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Thirty-one Years of the Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science: A Content Analysis

Abstract or Résumé:

This paper presents results of a content analysis of the *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science/ La Revue canadienne des sciences de l'information et de bibliothéconomie*. All articles published since 1986 were analyzed for language of publication, number of authors, authors' geographic location, article subject matter, and research methods used in empirical work. Longitudinal trends are noted. These data are compared with earlier descriptions of Information Science in Canada, and with analyses of the work of Canadian scholars in Information Science, to paint a fuller picture of the field as it has matured over the past 31 years.

Introduction

The Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science/ La Revue canadienne des sciences de l'information et de bibliothéconomie (CJILS/ RCSIB) is a scholarly journal started in 1976 and published by the Canadian Association for Information Science/ L'Association canadienne des sciences de l'information (CAIS/ACSI), founded in 1971. It is Canada's oldest bilingual, scholarly journal in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS), although there are other journals in the field published in Canada. CJILS/RCSIB has been peer reviewed since 1986. More historical detail is provided by Nilsen (2007, 2010), who contributed important milestone analyses of the history of CAIS/ACSI, and of the Association's annual conferences. Additionally, Wolfram (2012) analyzed the contributions of Canadian scholars to the field of Information Science, revealing that the most popular publication venue for these scholars between 1989 and 2008 was CJILS/RCSIB. The journal publishes Canadian authors, but also publishes the work of authors globally.

There have been recent analyses of LIS scholarship in Canada. In 2016, Paul-Hus, Mongeon, and Shu published a bibliometric analysis of contemporary information science research in Canada. They sought to identify the nationalities and disciplines of the collaborators of these Canadian authors, as well as to define the authors' areas of research interest. They found that Canadian LIS authors primarily disseminate their work through research articles, and that their collaborators were largely other Canadian scholars, with collaborations with authors from the U.S. the next largest category. These co-authors were mostly from LIS; the second largest group of co-authors were from Computer Science. Paul-Hus, Mongeon, and Shu (2016) also noted differences in publication patterns across the different LIS programs in Canada, and found that most Canadian LIS authors publish in technologically-oriented topic areas.

Other scholars have approached the analysis of existing scholarly literature in LIS from similar angles. Chang, Huang, and Lin (2015) used keyword, bibliographic coupling, and co-

citation analyses to investigate research topics in highly cited papers published between 1995 and 2014 in ten LIS journals. They found that bibliometrics and information seeking/information retrieval were the most popular topics in the literature. Aharony (2012) conducted a content analysis of keywords and abstracts to determine topics of articles published in ten top LIS journals in 2007 and 2008, and found that the most popular were information technology and social information science. Larivière, Sugimoto, and Cronin (2012) analyzed LIS journals over a century and found that sole authorship was the norm until about 1960, after which the average number of authors exceeded one. Wolfram (2012) found that information behaviour and information retrieval were the most popular topics published by Canadian LIS authors between 1989 and 2008. Results of the current study will be compared with data such as these to examine the "fit" of articles published CJILS/RCSIB in the overall LIS landscape.

Research Problem

CJILS/RCSIB is Canada's oldest scholarly journal in the field of information science, and is the most popular venue for Canadian authors in the field. A close analysis of the journal can reveal transformation over time, and help to determine whether the journal is meeting the goals of its publisher, CAIS/ACSI, and its editors. This analysis was undertaken to provide data to inform future directions for the journal.

Research Questions

1. What is the proportion of English to French articles published in CJILS/RCSIB between 1986 and 2017?
2. What are the authorship patterns of articles published in CJILS/RCSIB between 1986 and 2017 (number of authors, locations of authors)?
3. What types of articles were published in CJILS/RCSIB between 1986 and 2017?
4. What were the topics of articles published in CJILS/RCSIB between 1986 and 2017?
5. What were the research methods used in empirical articles published in CJILS/RCSIB between 1986 and 2017?
6. What were the characteristics of the CJILS/RCSIB journal editors between 1986 and 2017?

Method

Every article published in CJILS/RCSIB between 1986 (when all articles started to be peer-reviewed) and 2017 was analyzed using quantitative content analysis, a method commonly used in LIS (*cf.* White & Marsh 2006; Julien, Pecoskie & Reed 2011). Book reviews, editorials, and other content were not included in the analysis. Variables analyzed included language of article, number of authors per article, geographic location of all authors, article types (commentary, which is opinion without research; report of service, which describes activities in information services; or, empirical research study, which is a report of a systematic collection of data for a particular purpose (Julien, Pecoskie, & Reed 2011), major subject matter of articles (based on Wolfram's (2012) classification), and characteristics of the journal editors (institutional affiliation and gender). In addition, research methods used in empirical studies were analyzed, with methods classified inductively. These analyses will reveal longitudinal trends in the

journal's leadership and content over the past 31 years. The data collection is ongoing, but will be completed and fully analyzed by the time of the conference. The conference presentation will report results of the analysis, including longitudinal trends apparent in the data.

Value of the Study and Connection to the Conference Theme

The data identified and analyzed in this study help to portray the development of the discipline of information science in Canada and the diversity apparent in the field's production of research between 1986 and 2017. Data that describe patterns in methodological approach, article type, article topic, language, and authorship enable the recognition of trends in disciplinary focus, as well as provide indications of scholarly maturity, and counter criticism of the field. Such data also provide a basis for comparison with similar data from other disciplines or from other geographic locations. Analyzing data that reflect patterns in past and present CJILS/RCSIB research articles informs understanding of not only the content and evolution of this research over time, but also how this research intersects with the information science field as a whole. Such analysis aids in the development of self-awareness of the diverse perspectives and interpretations within the CAIS/ASCI community, and in imagining new paths, models, and patterns for future research in the field, and for CJILS/RCSIB.

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