise to the phenomenon interlocking editorships.

3.3. Social Network Analysis

As part of the methodological approach, this study applies Social Network Analysis (SNA) to examine the structure of relationships among the EBMs in leading journals within the fields of tourism, leisure, and hospitality. SNA provides a framework for analysing and visualizing the connections between actors, in this case, editors, based on editors who serve on multiple journals, editors who hold more than one position within the same journal, and past editors who appear across different years. This approach enables the identification of structural patterns and interconnections that shape the composition of editorial boards, providing insights into the underlying dynamics of academic gatekeeping.

To identify key actors within the network, centrality measures are applied. Degree centrality reflects the number of direct connections an editor or institution has, indicating their visibility. Betweenness centrality captures how often a node acts as a bridge between others, highlighting potential gatekeeping roles. Closeness centrality measures how quickly a node can reach all other nodes in the network.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

4.1.1. JOURNAL

The dataset includes 532 editorial positions across five leading journals, after excluding six entries due to missing H-index or institutional data. These positions are distributed as follows: 182 from *Annals of Tourism Research (ATR)*, 123 from the *International Journal of Hospitality Management (IJHM)*, 56 from *Journal of Leisure Research (JLR)*, 64 from *Leisure Studies (LS)*, and 113 from *Tourism Management (TM)*. It is important to note that some individuals serve on multiple editorial boards, bringing the total number of unique editors to 479. Figure 1 displays the distribution of editorial positions per journal. Having established the composition of editorial positions, the following section examines gender representation among these members.

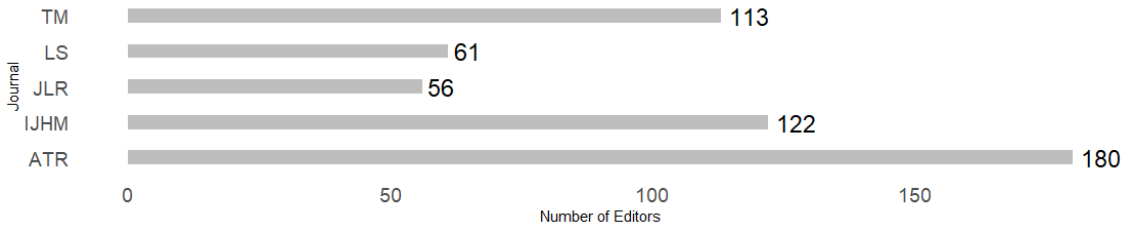

Figure 1 – Number of editors per journal

4.1.2. GENDER

Out of the 532 editorial positions, 211 are held by women, representing 39.70% of the total, while 321 are held by men (60.30%). This distribution is consistent with findings from prior research, which consistently shows male dominance across editorial boards, though female representation has been gradually increasing. For example, Goyanes and de-Marcos (2020) reported that women accounted for 37.26% of board members, while Altman and Cohen (2021) observed 34%. Petersen (2017) found only 21.82% female editors, and Hafeez et al. (2023) placed this figure at 30%. In African journals, women constituted just 28.2% of editors (Mendonça et al., 2018), and in some disciplines, editorial boards remain entirely male (Mazov et al., 2018) and in most cases, comprising less than a quarter of women (Metz et al. 2015; Santos & Mendonça, 2022).

At the continental level, Europe shows the highest female representation (42.30%), followed by the Americas (40.30%) and Oceania (38.90%). Asia lags behind with only 33.30% of female editors. Africa is the only continent with equal gender representation (50/50), although this is based on a minimal sample of just two individuals, as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 – Editors and Gender distribution per Continent

Continent	Male	Female	% Female
Africa	1	1	50.00%
Americas	105	71	40.30%
Asia	66	33	33.30%
Europe	116	85	42.30%
Oceania	33	21	38.90%
Total	**321**	**211**	**39.70%**

Gender representation also varies significantly across the journals analysed. *Journal of Leisure Research (JLR)* has the highest proportion of female editors (53.60%), making it the only journal in which women outnumber men. *Annals of Tourism Research (ATR)* follows with near parity at 48.90%. *IJHM* is dominated by male editors (74.60%), which raises concerns about potential gender homogeneity in editorial decision-making within this journal. *Tourism Management (TM)* and *Leisure Studies (LS)* present intermediate values, with 32.70% and 41.00% female representation, respectively (Table 3).

Table 3 – Editors and Gender distribution per Journal

Journal	Male	Female	% Female
ATR	92	88	48.90%
IJHM	91	31	25.40%
JLR	26	30	53.60%
LS	36	25	41.00%
TM	76	37	32.70%
Total	**321**	**211**	**39.70%**

These findings suggest that while some progress has been made toward gender equality in editorial representation, disparities remain notable, particularly in journals like *IJHM* and *TM*. The uneven distribution of women across journals and regions underscores the need for continued efforts to promote inclusivity in academic leadership roles. Prior studies confirm persistent male dominance on editorial boards, despite slow increases in female representation (Mauleón et al., 2013; Metz et al., 2015; Goyanes et al., 2022; Baccini & Re, 2024). However, more recent findings by Lundberg and Stearns (2019), cited in Baccini and Re (2024), suggest that this progress may have stalled in certain disciplines, highlighting the importance of ongoing monitoring and institutional interventions to ensure sustainable improvements. The next section investigates the geographical distribution of editors, offering further insights into the diversity of these boards.

4.1.3. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Editors of the five analysed journals come from 41 different countries, revealing substantial disparities in global representation. Europe accounts for the highest number of countries represented (21) and the largest share of editorial members (201), with the United Kingdom alone contributing 103 editors (see Figure 2). The Americas follow, with 176 editors, of which 152 are based in the United States. In stark contrast, Africa has only two represented countries, each contributing a single editor.

Overall, the United States and the United Kingdom dominate editorial board composition, accounting for 28.60% and 19.40% of members, respectively. Combined, these two countries hold nearly 48% of all editorial positions, reflecting a high concentration of influence within the global academic publishing landscape.

