How the Geographic Diversity of Editorial Boards Affects What Is Published in JCR-Ranked Communication Journals

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Abstract
This article tests whether the geographic diversity of editorial boards affects the diversity of research papers. Based on a content analysis of 84 journals listed in the Journal Citation Report, we show that diverse editorial boards are more likely to publish more diverse research articles, based on the country of origin of the first author and on where the data were collected. Our findings also indicate a negative association between (a) the impact factor and diversity of the research approach, (b) the journal's affiliation to an academic association and diversity in the first author's country of origin and the country of data collection, and (c) the founding year of the publication and the country of data collection. Finally, the founding year of the publication is explored as a moderator.

Keywords
editorial boards, diversity, research patterns, communication sciences, journals, impact factor

Editorial boards (EBs) are crucial agents in the governance of academic disciplines. As gatekeepers of knowledge (Metz et al., 2016), they represent a key role in shaping what is published and thus what informs theory development, research, and practice. In a scientific context which is increasingly standardized and formulaic (Alvesson &

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Gabriel, 2013), some observers suggest that scientific journals should be open to geographical inclusion in their EBs to facilitate the publication of manuscripts having a wide range of research approaches and perspectives (Baruch, 2001). However, research on scientometrics demonstrates that Western regions dominate major journals in terms of both authors and EBs (Murphy & Zhu, 2012) promoting, as a result, a shared, global consensus around well-known theories and interpretations of the world (Braun & Dióspatonyi, 2005). The effects and potential consequences of the composition of EBs on the articles they choose to publish constitute the focus of this study.

This article explores the effects of EBs' composition and journals' characteristics in what communication journals publish. Based on a content analysis of 84 Journal Citation Reports (JCR) communication journals in 2017, we explore the effects of five factors: the geographic diversity of EBs, their impact factor (IF), the year founded, their affiliation to an academic association, and publisher. Our results indicate a positive correlation between EB diversity and the diversity of countries of origin of first authors and the countries of data collection. Therefore, journals with more geographically diverse EBs are more prone to publish diverse research papers, at least in terms of the first author's country of origin and the country of data collection. In addition, our results indicated the key role of journals' IF and affiliation to an academic association in reducing the diversity of the first author's country of origin, country of data collection, and research approach. Finally, our findings revealed that more recently founded journals are more sensitive to geographical inclusion in terms of data collection, playing a statistically significant role as moderators in the relationship between EB diversity and the diversity of first author origin and research approach. This study contributes to a growing body of scholarship on how EBs affect what is published (Goyanes, 2019) and research inequalities between Global North/South regions in communication studies.

Geographical Standardization and Diversity: Why It Is So Important?

In a globalized world, most scholars are likely in favor of "more equal representation and diversification of scholars and studies from around the world in publications, conferences, and faculties" (Waisbord, 2019, p. 93). The same author also stresses that, in communication studies, globalization has uneven consequences because the field consists of a powerful center constituted by the United States and a few Western European countries, whereas other parts of the world account for between 1% and 5%. Thus, it is not only that "globalization largely follows existing inequalities in the global production of academic knowledge" (Waisbord, 2019, p. 95), but, meanwhile, inequalities in global knowledge production also follow world-systemic inequalities in geopolitical power relations (Demeter, 2018).

Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly initiated an invited forum in which five editors of internationally recognized communication journals clarify their opinions on the diversity of the discipline (Ang et al., 2019). Louisa Ha, editor of

Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly, emphasized that, although geographical diversity is very important in the case of international journals, a country or regional quota cannot be accepted because journals have to maintain research quality (Ang et al., 2019). In the same article, Peng Hwa Ang, former president of International Communication Association (ICA) emphasized the role of mentoring programs in peripheral regions, whereas Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick, editor of *Communication Research*, added that, besides low geographical diversity, low research diversity should also be problematized. Ignacio Aguaded, editor of *Comunicar*, added other types of diversity as methodological, cultural, and topical diversities. In short, all the interviewed editors agreed that diversity is relatively low in communication research, but, in their opinion, it should be raised without a decline in research quality.

As Chase-Dunn (1999) argues, interconnected societal fields like economy, culture, politics, and communication should be analyzed from a global perspective, and the global academy is no exception. Following Wallerstein (2004), we assume that knowledge production is not separate from overall world-system dynamics, but is rather an essential part of the system's operation. Galtung (1971) even posits that the means of knowledge production, such as popular culture and education, serve to maintain the hegemony of the center by spreading its values and ideologies. Moreover, academic publishing itself benefits from the political and economic hegemony of the Anglo-American center (Canagarajah, 2002). Accordingly, it is not surprising that the pattern of power relations in communication studies is similar to those seen in other super-structures of the world system, such as in communication networks, transport, industry, and entertainment (Wallerstein, 1991). So, although "in an ideal scholarly world, all voices compete in academic discourse regardless of geographic and linguistic origin" (Hanitzsch, 2019, p. 214), according to both empirical analyses and theoretical traditions such as critical studies, decolonialization studies, and world-systems analysis, global science was, and still is, a distorted field that privileges the more powerful central agents, regardless of their scientific merits (Waisbord, 2019).

Another research tradition dealing with global inequalities in science is decolonialization theory (De Santos, 2007, 2014, 2018; Kerr, 2014; Mignolo, 2011, 2018). De Santos (2011) uses the very expressive word *epistemicide* when referring to how hegemons of global science systematically overlook and exterminate rival or alternative research traditions, epistemologies, and peripheral knowledge. According to this tradition, the so-called globalization of knowledge is conceived as an encounter of cultures that implies the death of the knowledge of the subordinated participant. This leads to an epistemic monoculture (Mignolo, 2011) where the West maintains control over the structure of knowledge. According to decolonization theorists, the global academic community needs a cognitive justice in which plurality of knowledge is the norm, and in which even peripheral members of the community have the right to profess different forms of knowledge (De Santos, 2007). With reference to communication scholarship, Ganter and Ortega (2019) stress that postcolonial studies "confront institutionalized knowledge and aim to trigger not only a more democratic rereading of our own scholarly realities but also a greater diversity of perspectives in media and communication studies" (p. 70).

As we have seen, the colonialization of epistemic, cultural, and topical issues results in a relatively less diverse, centralized and Euro-American hegemony that creates power structures within the discipline, similar to those already in place in the world system in general (Aman, 2016; Lee, 2015). But as Wang (2011) stresses, "the ascendancy of postmodernism, postcolonialism, and deconstructionism has finally brought academic attention to the periphery, minority, and subaltern. This is the time for decentralization, de-Westernization, differentiation and pluralist thinking" (p. 2). De Santos (2016) expressly states that the academic community should recognize that global perceptions and knowledge go far beyond the Western understanding of the world (p. 8). In a similar vein, Silvio Waisbord (2019), former editor of the ICA flagship *Journal of Communication*, affirms that "broadening the geographical-intellectual horizons of the field is imperative to reassess the validity of arguments, interrogate premises and arguments, expand analytical horizons, and bring in research questions and intellectual traditions from around the world" (p. 101). Hanitzsch (2019) also adds that more diversity might make a discipline more resilient in the face of crises. For example, the crisis of journalism might be only a crisis of Western journalism, not of the field as a whole, meaning that taking more diverse journalism practices and academic perspectives into account could help the entire field to counter the crisis. Thus, the ethical arguments in favor of a culturally and geopolitically diverse discipline could be augmented with an evolutionary argument that more diverse disciplines are more robust and thus more resistant to global challenges and difficulties.

As will be discussed in the following paragraphs, EBs play a crucial role in the geopolitical representation of a journal. Ganter and Ortega's (2019) analysis showed that "a critical implementation of de-Westernization requires more geographically diverse editorial boards, greater international cooperation, and comparative accounts to capture diversity in regional contexts" (p. 68). Thus, we could assume that the level of diversity in general—and the level of de-Westernization in particular—is represented by the geographic diversity of EBs, and that the composition of EBs also represents world-systemic power relations in terms of knowledge production and dissemination.

Geographic Diversity of EBs and Its Effects on What Is Published

The key function of EBs is manifested by the gatekeepers of knowledge metaphor (Metz et al., 2016), an idea that acknowledges their crucial influence in structuring journals' research output, and hence what informs theory development, research, and practice (Metz & Harzing, 2012). This metaphor should be understood, however, in the context of the extremely complex system of global academia. Scientific reputation is very important not only for authors, but for journal editors as well. Being indexed in Web of Science (WoS), MEDLINE, or Scopus is a great achievement for editors in their efforts to make their journals highly cited and internationally visible, whereas it is also crucial to keep indices like the journal impact factor (JIF) or Elsevier's SJR

(Scimago Journal & Country Rank) as high as possible. Canavero et al. (2014) investigated the process by which journal editors select presumably highly cited articles and authors with a strong reputation. The authors found that most editors use two types of bibliometric indicators: journal impact (based on citations) and academic reputation (based on the h-index of the authors). And, as it is well demonstrated through the infamous Matthew-effect (Bonitz et al., 1999) that authors from the periphery will receive fewer citations to their papers than their central peers, the publication of peripheral research articles runs counter to the interests of journal editors.

Another argument that supports the fact that the geographic diversity of EBs could affect the diversity of published articles comes from empirical research (Demeter, 2018; Lauf, 2005). Lauf ascertained that, although we do not have direct evidence as to whether the review process leads to a higher or lower geographic diversity because of the lack of public data on it, we can still presume that there is a connection. He also presents empirical and practical arguments: Under the former, his research clearly showed that communication journals with more diverse EBs publish more diverse articles in terms of the affiliations of the authors. According to his practical arguments, Lauf said that the extremely high proportion of central (mostly American) editors and the less than 5% of non-Western EB members lead to a situation in which peripheral article proposals cannot be reviewed by the internal process and must be sent for an external review, making the process both slower and costlier. This last feature is key in communication studies, where social geographical and even human geographical differences between different world regions can be very pronounced. It seems obvious then that, if a journal had no EB member or advisor specializing in, for example, Central Africa, the board would face serious challenges in selecting articles from or about this region. Consequently, an editor might reject an article without having first made an adequate assessment of it. Another possible reason why newer journals have relatively more diverse EBs than established, older journals is that emerging journals need a diverse board to be eligible for inclusion in JCR (Goyanes, 2019). It is much harder for established journals to diversify EBs, because only scholars with prominent reputations are invited and they are more likely to be from the Global North (Lauf, 2005).

Demeter (2018) repeated and added to Lauf's research with all 82 WoS SSCI (Social Sciences Citation Index)-indexed communication journals and found a strong correlation between EB diversity and publication diversity. He even found that, when a journal increases its EB diversity, the diversity in what is published is likely to increase as well:

> The composition of journal editorial boards proved to be a good predictor for the national diversity of their publication output. There are significant correlations between the diversity of editorial boards and the national diversity of publications in both negative and positive directions. Moreover, journals that raised their national diversity in their editorial boards from Lauf's research to the present also raised their national diversity in publications. Therefore, the correlation between editorial boards and publication outputs

> has been proved both longitudinally and in cross-sectional statistical measures. (Demeter, 2018, pp. 2914–2915)

In accordance with the insights of both world-systems theory and decolonization studies, we assume that geopolitical hierarchies in the world system would correlate with an uneven systemic distribution of knowledge production and dissemination (Demeter, 2018). As it might play a significant role in both the level of gatekeeping and publication output, we assume that the level of internationalization is represented in not just the diversity of EB members, but also the diversities of authorship, data collection, and research approach. In addition, we presume that the diversity of EB members as gatekeepers plays a crucial role in these relationships, and therefore we hypothesize as follows:

> **H1:** A greater geographic diversity within an EB leads to greater diversity in (a) first author's country of origin, (b) country of data collection, and (c) research approach.