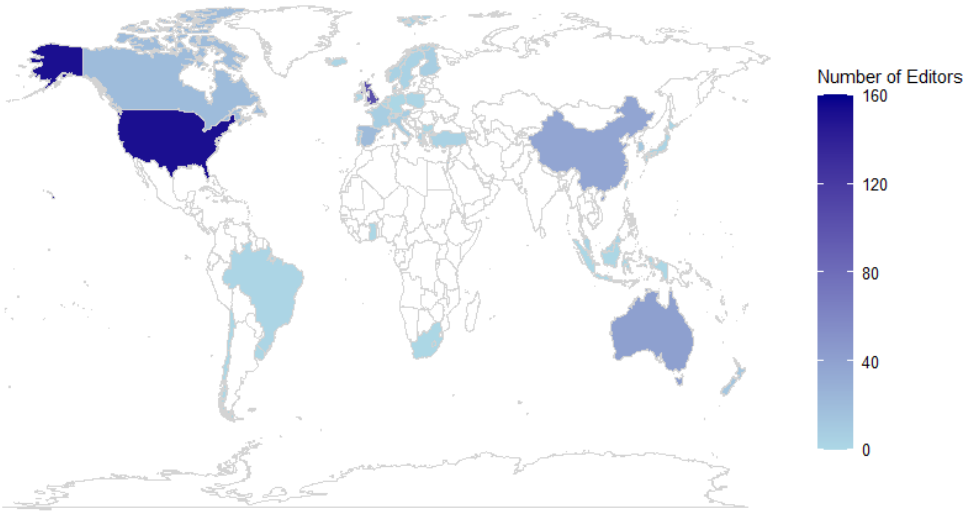

Figure 2 – Geographic Distribution of Editors

Geographic representation also varies by journal (Figure 3). African participation is minimal, with only two editors across all journals. Oceania's representation appears sporadically, most notably in *Annals of Tourism Research (ATR)* and *Tourism Management (TM)*.

- *ATR* has the strongest European presence (97), followed by Asia (30), the Americas (29), Oceania (23), and Africa (1).
- *IJHM* is dominated by editors from the Americas (59), followed by Europe (30), Asia (25), and Oceania (8).
- *JLR* shows a heavy skew toward the Americas (46), with minimal representation from Asia (6) and Europe (4).
- *LS* is predominantly European (38), with modest contributions from the Americas (10), Oceania (7), Asia (5), and Africa (1).
- *TM* exhibits the most balanced distribution, with editors from Asia (33), the Americas (32), Europe (32), and Oceania (16).

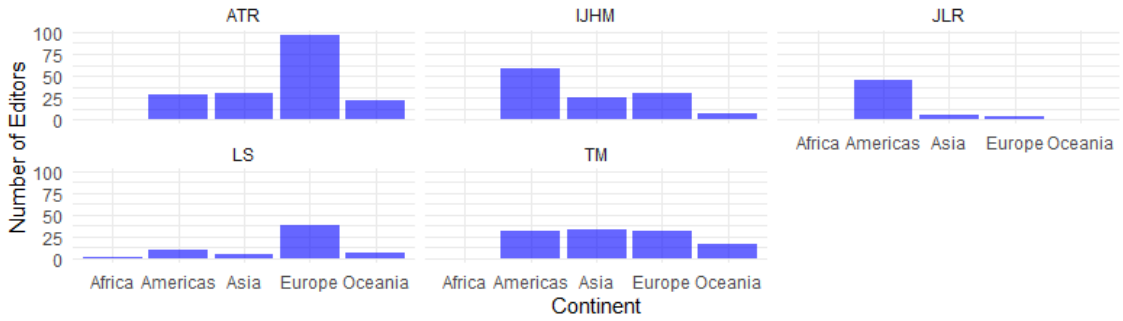

Figure 3 – Editors by Journal and Continent

These figures underscore a persistent concentration of editorial power in Europe and North America, especially among Anglophone nations. While this reflects historical and structural advantages, such as the presence of major publishers and the dominance of English in academia (Goyanes et al., 2022; García-Carpintero et al., 2010), it also points to limited progress in global inclusivity.

Despite some increases in editorial diversity over the past two decades (Baccini & Re, 2024; Harzing & Metz, 2012), representation from Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East remains disproportionately low. These regions, often referred to as "shadow" regions (Özbilgin, 2004, p. 11) contribute substantially to research output but are underrepresented in editorial leadership (Kumar & Srivastava, 2013; Leydesdorff & Wagner, 2009).

The continued dominance of the U.S. and U.K. reflects how editorial appointments remain concentrated in elite institutions, with limited reflection of the growing global research community. This has implications for which research gets visibility and legitimacy. As Braun and Dióspatonyi (2005a, b) and Kalaitzidakis et al. (2003) argue, editorial boards in these countries are more likely to influence publication trends and citation flows.

The current imbalance challenges notions of global academic equity and highlights the need for more inclusive editorial policies that better reflect the geographic diversity of scholarly production.

4.1.3. Institutional Affiliation

The editorial board members analysed are affiliated with 251 institutions worldwide. A clear pattern of institutional concentration emerges, with U.S.-based universities dominating the landscape, followed by the United Kingdom. Australia and Hong Kong each contribute one university to the top tier. Notably, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University stands out as the most represented institution, accounting for 16% of all editorial board members.

The table below (Table 4) presents the 15 most represented institutions, as multiple institutions shared the same number of editorial board members (7 each), resulting in 15 entries. This distribution highlights the centralisation of editorial influence within a small group of elite institutions, primarily located in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Table 4 – 15 most represented institutions

Country	Institutional Affiliation	Nº members	Percentage
Hong Kong	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	24	16%
United States of America	University of Central Florida	17	11.30%
United Kingdom	University of Surrey	13	8.67%
United Kingdom	Bournemouth University	10	6.67%
United States of America	Pennsylvania State University	10	6.67%
United States of America	Temple University	10	6.67%
United Kingdom	Leeds Beckett University	8	5.33%
Australia	The University of Queensland	8	5.33%
United States of America	University of Massachusetts	8	5.33%
United States of America	Arizona State University	7	4.67%
Austria	MODUL University Vienna	7	4.67%
China	Sun Yat-Sen University	7	4.67%
United States of America	University of Houston	7	4.67%
United States of America	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	7	4.67%
China	Zhejiang University	7	4.67%

This concentration of editorial board members in a small number of elite universities reflects similar trends found in previous studies. Goyanes et al. (2022) observed that, with the exception of one UK institution, the most dominant universities supplying editors were all located in the United States. In line with these findings, Pennsylvania State University, which accounts for 6.67% of editors in this study, has long been recognised for its editorial influence (Burgess & Shaw, 2010).