We will also investigate how the central systemic position of a journal, measured in its IF, affects its diversity indices. Journals with a high IF are at the top of the hierarchy in academic reputation (Paulus et al., 2015), as it is often assumed that IF is associated with the quality of the content published (Ferrer-Sapena et al., 2016). Although this assumption is contested by many scientometric studies (Callaway, 2016), there is a general agreement on the crucial role of the IF in supporting academic decisions in relation to academic promotions and the allocation of funds (Siversten, 2016). To contribute to top-tier journals, authors must meet exacting quality standards, a feat that many scholars worldwide struggle to accomplish. As journals with a distinguished reputation are often at the top on impact in a given field (Delgado & Repiso, 2013), we presume that they might attract people and empirical evidence from different regions of the world.

In addition, as many world regions have established scientific standards in which the IF is the benchmark for research assessments, we assume that those journals with a higher IF are more likely to publish diverse research papers in terms of authorship and empirical evidence, given the demanding pressure of different geographical domains. Similarly, as many reputed journals are at the forefront in diversity issues in science communication and production (Dhanani & Jones, 2017) and play a key role in persuading other journals to become more open to geographical inclusion, we assume that this will reflect on their scientific output.

Silvio Waisbord and Claudia Mellado (2014) wrote that de-Westernization

> refers to a shift in academic knowledge to broaden the analysis by considering experiences, research findings, and theoretical frameworks developed in the rest of the world. De-westernization is deemed necessary to enrich a field that has been historically organized around analytical concepts, epistemologies, arguments, and evidence developed in the United States and Western Europe. It is understood as the inclusion of subaltern

perspectives typically ignored in Western academia that question fundamental premises of the scientific enterprise underpinning mainstream communication research. It embodies the need to reposition academic research and local knowledge traditionally situated in the "margins." It is considered necessary to shake up certainties grounded in a narrow set of cases and analytical perspectives, and to break away from the provincialism of scholarly research. It reflects broad impulses to decentralize academic knowledge amidst massive shifts in the world's politics, economics, and culture driven by globalization and the coming of new powers and geopolitical blocs (p. 362).

When referring to the very complex concept of de-Westernization, the authors also mean increased diversity in country of data collection, subject of study, and the body of evidence. All these considerations mean that, among non-Western authors, non-Western data, evidence, and subjects should be incorporated in the field of international communication scholarship (Waisbord & Mellado, 2014), and, according to Waisbord (2015a), the most prestigious journals should lead by setting the example.

However, this openness of top-tier journals to diversity will be challenged when it comes to the research approach implemented. In this regard, it is well documented that the hegemonic view for science development in communication sciences is based on quantitative research (Freelon, 2013; Waisbord, 2019). Despite the diversity that does exist in the field and the counterhegemonic struggle within academia, communication research is increasingly empirically based and rooted in the positivistic paradigm, both qualitatively, but also, and especially, quantitatively. As a consequence, many cultural, critical, postcolonial, and theoretical views in general on communication research development are increasingly rejected. Therefore, we assume that although top-tier communication journals might attract more diverse authors with diverse empirical evidence in terms of the country of data collection, they might also prefer mainstream research approaches. As a result, we hypothesize as follows:

H2: The greater the IF, (a) the greater the diversity in first author's country of origin, (b) the greater the diversity in country of data collection, and (c) the lesser the diversity in research approach.

Additional considerations can be taken into account when we consider journals' age, that is, when they were founded. As in other cultural, political, or economic areas, the scientific field in general—and academic journals in particular—is increasingly under pressure in democratic societies to meet standards of diversity (Dhanani & Jones, 2017). Journals' crucial role in the dissemination of sciences makes them a key forum for the fostering of openness, diversity, and inclusion, thus allowing for pluralistic visions of the world. For instance, Waisbord hastened the decentralization of the field not only by his programmatic editorial (Waisbord, 2015a) and his article in *Communication Theory* (Waisbord, 2015b; Waisbord & Mellado, 2014) but also in his latest book (Waisbord, 2019). Following this logic, it is possible that recently founded journals are more sympathetic to diversity issues in science as they may have been established with clear normative expectations in line with the growing political and

societal pressures on diversity issues. Older journals might, on the contrary, be more likely to maintain the status quo, as they were founded with traditional structures, views, and expectations on the development of sciences. However, the research strategies and specializations of some journals might favor certain topics and agendas, regardless of when they were founded. Therefore, due to a lack of clear theoretical prediction, we ask the following research question:

RQ1: How does the founding year of the publication affect diversity of (a) first author's country of origin, (b) countries of data collection, and (c) research approaches?

In addition, we want to explore whether the effects of the interaction between EB diversity and publication founding year predict diversity in (a) the first author's country of origin, (b) the country of data collection, and (c) research approaches. Specifically, we are interested in testing whether EB diversity and the founding year of the publication reduce or increase the levels of our three dependent variables. It can be assumed that both the intrinsic nature of EBs in terms of geographic diversity and the founding year of the publication are key factors in shaping journals' output and thus in amplifying or mitigating the diversity of research in communication sciences. We thus explore the following research question:

RQ2: How does the founding year of a publication affect the relationship between EB diversity and diversity in (a) first author's country of origin, (b) countries of data collection, and (c) research approaches?

Finally, we hypothesize that prestigious academic associations might represent existing power relations in the world system of knowledge production. In other words, we assume that, as members from central (typically American and Western European) countries are significantly overrepresented in the most prestigious academic associations in communication studies (Waisbord, 2019), journals published by these associations prefer central authors and thus show less diversity in the first author's country of origin, the countries of data collection, and research approaches. Relatedly, given the growing influence of publishing houses in the dissemination of science, we also explore how they affect the diversity of journals' output. Although a priori they do not significantly interfere in editorial decisions, we aim to empirically explore which publisher is more supportive of first author, country of data collection, and research approach diversity. Given the limited EB diversity in communication journals (Goyanes, 2019), it is time that they take action, pressuring editors to improve the international coverage of leading journals by including those issues, themes, and regions which are currently marginalized (Goyanes, 2017). Therefore, we ask the following research questions:

H3: Journals affiliated with an academic association (ICA, AEJMC [Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication], NCA [National Communication

Association], etc.) are less likely to show diversity in (a) first author's country of origin, (b) country of data collection, and (c) research approaches.

RQ3: How the journal publisher (Wiley, Taylor & Francis, Elsevier, etc.) affects diversity in (a) first author's country of origin, (b) country of data collection, and (c) research approach.

Method

Data Collection

In accordance with the methods of the current literature (Demeter, 2018; Lauf, 2005), we selected all communication journals ($N = 84$ in 2017) indexed on the SSCI list of WoS in 2017. We chose the year 2017 for the analysis, because we started our data collection in 2018, and therefore data for 2017 were the most recent available. Similarly, we decided to take the JCR to examine our hypothesis and research questions because it is the most influential in sciences and is usually taken as the reference in academic promotions, scholars' evaluations, and research funding (Alvesson et al., 2017).

Data for this study are based on a probabilistic, stratified random sample. We stratified the sample by journal and number of articles published. In total, there were 84 JCR journals in 2017, publishing 3,483 articles excluding special issues ($M = 41.46$; $SD = 35.36$; min. = 12; max. = 247). We stratified the sample by those journals that have published less than 40 articles per year ($N_{journals} = 60$; 71.4%; $N_{articles} = 1,585$; 45.5%; mean of the cohort = 26.41; $SD = 8.24$; min. = 12; max. = 40), between 40 and 80 articles ($N_{journals} = 17$; 20.2%; $N_{articles} = 964$; 27.7%; mean of the cohort = 56.7; $SD = 12.8$; min. = 41; max. = 77), between 80 and 120 ($N_{journals} = 5$; 6%; $N_{articles} = 509$; 14.6%; mean of the cohort = 101.8; $SD = 11.3$; min. = 88; max. = 117) and 120 to the maximum number of publications ($N_{journals} = 2$; 2.4%; $N_{articles} = 425$; 12.2%; mean of the cohort = 212.5; $SD = 48.7$; min. =178; max. = 247).

To make the sample more proportional, we conducted a uniform content analysis of 30% of the published articles in the four cohorts by journal. This means that, if a journal published 36 articles in 2017, it belonged to the first cohort and 11 papers were content analyzed (30% of 36). Similarly, if a journal published 145 articles, it fell into the fourth cohort and 43 articles were content analyzed (30% of 145). Our sampling was probabilistic and stratified by journals and published papers at 30% (and not proportionally representative), because many journals publish less than 40 papers per year, making this proportion below three articles, which prevented us from calculating diversity indices. On the other hand, we selected 30% of the total publications by journal because it was a sufficient proportion to have a sound sample and calculate the indices. In total, 1,056 articles from 84 periodicals were content analyzed.

Content Analysis

To test our hypothesis and answer the research questions, the EBs and research articles were reviewed by the second author. For intercoder reliability, the first author

independently coded a random selection of 20% of cases of both EBs and research approaches. The Cohen kappa intercoder agreement coefficient (Cohen, 1960), which adjusts for the proportion of agreements that take place, was evaluated using the guidelines outlined by Landis and Koch (1977), where the strength of the kappa coefficient is as follows: 0.01 to 0.20—slight; 0.21 to 0.40—fair; 0.41 to 0.60—moderate; 0.61 to 0.80—substantial; 0.81 to 1.00—almost perfect. The analysis provided an interrater agreement of 98% and a kappa coefficient of 0.93 for EBs, and an interrater agreement of 93% and a kappa coefficient of 0.93 for research approaches. Therefore, the intercoder agreement coefficient was almost perfect for EBs and substantial for research approaches (the description of these variables can be found in the following codebook).

Independent and Dependent Variables (Codebook)

This study's main objective was to explore the fundamental factors that explain journals' research output related to EB composition and journal characteristics. Specifically, we explored how the EBs' geographic diversity, the IF, the founding year of the publication, the journal's affiliation to an academic association, and its publisher affected journals' research diversity, specifically in terms of first author's country of origin, country of data collection, and research approach. Thus, our model includes three different research diversity measures as dependent variables, six variables of interest as independent variables, and one moderation effect between the IF and founding year of the publication. Accordingly, the article includes a series of measures of these variables, as well as some standardized characteristics of EBs as controls.

General identification of the unit of analysis for EBs and research articles. This initial section consists of data relating to the number of the unit of analysis, name of the EB members including editor-in-chief, editors, associate editors, and international EBs ($N = 5,428$), title of the research article ($N = 1,056$), journal in which the article was published ($N = 84$), and date on which the coding was made.

IF. Journals' IF was taken from the JCR ranking in the category of "Communication" in 2017 ($M = 1.45$; $SD = 0.84$; max. $= 4$; min. $= 0.25$).

Founding year of the publication. This variable was measured by consulting the first year in which the journal was published. If a journal had changed its name during its evolution, we take the first year of publication of the original journal as reference ($M = 1985$; $SD = 19.78$; max. $= 2013$; min. $= 1915$).

Journal affiliation to a Western academic association. Journal affiliation was coded as 1 = yes, 0 = no and includes, among others, affiliations such as the ICA, AEJMC, and NCA.

Journal publisher. This variable was coded with five categorical values representing all the possible publishers of JCR communication journals: 1 = *Wiley* ($n = 6$), 2 = *Sage*

($n = 26$), 3 = *Elsevier* ($n = 4$), 4 = *Independent* ($n = 16$) (i.e., *International Journal of Communication*), 5 = *Taylor & Francis* ($n = 32$).

Nationality of EB members. This section analyzes the geographical origin of EBs. The nationality of EBs was coded according to the country in which EB members have their current academic affiliation, following previous studies on EBs' diversity (Demeter, 2018; Goyanes, 2019). Taking the current academic affiliation to get evidence about the nationality of EBs has obvious limitations. For instance, an American scholar who works at a Singaporean university would count as an Asian, despite the fact that he or she might have a greater connection to U.S. academia. Nevertheless, in the majority of the cases, the two countries are aligned.