Baccini and Re (2024) also showed that in the field of economics, editorial boards are largely composed of scholars from U.S. institutions, with only a few exceptions globally. The

persistence of this trend is often explained by the prestige, resources, and academic networks of these institutions, which attract highly productive scholars. Petersen et al. (2017) argued that the presence of elite universities enhances a journal's quality and visibility, while Hodgson and Rothman (1999) warned that such dominance could hinder innovation and limit topic diversity.

Although there is evidence of growing research output from European and Asian universities, most editorial roles remain centred within U.S. institutions. In tourism, leisure, and hospitality studies, Metz et al. (2015) noted the increasing contribution of European institutions, yet editorial positions still favour American affiliations. Similarly, Kalaitzidakis et al. (2003) acknowledged that while Asian and European universities have improved in global rankings, the highest echelons remain dominated by the U.S..

The current analysis reinforces these findings: despite the presence of institutions from Hong Kong, China, Australia, and Austria, editorial influence remains concentrated among a small set of elite institutions in high-income countries, particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom. This continued institutional centralisation raises concerns about the diversity, inclusiveness, and global representativeness of editorial boards.

4.1.3. RESEARCH PERFORMANCE (H-INDEX)

When analysing the editors' research performance using the H-index, male editors consistently exhibit higher average values than their female counterparts across all five journals, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 – Mean H-index by Gender for Each Journal

Journal	Mean H-index	Male mean H-index	Female mean H-index
ATR	20.40	24.70	15.90
IJHM	28.80	30.40	24
JLR	13.20	16.20	10.50
LS	15.60	17	13.60
TM	33.20	38.20	22.90
Total	**22.24**	**25.30**	**17.38**

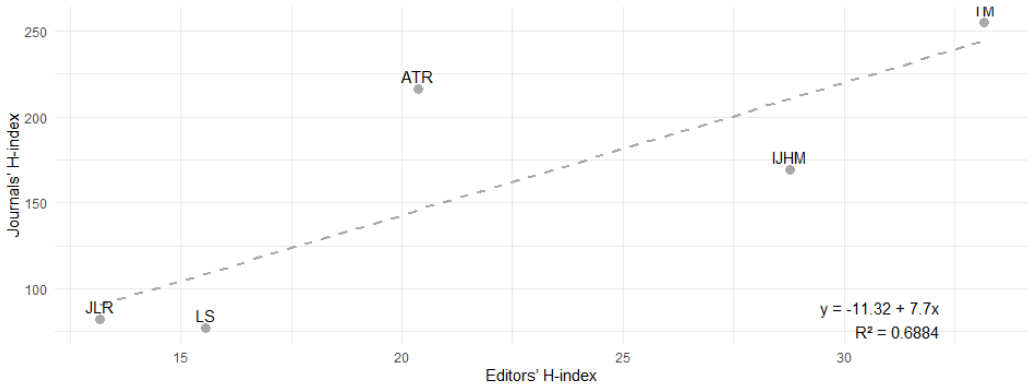

Figure 4 – Association between editors' H-index (x-axis) and the journals' H-index (y-axis)

Figure 4 illustrates the positive association between the average H-index of editorial board members and the journal's H-index. The regression equation, $Y = -11.32 + 7.70X$, indicates that, on average, for each 1 unit increase in the editorial board's mean H-index, the journal's H-index increases by approximately 7.70 units. While this may appear high, journal H-indices generally operate on a broader scale, which justifies the steep slope. After standardizing the variables, the association remained robust, with a standardized beta coefficient of 0.83. The model's R^2 value of 0.6884 suggests that approximately 69% of the variance in a journal's H-index can be explained by the research performance of its editorial board. This supports the hypothesis that journals with more academically accomplished editors tend to have greater scholarly impact.

Interestingly, *ATR* performs better than predicted, indicating the presence of additional factors influencing its visibility and impact. Conversely, *IJHM*, despite having a high editorial board H-index, lies below the regression line, implying that editorial academic strength does not always translate directly into journal impact. This discrepancy may point to disciplinary citation patterns or field-specific publication dynamics, rather than editorial shortcomings.

These findings are consistent with Mendonça et al. (2018), who observed a broadly positive connection between the average H-index of editorial teams and the performance of the journals they serve. Their analysis, modeled by the equation $Y = 15.221 + 2.7688X$, indicates that journals with editorial boards composed of more research-productive scholars tend to achieve greater impact within their field. This relationship underscores the importance of editorial expertise in shaping journal visibility and citation performance.

Overall, the descriptive analysis reveals clear patterns in the editorial board composition of leading journals in tourism and economics. Geographic distribution remains concentrated in North America and Western Europe, reflecting a continued dominance of the Global North in academic publishing. Gender representation is still imbalanced, with women significantly underrepresented, particularly in economics journals. Institutional affiliation analysis highlights a concentration of editors from highly ranked and research-intensive universities, suggesting a strong link between editorial roles and institutional prestige. These patterns are

further reinforced by research performance metrics such as the H-index, where editors tend to have high publication and citation profiles, underscoring the gatekeeping role of high-performing academics. Together, these findings point to a selective and potentially exclusionary structure within editorial boards that shapes not only what research is published but also who gets to define the research agenda in these fields.

4.2. Editorial Overlap

When a scholar is found on two different boards, the two boards are "interlocked". It is assumed that such personal bridges between two journals allow for socialization and communication. A total of 53 individuals (11.06% of the 479 unique editors across the five journals) appear more than once. Of these, 49 editors are present in two journals, while 4 editors are featured in three journals.

Among the editors serving on multiple journals, males constitute the majority, representing a larger portion of the editorial team (36 male editors versus 15 female editors). In terms of institutional affiliation, the most common is The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, with five editors affiliated with it, reflecting its status as the institution with the highest overall number of editors. However, smaller counts are shared by other institutions such as the University of Central Florida with three editors, which is consistent with its position as the second most represented institution. Several institutions, including Florida State University, MODUL University Vienna, and Pennsylvania State University, each have two editors affiliated with them. Geographically, both the Americas and Europe have 18 editors each, which shows richest representation on the editorial boards. Asia follows with 11 editors, which is somewhat less than the Americas and Europe, and Oceania takes the lowest position with only four editors. These results imply that the Americas and Europe have a dominant role in editorial decision making in this distribution. Asia demonstrates a reasonable level of representation, whereas Oceania has the lowest, with only four editors. The H-index distribution has a range of values from 1 to 89, with higher values like 63, 65, 73, 84, and 89 representing a few highly influential editors (see Figure 5). There are 4 groups of 3 editors who have an H-index of 27, 35, 40 and 60. Other values, such as 14, 18, and 20, are shared by two editors, while most values are represented by only one editor. Moreover, the majority of the editors lie in the middle of the H-index interval, indicative of a moderate academic influence.