The geographical categories were as follows: 1 = *United States*, 2 = *United Kingdom*, 3 = *Western Europe*, 4 = *Canada*, 5 = *Developed Asia* (including Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong), 6 = *Australia and New Zealand*, 7 = *Middle East*, 8 = *Africa*, 9 = *South America*, 10 = *Eastern Europe*, 11 = *Undeveloped Asia* (all Asian countries not listed under Developed Asia), and 12 = *Israel*. As outlined, we combine continent level, country level, and geographical level to present the data in a coherent and concise manner, following previous studies (Goyanes, 2019). For instance, we consider the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Israel as independent values at country level because they are some of the most important countries in terms of total EB members. By contrast, we consider Africa as a conglomerate of nationalities at a continent level because its contribution to the total number of EB members is limited. Finally, we consider Western Europe, Developed Asia, the Middle East, South America, Eastern Europe, and Undeveloped Asia at geographical level to make geographical distinctions between and within continents based on their cultural and economic roots.

Diversity of first author country of origin. This section analyzes the geographical origin of the first author of the article. The coding and rationale for their geographical classification were the same as those in EBs' nationality.

Country of data collection. This section analyzes the geographical domain in which authors collected their data. The coding was the same as that in EBs' nationality with another category (13) for international or regionally comparative data analysis.

Research approach. This section analyzes the research approach employed, coded as 1 = *quantitative*, 2 = *qualitative*, 3 = *mixed methods*, and 4 = *theoretical*. Critical/cultural studies were considered qualitative or theoretical depending on whether the article was empirically based (qualitative) or not (theoretical). Articles that combined both quantitative and qualitative techniques were considered to be mixed-methods studies. The nature of this variable was based on journals' voluntary or discretional strategies, which prevented us from opening normative discussions in relation to diversity issues. In this regard, some journals (e.g., *Communication Theory*) are devoted to theoretical essays rather than data-based research, and some outlets favor

particular methodological orientations, regardless of their EB. Moreover, some might even argue that it is better to have specialized outlets rather than all-inclusive ones. The priorities and orientations of journals are based on the strategies of their editors and readers. Therefore, although this variable is particularly relevant in calibrating the level of research standardization in communication sciences, the domination of certain research orientations is voluntary. However, in the majority of cases, journals present a fair research diversity when it comes to methodological approaches.

Control Variables

To control for potential confounds, our statistical models also included a variety of variables that may explain relationships between the variables of interest. Specifically, we included four controls: number of articles published ($M = 41.46$; $SD = 35.36$; max. $= 247$; min. $= 12$), number of EB members ($M = 63.30$; $SD = 31.77$; max. $= 171$; min. $= 8$), editor gender (female $= 27$ or 35.1%; male $= 50$ or 64.9%), and editor origin (United States $= 45$ or 55.6%; Rest of the world $= 36$ or 44.4%). Making the categorization for American/Rest of the world editor origin is in consonance with the discourse of the Americanization of the field (Waisbord, 2015a, 2015b, 2019; Waisbord & Mellado, 2014), or, as other authors call it, the "internalization through Americanization" discourse (Wiedemann & Meyen, 2016).

Measurements

EB diversity index. As outlined previously, we first collected data on all the EB members ($N = 5,428$) of the JCR journals and categorized them by region of their current affiliations. Based on these data, we calculated Simpson's reciprocal index of diversity for each journal (Hill, 1973). Diversity was calculated by the geographical locations of the individual EB members of a given journal. The range of this variable is between 1 and 0, where numbers closer to 1 signify greater international diversity in EBs, and values closer to 0 indicate less ($M = 0.53$; $SD = 0.25$). The calculation deals with the total number of elements in a given category (n) and with the total numbers of all elements (N), so the diversity index measures the distribution of the elements from proportional distribution (values closer to 1) to disproportional distribution (values closer to 0):

$$D = \frac{\sum n(n-1)}{\sum N(N-1)}. \tag{1}$$

Research papers' diversity indices. To measure the diversity of research articles, we developed three indices (i.e., dependent variables). Our first variable measured the geographic diversity of the first author's affiliation. We coded the selected articles using the same categories as for EB diversity, and we used Simpson's reciprocal index of diversity as a model throughout ($M = 0.61$; $SD = 0.24$). Our second variable measured research papers' country of data collection. We used the same categories as for

EB diversity and first author affiliation, with another category for international or regional comparative data fields. Again, the country of data collection diversity was calculated based on the model of Simpson's reciprocal index of diversity ($M = 0.66$; $SD = 0.23$). Our third variable measured articles' research diversity in terms of the research approach. This variable was also developed on the model of Simpson's reciprocal index of diversity ($M = 0.45$; $SD = 0.26$).

Data Analysis

To test our hypotheses and research questions, we conducted a hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis, with three different dependent variables: the first author's country of origin, the country of data collection, and the research approach. The independent variables were introduced in three different blocks. The first block of variables comprised the set of controls (number of articles published, number of EB members, editor gender, and editor origin), the second comprised our variables of interest: founding year of the publication, IF, journal affiliation, and publisher, and in the third block we introduced the moderation effects (EB diversity × and founding year of the publication) using the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Model 1).

Results

The collected data showed enormous differences between the different levels of diversity of individual periodicals (see Supplemental Appendix for the complete data set). We will begin by presenting some descriptive statistics (Table 1) on the contributions of different world regions in their numbers of EB members, first author's country of origin, and country of data collection (Figure 1).

Although the dominance of the United States and Western Europe is significant in all our measured dimensions, we also noted important differences. The United States clearly has the most powerful position as gatekeeper of ideas, because it has much more EB members than all other world regions taken together, and its participation in EB members is even stronger than its participation in data or author contribution. The exact opposite is true of developing world regions like Africa, Eastern Europe, developing Asia, the Middle East, or South America, where their contributions as data providers are much stronger than their participation as idea brokers, as illustrated by their number of EB members. The third type of contribution is represented by Western Europe, where author participation is the strongest form of contribution, followed by a still extensive contribution in terms of the data field and a lesser but still significant contribution in EB members.