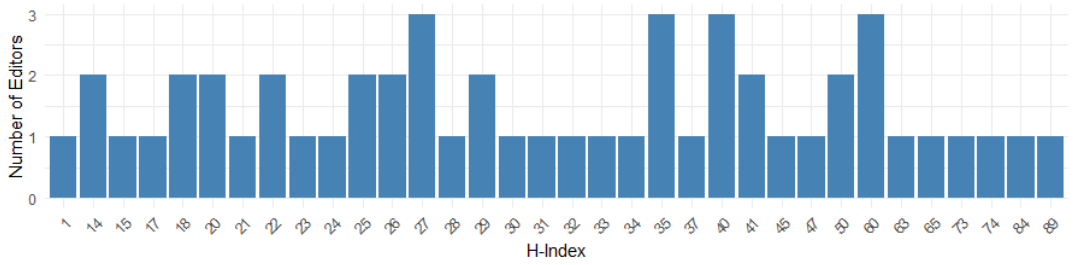

Figure 5 – H-index distribution of Multi-Journal Editors

A network map shows editorial board relations between editors who serve exactly two journals among the five selected tourism research journals including *TM*, *ATR*, *IJHM*, *LS*, and *JLR*. In this network, green nodes show the journals and blue nodes demonstrate the editors and the lines represent the shared editorial connections. Blue nodes connect to central green nodes reflect the number of editorial connections among different journals. Figure 6 highlights overlapping categories found between individual journal pairs, revealing the organizational structure and relative positions of the journals within the group.

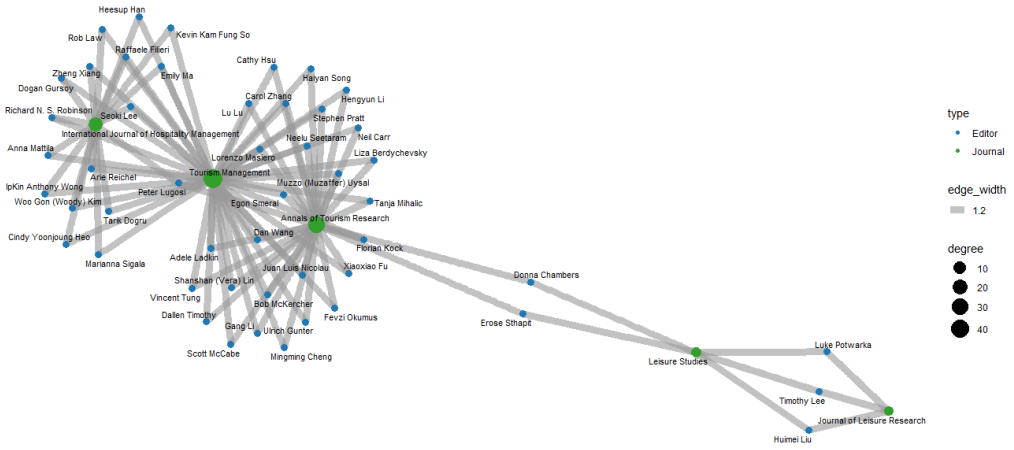

Figure 6 – Editorial Overlap Among Journals: Editors Featured in Two Journals

Table 6 – Centrality Metrics in the Journal Network: Editors Shared by Two Journals

Journal	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
ATR	30	527.22	0.01
TM	43	816.34	0.01
IJHM	17	80.94	0.01
LS	5	198	0.01
JLR	3	1.50	0

A total of 27 editors are shared by *TM* and *ATR* at their network core, more than any other pair of journals. At the same time, *TM* has both the highest degree centrality (43) and betweenness centrality (816.34), while *ATR* is next with 30 and 527.22 degrees and betweenness scores, as presented in Table 6. These results show that *TM* and *ATR* play a central and connecting role in the network, making them key parts of the group. *Leisure Studies*, though connected to *ATR* and *JLR*, has a lower importance in the network, since it has a distance centrality of 5 and a closeness centrality of 0.01. This suggests a blending of editorial responsibilities among a limited number of individuals who influence multiple journals. Because *IJHM* links to *TM* and *ATR* through 17 editors and achieves a high betweenness score, it has a significant though niche role in connecting the core journals to more specialized domains. This positioning highlights *IJHM*'s strategic role as a bridge between more general

tourism journals and hospitality-specific domains, reflecting both its disciplinary focus and its integration within broader scholarly networks. Along the outermost edge, *JLR* is only connected to *LS* through shared editors and has the lowest values for degree (3), betweenness (1.50) and closeness (0). This proves that *JLR* is only slightly integrated and has its own key topics within broader tourism research publications.

Notably, editors such as Donna Chambers and Erose Sthapit have the highest betweenness centrality (117.50), suggesting a strong bridging role between distinct journal communities. In contrast, many editors exhibit uniform values in degree and closeness, indicating symmetrical overlaps but less unique positioning in terms of connectivity or control over the network flow.

While this section focuses on moderate editorial overlap (editors on exactly two journals), the next part explores a more exclusive group of editors interlocked across three journals, revealing a tighter network core.

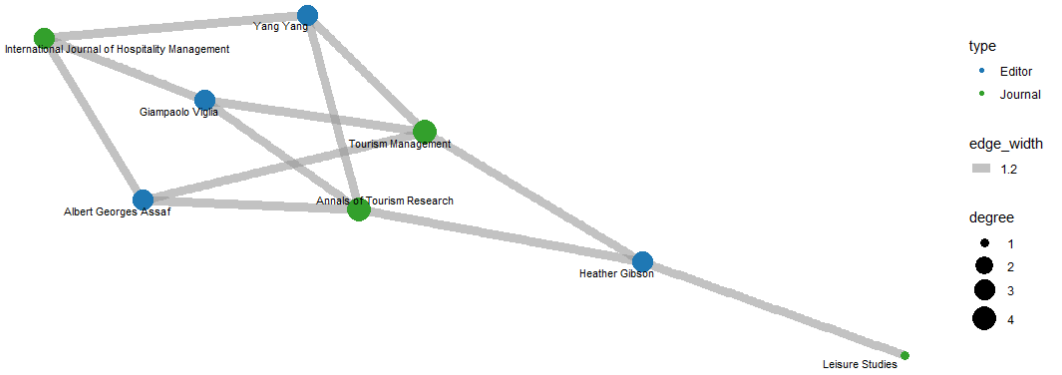

Figure 7 – Editorial Overlap Among Journals: Editors Featured in Three Journals

Table 7 – Centrality Metrics in the Journal Network: Editors Shared by Three Journals

Journal	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
ATR	4	5	0.10
TM	4	5	0.10
IJHM	3	1	0.07
LS	1	0	0.06

Figure 7 and Table 7 zoom in on the editorial overlap at the maximum level of engagement, with editors serving on exactly three journals. This represents the highest level of editorial interlocking in the network. A small but influential group of editors appears as central connectors, each linked to three different journals. The high degree of 3 demonstrates through a node size, indicating a broader editorial reach across the field.

Multiple shared editorial connections establish *Tourism Management*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, and *International Journal of Hospitality Management* as central hubs in the editorial landscape of these journals. This can also be seen from the *TM* and *ATR's* centrality metrics: both have the highest degree centrality (4), betweenness centrality (5) and closeness centrality (0.10) which means they are both very important to this tight-knit editorial group. *IJHM* takes the fourth place for degree (3) and a lower closeness (0.07), nevertheless, it plays a crucial role in connecting the network. Since *LS* has both a degree of 1 and a betweenness of 0, it still occupies a small place in the network, maintaining a peripheral position with only one editor linking it to the rest of the overlapping editorial members. However, the *Journal of Leisure Research* does not appear in the network of editors interlocked across three journals, further reinforcing its more isolated position in terms of editorial overlap.

The node degree for journals reflects once again how many of these high-overlap editors are shared with other journals, while the uniform edge thickness indicates that each connection represents one editor-journal relationship. This visualization shows editorial concentration at the network core through the clustered group of shared editors at the centre. Heather Gibson shows up as the editor with the greatest betweenness centrality (6.25), suggesting that she helps connect different journal communities. Editors such as Assaf, Viglia and Yang Yang also hold a degree of 3 and are close to one another at 0.083, but their betweenness scores are just 1.58, showing they play more secondary roles in the network.

This focused look at the maximum overlap tier reveals a concentrated editorial elite, suggesting that a small group of individuals plays a disproportionately central role in shaping scholarly discourse across leading tourism and hospitality journals.

The presence of interlocking editors demonstrates how a chosen group holds strong and uneven control over what gets published academically. Much research across different fields demonstrates that a few individuals regularly serve as editors for a large number of journals. Mazov et al. (2018) reported 27 individuals serving on two editorial boards and 5 on three, our findings also reveal a notable overlap, with several scholars sitting on two boards and four serving on three. Similarly, Burgess and Shaw (2010) find that just a small number of editors are editors in more than one journal, making them a separate elite group. As Mendonça et al. (2018) discovered, editors who serve multiple times tend to have better research performance indices (e.g., H-index), suggesting a stratification of editorial prestige. Baccini and Re (2024) extend this by showing that while nearly 80% of editors serve on only one board, a small minority hold numerous journals. Likewise, Addis and Villa (2003) noticed that a number of individuals were members of three or more boards, so power tended to be held by a limited group. They found one person on six boards, another on five and several more on four or three.

Many of these combined roles often reflect bigger inequalities that can be seen not only in society's structures but also in gender. Baccini and Re (2024) indicate that fewer women than men tend to serve on several different boards. Goyanes et al. (2022) noticed that women are still underrepresented in editorial positions. The under-representation of women is also clear when we look at how many women edit for different journals. Mendonça et al. (2018)

illustrate this imbalance with a clear numerical gap between male and female editors, and Santos and Mendonça (2022) show that female editors are typically affiliated with just one board, rarely appearing across multiple journals. Goyanes et al. (2022) and Santos and Mendonça (2022) highlight that editors from institutions in the United States and English-speaking countries have taken the main role. This situation is a result of the unequal distribution of editors on journal boards (Baccini & Re, 2024). The problem with homogenous editors isn't just symbolic; editors who have various roles may become more set in the existing science framework and less willing to support original studies, upholding the ways the discipline operates (Petersen et al., 2017). Altman and Cohen (2021) point out that such interconnections have an impact on academic growth yet might prevent greater diversity among those who manage journals.

According to Baccini and Barabesi (2010) who point to a 2023 paper by Ductor and Visser (2023), their analysis with interlocking editorship revealed that a few important publications in the field concentrate significant power at both the journal and individual levels. Because just a few influential editors may shape research and interests in a field, inequality in academic knowledge can be passed off as simple editorial skill. This knowledge is needed to change the unfair system in academic publishing.

4.3. MULTIPLE ROLES

EBMs sometimes hold multiple roles within the same journal, with some individuals occupying more than two positions simultaneously. By detecting repeated names, it was possible to identify those who hold multiple roles within a journal.

In each journal analysed in this work, the maximum number of positions held by a single editor is two. In total, 473 different people were found for the 479 available EB positions, with 4 male and 2 female editors holding multiple roles. These editors are affiliated at prestigious institutions on a worldwide scale including Auckland University of Technology (New Zealand), Bournemouth University (United Kingdom), Chukyo University (Asia) and many other institutions. The editors are geographically spread throughout Oceania (2), Americas (2), Europe (1), and Asia (1). Their countries of origin include New Zealand (2 editors), United Kingdom (1 editor), Canada (1 editor), Japan (1 editor), and the United States (1 editor). With an H-index varying between 8 to 30 (mean 18.20).

Figure 8 shows a *Network of Editors with Multiple Roles: Journals* that shows the connections between editors (blue nodes) and the journals (green nodes) where they hold multiple editorial roles. Each line represents an editor's link to a journal where they serve in more than one capacity. Among the five observed journals in this work, *IJHM and LS* each feature two editors holding dual roles. In contrast, *JLR* and *ATR* only have one editor each. The network demonstrates editorial influence distribution by showing which individuals actively contribute intensively to multiple editorial responsibilities in academic tourism, leisure, and hospitality research.