H1 predicted that a greater geographic diversity within an EB leads to greater diversity in (a) first author's country of origin, (b) country of data collection, and (c) research approach. The regression analysis revealed a statistically significant and positive association between EB diversity and diversity of first author's country of origin ($\beta = 0.609$; $p < .01$) and country of data collection ($\beta = 0.471$; $p < .01$). However, as reflected in Table 4, the association between EB diversity and research approach was

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations.

|	M	SD	EB number	Number of articles	EB diversity	Publication founding year	Impact factor	First author origin	Country of data collection	Research approach
EB number	63.30	31.77	—	.234*	-.236*	-.119	.371**	-.070	.061	-.133
Number of articles	41.46	35.36		—	-.006	.170	.173	.113	.118	.151
EB diversity	0.53	0.25			—	.426**	.076	.628**	.397**	.172
Publication founding year	1985	1978				—	-.103	.413**	.155	.147
Impact factor	1.45	0.84					—	.081	.122	-.197
First author origin	0.61	0.24						—	.647**	.060
Country of data collection	0.66	0.23							—	.142
Research Approach	0.45	0.26								—

Note. EB = editorial board.
*p < .05. **p < .01.
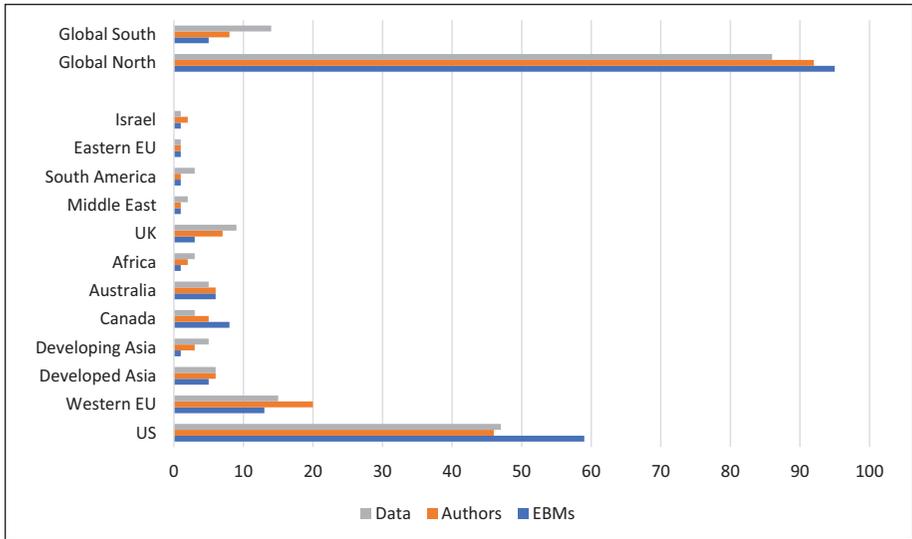
Figure 1. Contributions of different world regions to the global academy in communication and media studies in terms of EB members, author, and data of origin participation.

Note. The "Australia" category also includes EB members from New Zealand. EB = editorial board; EBMs = editorial board members.

not statistically significant. Therefore, more diverse EBs are more prone to publish research articles that are diverse in terms of first author's country of origin and country of data collection. Hence, H1a and H1b were fully supported, where H1c was not supported.

H2 predicted that the greater the IF, (a) the greater the diversity in first author's country of origin, (b) the greater the diversity in country of data collection, and (c) the lesser the diversity in research approach. The regression analysis revealed a statistically significant and negative association between the IF and the research approach diversity. Therefore, the higher the IF, the lower the research approach diversity ($\beta = -0.199$; $p < .05$). As reflected in Tables 2 and 3, the regression did not show a statistically significant association between IF and both first author's country of origin and the country of data collection. Hence, H2a and H2b were not supported, whereas H2c was supported.

RQ1 asked how the founding year of the publication affects diversity in (a) the first author's country of origin, (b) the country of data collection, and (c) the research approach. The regression analysis shows a negative association between the founding year of the publication and country of data collection diversity. Therefore, more recently founded journals are more likely to publish diverse research articles, at least in terms of the country of data collection ($\beta = -0.195$; $p < .05$). However, there was no statistically significant association between the founding year of the publication and either the diversity of first author's country of origin or the research approach.

Table 2. Regression Analysis Predicting the First Author's Country of Origin.

	β main effects	Moderation effect
Block 1: Controls		
Number of articles	0.142	0.000
Number of EBs	−0.036	0.000
Editor gender	0.059	0.006
Editor nationality	−0.228*	0.044
ΔR^2	.083	—
Block 2: Variables of interest		
EB diversity	0.609**	0.553**
Publication founding year	0.031	0.000
Impact factor	−0.048	0.000
Journal affiliation	−0.365**	−0.130**
Publisher$_{Wiley}$	0.252*	0.050
Publisher$_{None}$	0.065	0.005
Publisher$_{Taylor \& Francis}$	−0.035	0.003
Publisher$_{Elsevier}$	−0.045	0.001
ΔR^2 (%)	.528	—
Block 3: Moderation effect		
EB diversity × Founding year	—	−0.009**
ΔR^2		.020
Total R^2		.631

Note. Cell entries are final-entry OLS standardized coefficients. EB = editorial board; OLS = ordinary least squares.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

RQ2 asked how the founding year of a publication affects the relationship between EB diversity and diversity in (a) first author's country of origin, (b) countries of data collection, and (c) research approaches. The interaction terms of the regression analysis show that the founding year of the publication negatively affects the relationship between EB diversity and first author diversity ($\beta = -0.009$; $p < .01$). However, as demonstrated in Table 4, the founding year of the publication positively affects the relationship between EB diversity and the country of data collection ($\beta = 0.007$; $p < .05$). Figure 2 graphically plots the interaction terms between EB diversity and founding year of the publication. We can observe that, when EB diversity is low, recently founded journals are more prone to publish diverse research articles in terms of the first author's country of origin. However, when EB diversity is high, an older journal is more likely to publish diverse research articles in terms of the diversity of the first author's country of origin. On the other hand, in Figure 3, we plot the interaction terms between EB diversity and research approach. In this case, we observe a cleaved transverse moderation: When EB diversity is low, older journals are more prone to research approach diversity (negatively), but when EB diversity is high, recently founded journals are more likely to research approach diversity (positively).

Table 3. Regression Analysis Predicting Country of Data Collection.