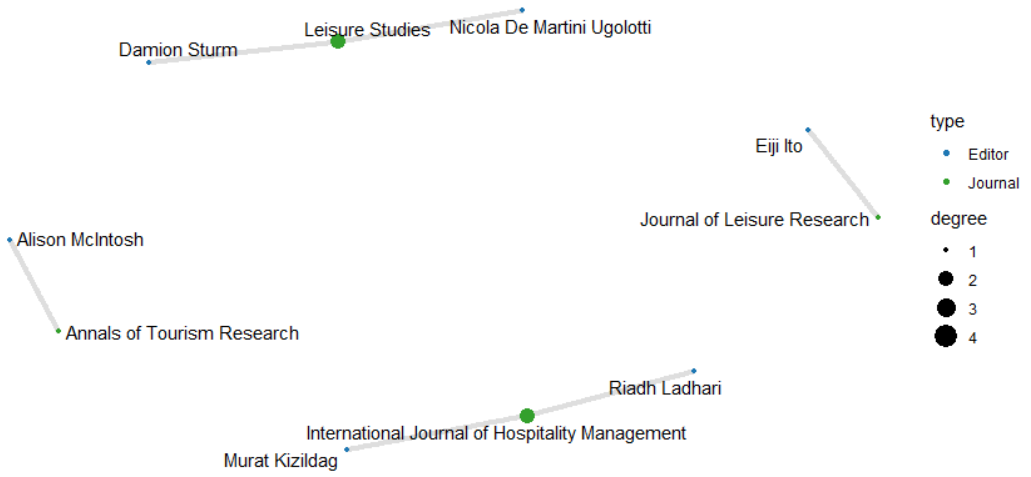

Figure 8 – Network of Editors with Multiple Roles: Journals

Table 8 confirms that *IJHM* and *LS* have the most important centrality values which is due to having two editors who manage different roles. In different contrast, *ATR* and *JLR* both have one editor which reduces their centrality. Everyone on the editor side shares only a single journal which gives them very similar centrality.

Table 8 – Centrality Metrics in the Journal Network: Editors in Multiple Roles

Journal	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
ATR	1	0	1
IJHM	2	1	0.50
LS	2	1	0.50
JLR	1	0	1

The illustration "Network of Editors with Multiple Roles: Roles" provides further insights into the editorial roles displayed in Figure 9. Unlike the journal affiliations shown in 'Network of Editors with Multiple Roles: Journals,' this illustration focuses on the individual editors' positions within the network. In this network, editors are shown in blue while their roles appear as orange nodes. Each connection represents an editor holding a particular position, such as Managing Editor, Coordinating Editor, Associate Editor, Senior Associate Editor, Editorial Review Board, Regional Editor, Editorial Advisory Board, or Editorial Board. Node size reflects the number of connections each editor or role has. Among these, Associate Editor emerges as the most common role, linked to three editors. The two editor roles of Coordinating Editor and Editorial Board both link to two editors, thus confirming their central importance across the analysed journals.

Both Tables 9 and 10 highlight that Associate Editor holds the main role among editors due to having the most connections and betweenness within the group. The Coordinating Editor and Editorial Board are important in the editorial workflow because they have higher centrality

than others. Of the editors, Riadh Ladhari is the one who connects the most positions in the network, showing a bridging position.

Figure 9 – Network of Editors with Multiple Roles: Roles

Table 9 – Centrality Metrics in the Role Network: Editors Holding Multiple Roles

Role	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
Associate Editors	3	12	0.11
Editorial Review Board	1	0	0.06
Regional Editors	1	0	0.06
Senior Associate Editors	1	0	0.06
Coordinating Editors	2	8	0.08
Managing Editor	1	0	0.05
Editorial Board	2	8	0.08
Editorial Advisory Board	1	0	0.05

Table 10 – Centrality Metrics in the Editor Network: Editors in Multiple Roles

Editor	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
Alison McIntosh	2	5	0.08
Damion Sturm	2	5	0.08
Eiji Ito	2	5	0.08
Murat Kizildag	2	5	0.06
Nicola De Martini Ugolotti	2	5	0.06
Riadh Ladhari	2	9	0.08
Alison McIntosh	2	5	0.08
Damion Sturm	2	5	0.08

The visualization illustrates the hierarchical arrangement of editorial board members and emphasizes their unequal authority relative to a small number of colleagues through mapping such links. Editors who have multiple roles are key gatekeepers, deciding what research to publish and therefore contributing to the direction of academic conversation.

Although the phenomenon of editors holding multiple roles is occasionally acknowledged in the literature, it has not been thoroughly examined or visualized. Some research, for example, that of Altman & Cohen (2021) and Santos & Mendonça (2022), reports the presence of repeated names or multiple roles, but they do not systematically analyse the implications of this overlap. This limited attention underscores a gap in editorial board research. A small number of editors manage several roles which can make others question their decision-making. Such focus could influence the course of academic talks without being easily noticeable. In addition, Santos and Mendonça's 2022 study highlighted gender disparities in who holds various editorial roles, which points to potential gender disparities in how editorial responsibilities are distributed. Since these internal structures haven't been studied much in detail, it is clear that there is a real need for more openness and responsibility when it comes to how editorial boards operate. By mapping and interpreting these internal hierarchies, this study offers an important step toward addressing that gap.

4.4. Repeated Past Editors

For the Past Editors, data could only be retrieved from two journals, *Leisure Studies* and *Journal of Leisure Research*. Unfortunately, editorial board records for the remaining three journals in the study were unavailable. Our analysis of these two journals revealed 10 editor roles which multiple editors held over multiple terms and all editors worked within *Leisure Studies*. A detailed list is presented in Table 11 and 12 which shows the names of editors as well as the total number of times their names appeared during the research.

A social network analysis (SNA) of these repeat editors reveals that most individuals served on the editorial board two or three times. The exception was Jayne Caudwell standing out with

four appearances, making the editor with the most frequently recurring editor. The network visualization presented in Figure 10 displays a radial format that places the centre point on *Leisure Studies*. Among the 10 editors shown the journal node exhibits a 27 degree which corresponds to its previous editorial appearances. From the journal node the editors spread out like branches to show the length of their past editorships.

As a result, *Leisure Studies* is at the center of the network, controlling all linkages and displaying the highest scores for both degree and betweenness centrality. Jayne Caudwell's four terms as an editor make her the most prominent among the others in the network. A majority of the editors made more than one appearance, shown by their shared degree values and their low closeness values indicate that the network consists of only one journal.

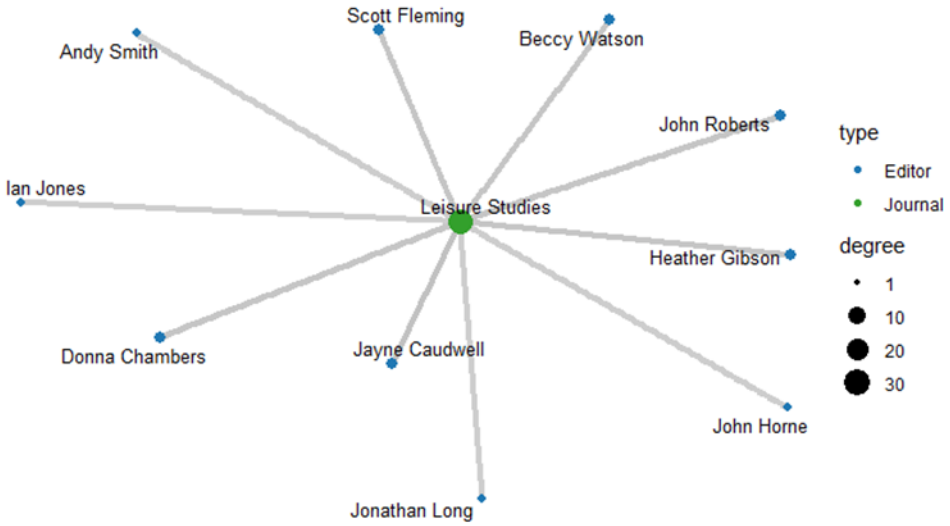

Figure 10 – Repeated Editors

Table 11 – Centrality Metrics in Repeated Editors: Journal

Journal	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
LS	27	45	0.10

Table 12 – Centrality Metrics in Repeated Editors: Editors

Editor	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
Andy Smith	2	0	0.05
Beccy Watson	3	0	0.05
Donna Chambers	3	0	0.05
Heather Gibson	3	0	0.05
Ian Jones	2	0	0.05
Jayne Caudwell	4	0	0.05
John Horne	2	0	0.05
John Roberts	3	0	0.05
Jonathan Long	2	0	0.05

On the other hand, Figure 11 displays a network made up only with editors where connections are made around common time periods. In changing the layout by moving the focus away from the journal as a central node to the editors themselves, patterns of co-editorship over time are identified. Editors such as Jayne Caudwell, Scott Fleming, and Donna Chambers have more central positions, suggesting frequent cross-over with other board members, while peripheral editors such as John Horne and Beccy Watson had less overlap. The visualization opens up internal editorial dynamics, showing who cooperated during similar periods while it might have influenced collective decision-making. Degree centrality (see Table 13) reinforces these positions: Jayne Caudwell has the highest degree (8) and appeared on the board four times, which implies this editor to have had a major bridge between editorial terms. Opposed to this, editors such as Ian Jones and John Horne with 3 equal degrees had fewer overlapping terms. This visualization surfaces internal editorial dynamics to whom collaborated during similar periods and perhaps affected mass deliberation.

The centrality metrics confirm the central role of Jayne Caudwell, who shows the highest degree and betweenness centrality, indicating frequent co-membership with other editors and a bridging role across time periods. Editors like Donna Chambers, Scott Fleming, and Heather Gibson also rank high, reflecting strong overlap with others. In contrast, John Horne and Ian Jones appear more peripheral, with lower degree and zero betweenness, suggesting limited co-editing ties during their terms.

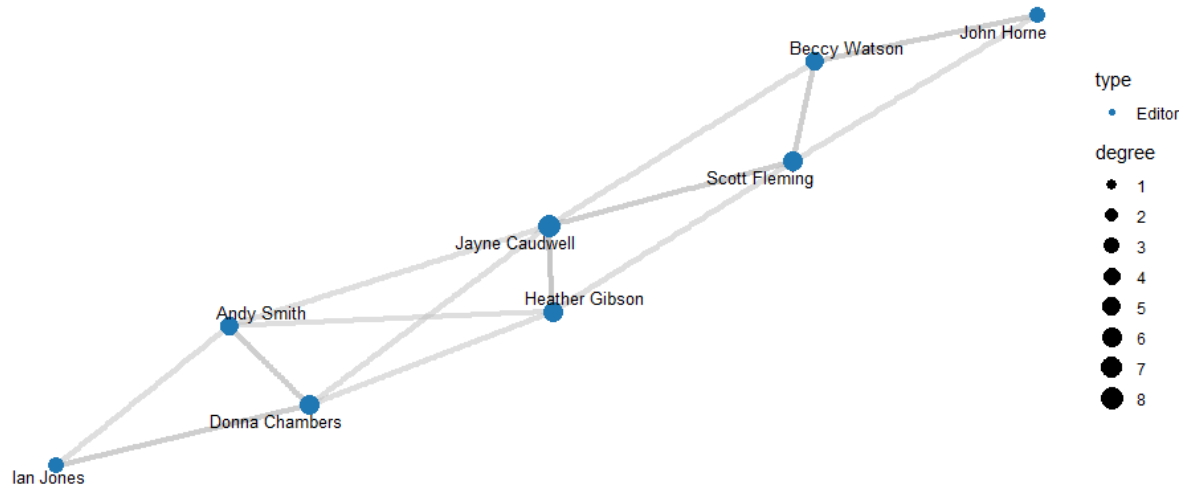

Figure 11 – Repeated Editor Network Based on Shared Time Periods

Table 13 – Centrality Metrics in Repeated Editors on Shared Time Periods

Editor	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
Jayne Caudwell	8	8	0.11
Heather Gibson	6	1.60	0.10
Donna Chambers	6	3.33	0.09
Scott Fleming	6	3.70	0.09
Beccy Watson	5	1.70	0.08
Andy Smith	5	1.67	0.09
John Horne	3	0	0.06
Ian Jones	3	0	0.06

Notably, the journal's editorial records show Michael Silk's presence as a member of both the past editorial team (2016) and the current Editorial Advisory Board of *Leisure Studies*.