	β main effects	Moderation effect
Block 1: Controls		
Number of articles	0.107	0.000
Number of EBs	0.052	0.001*
Editor gender	0.054	0.037
Editor nationality	−0.085	0.065
ΔR^2	.025	—
Block 2: Variables of interest		
EB diversity	0.471**	0.392**
Publication founding year	−0.195*	−0.001
Impact factor	−0.083	0.001
Journal affiliation	−0.479**	−0.007
Publisher$_{Wiley}$	0.193*	0.002
Publisher$_{None}$	0.085	0.001
Publisher$_{Taylor \& Francis}$	0.078	0.001
Publisher$_{Elsevier}$	−0.087	0.001
ΔR^2	.293	—
Block 3: Moderation effect		
EB diversity $\times$ Founding year	—	−0.000
ΔR^2		.004
Total R^2		.322

Note. Cell entries are final-entry OLS standardized coefficients. EB = editorial board; OLS = ordinary least squares.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

H3 predicted that journals affiliated with an academic association (ICA, AEJMC, NCA, etc.) are less likely to show diversity in (a) first author's country of origin, (b) country of data collection, and (c) research approaches. The regression analysis revealed a statistically significant and negative association between journal affiliation and the diversity of first author's country of origin (β = −0.365; $p < .01$), and country of data collection (β = −0.479; $p < .01$). However, the association between journal affiliation and research approach diversity was not statistically significant. Therefore, H3a and H3b were supported, whereas H3c was not supported. Finally, RQ3 asked how the journal publisher (Wiley, Taylor & Francis, Elsevier, etc.) affects diversity in (a) first author's country of origin, (b) country of data collection, and (c) research approach. The regression analysis shows that, taking Sage as the baseline in the analysis, journals published by Wiley are more likely to publish research articles with a greater diversity in first author's country of origin (β = 0.252; $p < .05$) and country of data collection (β = 0.193; $p < .05$). However, for the research approach diversity, the regression did not show a statistically significant association.

Table 4. Regression Analysis Predicting Research Approach.

	β main effects	Moderation effect
Block 1: Controls		
Number of articles	0.207*	0.001*
Number of EBs	−0.150	−0.001
Editor gender	−0.020	0.006
Editor nationality	−0.209*	−0.104
ΔR^2	.104	—
Block 2: Variables of interest		
EB diversity	−0.006	−0.020
Publication founding year	0.015	0.000
Impact factor	−0.199*	−0.007
Journal affiliation	0.044	0.000
Publisher$_{Wiley}$	−0.156	−0.001
Publisher$_{None}$	0.091	0.000
Publisher$_{Taylor \& Francis}$	−0.152	−0.004
Publisher$_{Elsevier}$	0.076	0.000
ΔR^2	.450	—
Block 3: Moderation effect		
EB diversity × Founding year	—	0.007*
ΔR^2		.025
Total R^2		.579

Note. Cell entries are final-entry OLS standardized coefficients. EB = editorial board; OLS = ordinary least squares.
*$p < .05$.

Discussion

EBs are crucial bodies in the governance, management, and promotion of scientific journals (Rosenstreich & Wooliscroft, 2006). As "gatekeepers of knowledge" (Metz et al., 2016), they perform a key role in leading academic fields and have a strong influence on what is published and thus what informs communication research and teaching. This article contributes to the limited, but fundamental research in this area by examining how the geographic diversity of EBs affects research papers' diversity in terms of first author's country of origin, country of data collection, and research approach. Our results offer six interrelated contributions to this line of inquiry at two different levels of analysis: descriptive and theoretical.

First, at a descriptive level, we found that the central core of the world system of knowledge production (especially the United States and Western Europe) significantly dominates EBs, which might suggest that their expectations, agendas, and perspectives are crucial to shaping communication theory, research, and teaching. Therefore, the role of EBs as gatekeepers of knowledge is fundamentally rooted in central Western understandings of science, shaping the content and morphology of leading communication journals. If the Global North rules most EBs in communication sciences, the
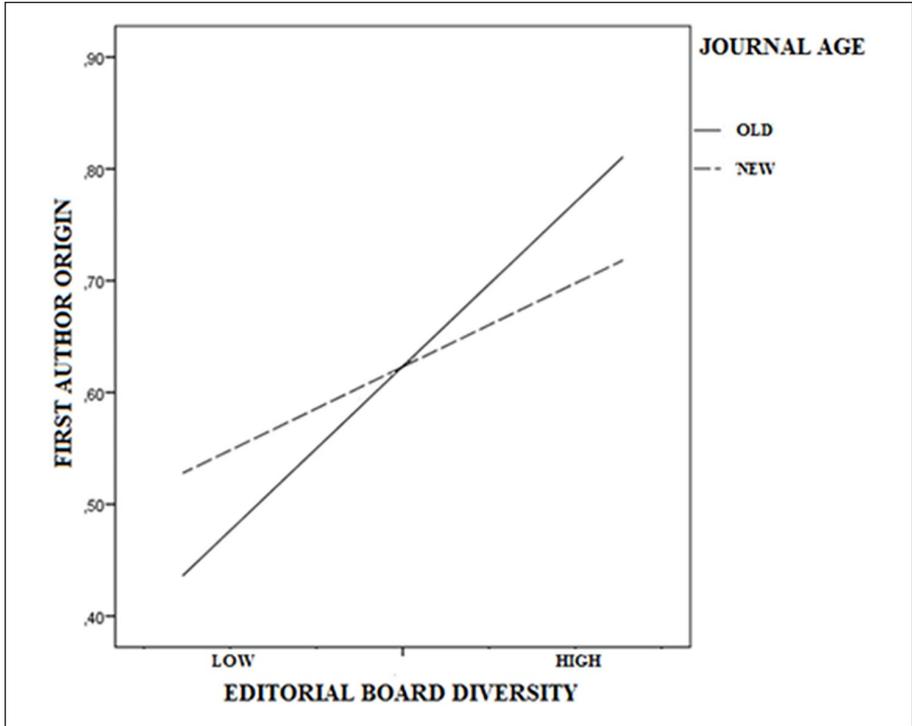
Figure 2. The interaction term of founding year of the publication on the relationship between editorial board diversity and first author's country of origin diversity.

opposite could be said for the Global South, which represents a tiny fraction of the composition of EBs, first author's country of origin, and the country of data collection. In this regard, our results clearly demonstrate that peripheral Global South regions are almost invisible, suggesting that their power to challenge or modify existing theories and research approaches in communication is currently very limited.