Because there was little historical editorial data, we could only explore a narrow range of patterns in past editorship. Yet, the constant appearance of a few editors in the available records suggests they may have influenced the work over many years. The stronger presence of certain editors in these visualizations can reflect both their frequent changes of position and their key role in making decisions at the same time. But the fact that the data does not include information on past editorial roles limits understanding, leaving it unknown if individuals changed positions, advanced their roles, or remained stable over several terms. For instance, Michael Silk is found on both current and former boards, this raises questions about continuity and role progression, yet no official documentation clarifies these transitions. Even though most studies do not examine the ongoing organization of editorial boards, Mendonça et al. (2018) point out that a pattern of entry and exit does seem to exist. This highlights why it is important to study how editorial boards develop over the years is useful, showing if the same people continue to influence what gets published, whether new ideas are being welcomed, or whether the journal's direction is shifting. However, since

journals rarely share much about who has been editor in the past, nor what their duties involved, it is challenging to understand how fair their editorial processes are.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study set out to investigate the gatekeeping role of editorial boards in five leading journals within the fields of tourism, leisure, and hospitality. By combining an editormetrics approach with Social Network Analysis (SNA), the research examined the composition, structure, and interconnections of editorial board members. Key dimensions; gender representation, geographic distribution, institutional affiliation, and research performance; were analyzed alongside patterns of editorial overlap, multiple roles, and continuity over time.

The findings reveal consistent patterns: editorial positions are predominantly held by male scholars, concentrated in the Global North, particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom, and linked to a small number of influential institutions. These trends reflect long-standing structural tendencies within academic publishing rather than isolated cases.

Editorial boards, as this study shows, are not merely administrative bodies but influential actors in shaping the direction and scope of scholarly discourse. When editorial roles are concentrated among a limited and interconnected group, there is a risk that intellectual diversity may be constrained. While editorial continuity can bring stability and expertise, it may also limit openness to emerging voices, particularly from underrepresented regions or institutions.

The relationship observed between the research performance of editorial board members and journal impact suggests that academic prestige and visibility tend to reinforce one another. This may contribute to persistent hierarchies, where established scholars remain central while newer or less networked researchers face greater challenges in gaining recognition. Notably, journals such as the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* illustrate this dynamic well, its editorial board includes scholars with some of the highest average H-index values among the journals analysed, underscoring its central position in shaping hospitality research. This strong academic profile highlights the journal's potential to lead in advancing both excellence and inclusivity within the field.

In light of these insights, a number of forward-looking strategies emerge. Journals may benefit from introducing rotation policies and broader recruitment practices to ensure a wider range of perspectives. Transparent editorial selection processes and regular monitoring of role distribution could support a more balanced and inclusive governance model. Professional associations and academic institutions also have a role to play in promoting equity within scholarly publishing structures.

By highlighting the underlying dynamics of editorial board composition and influence, this research contributes to a growing dialogue on equity, transparency, and diversity in academic publishing. Encouraging more inclusive editorial practices is not only a matter of fairness, but a path toward greater innovation, richer academic exchange, and a more globally responsive field of tourism, leisure, and hospitality research.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Table A – Summary of Editors Sharing Two Journals

Journals	Nº Shared Editors
TM & ATR	27
TM & IJHM	16
ATR & IJHM	1
ATR & LS	2
LS & JLR	3

APPENDIX B

Table B – Centrality Metrics in the Editors Network: Editors Shared by Two Journals

Editor	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
Adele Ladkin	2	4.89	0.01
Anna Mattila	2	1.67	0.01
Arie Reichel	2	1.67	0.01
Bob McKercher	2	4.89	0.01
Carol Zhang	2	4.89	0.01
Cathy Hsu	2	4.89	0.01
Cindy Yoonjoung Heo	2	1.67	0.01
Dallen Timothy	2	4.89	0.01
Dan Wang	2	4.89	0.01
Dogan Gursoy	2	1.67	0.01
Donna Chambers	2	117.50	0.01
Egon Smeral	2	4.89	0.01
Emily Ma	2	1.67	0.01
Erose Sthapit	2	117.50	0.01
Fevzi Okumus	2	4.89	0.01
Florian Kock	2	4.89	0.01
Gang Li	2	4.89	0.01

Haiyan Song	2	4.89	0.01
Heesup Han	2	1.67	0.01
Hengyun Li	2	4.89	0.01
Huimei Liu	2	16.67	0
IpKin Anthony Wong	2	1.67	0.01
Juan Luis Nicolau	2	4.89	0.01
Kevin Kam Fung So	2	1.67	0.01
Liza Berdychevsky	2	4.89	0.01
Lorenzo Masiero	2	4.89	0.01
Lu Lu	2	4.89	0.01
Luke Potwarka	2	16.67	0
Marianna Sigala	2	1.67	0.01
Mingming Cheng	2	4.89	0.01
Muzzo (Muzaffer) Uysal	2	4.89	0.01
Neelu Seetaram	2	4.89	0.01
Neil Carr	2	4.89	0.01
Peter Lugosi	2	14.16	0.01
Raffaele Filieri	2	1.67	0.01
Richard N. S. Robinson	2	1.67	0.01
Rob Law	2	1.67	0.01
Scott McCabe	2	4.89	0.01
Seoki Lee	2	1.67	0.01
Shanshan (Vera) Lin	2	4.89	0.01
Stephen Pratt	2	4.89	0.01
Tanja Mihalic	2	4.89	0.01
Tarik Dogru	2	1.67	0.01
Timothy Lee	2	16.67	0

Ulrich Gunter	2	4.89	0.01
Vincent Tung	2	4.89	0.01
Woo Gon (Woody) Kim	2	1.67	0.01
Xiaoxiao Fu	2	4.89	0.01
Zheng Xiang	2	1.67	0.01

APPENDIX C

Table C – Summary of Editors Sharing Three Journals

Journals	Nº Shared Editors
TM & ATR & IJHM	3
TM & ATR & LS	1

APPENDIX D

Table D – Centrality Metrics in the Editors Network: Editors Shared by Three Journals

Editor	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
Albert Georges Assaf	3	1.58	0.08
Giampaolo Viglia	3	1.58	0.08
Heather Gibson	3	6.25	0.08
Yang Yang	3	1.58	0.08

APPENDIX E

Table E – Summary of Editors Sharing Two Journals

Journals	Nº Shared Editors
TM & ATR	27
TM & IJHM	16
ATR & IJHM	1
ATR & LS	2
LS & JLR	3

APPENDIX F

Table F – Centrality Metrics in the Editors Network: Editors in Multiple Roles

Editor	Degree _Centrality	Betweenness_Centrality	Closeness_Centrality
Alison McIntosh	1	0	1
Damion Sturm	1	0	0.33
Eiji Ito	1	0	1
Murat Kizildag	1	0	0.33
Nicola De Martini Ugolotti	1	0	0.33
Riadh Ladhari	1	0	0.33

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