Second, our results first empirically demonstrate that, in terms of the business case for diversity (Robinson & Dechant, 1997), EB geographic plurality matters, at least in promoting journals' research output. Therefore, journals with EBs composed of members from a variety of regions are more likely to publish diverse research papers in terms of first author's country of origin and the country of data collection, but not in terms of the research approach. Despite the fact that our results partially confirmed our general theoretical assumption, our descriptive results did show marked differences between Global North and South, suggesting that the evolution of top-tier communication journals is at different stages and progressing at different speeds. To this regard, as previous studies on different fields of sciences have demonstrated (Burgess & Shaw, 2010; Willet, 2013), EBs and the production force in communication sciences are still ruled by a handful of Western regions (Goyanes, 2019).
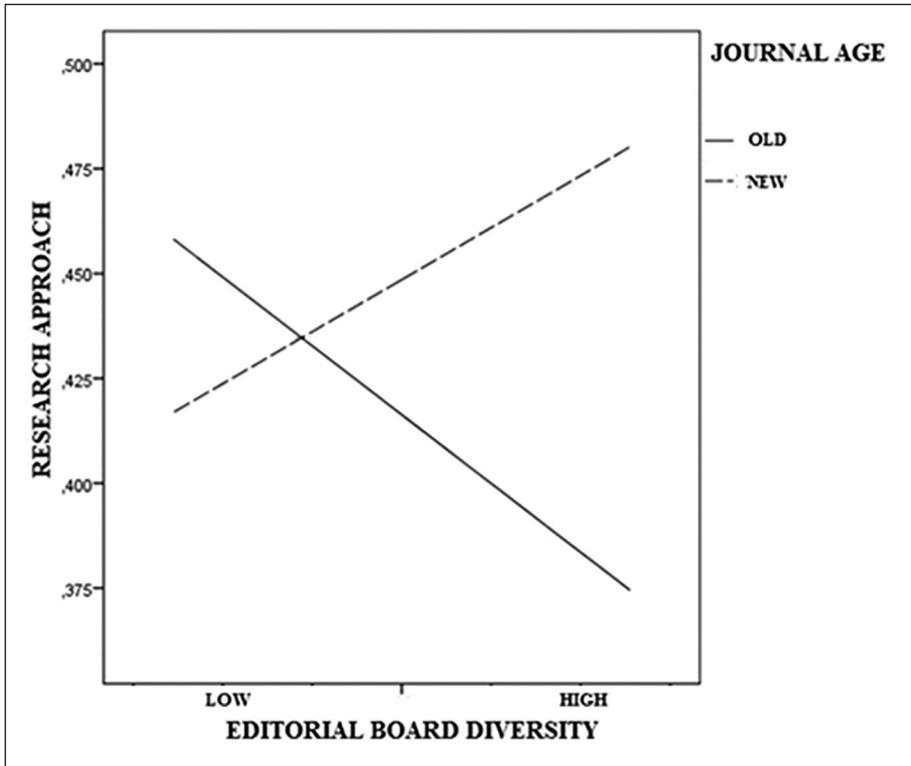
Figure 3. The interaction term of founding year of the publication on the relationship between editorial board diversity and research approach diversity.

It is interesting, however, that EB diversity correlates with authorship and country of data diversity, but not with research approach diversity. Therefore, it can be assumed that a more diverse EB would not result in a more diverse discipline in terms of research approaches. Still, it can be argued that a more developed geographical diversity is crucial for at least two reasons. First, a more diverse pool of authors and a more diverse EB serve the aims of de-Westernization (Waisbord, 2019); thus, increasing research approach diversity is very important, but not the only goal of de-Westernization. Second, we can also hypothesize that, at this stage of decentralization, more peripheral scholars are trying to use mainstream Western approaches to be published in established periodicals. Thus, a more significant de-Westernization of research approaches will be a later result of other fields of decentralization such as the de-Westernization of EB, country of data, and authorship. This assumption is reinforced by a recent paper stating that peripheral regions are more likely to either submit papers without the appropriate theoretical framework or using mainstream Western theories (Ang et al., 2019). In addition, peripheral authors, most typically, try to use Western theories on peripheral communities as well. Thus, we might suppose that research

approach diversity needs significantly more time to develop than other types of diversity such as EB diversity or the diversity of authorship.

Third, we predicted (H2) a positive association between IF and (a) first author's country of origin diversity, (b) country of data collection diversity, and (c) a negative association with approach diversity. Our results indicated that only the third relationship, that is, H2c, was statically significant, partially supporting our predictions. Therefore, journals with a higher IF are more oriented toward specific research approaches, both quantitative and qualitative, and neglect as a consequence many other cultural, critical, postcolonial, and—in general—theoretical and empirical views on communication research development (including mixed-methods research). These findings show that, despite the privileged position of leading journals to promote change, this transformation is not effective in research outcomes when it comes to our third dependent variables. In this regard, our findings indicate that leading journals are still very focused on specific research approaches, neglecting other orientations, and generally authored by Global North scholars.

Fourth, we empirically show the key role that the founding year of the publication plays in predicting the diversity of the country of data collection. In this particular case, it could be said that contemporary journals are aligned with the social diversity demands of our times and seek to offer equal opportunities across different geographic groups (Dhanani & Jones, 2017), thus encouraging intellectual openness and innovative thinking (Parker, 2007). Specifically, recently founded journals are more likely to publish diverse research papers in terms of the country of data collection. However, the relationship is not statistically significant for both the first author's country of origin and the research approach. This misalignment or gap between old journals and the country of data collection diversity might be explained by the hierarchical and traditional structures that govern their scientific strategies and research decisions, in which change processes might require time and, especially, good reasons (such as those which we are offering) to implement such transformations.

Fifth, when journals were founded mattered when explaining the relationship between EB diversity and the diversity of both first author's country of origin and research approaches. On one hand, the more diverse the EB, the greater the diversity in first author's country of origin. However, the effect is more pronounced in older journals. Older journals benefit the most from increased EB diversity, at least when explaining first author's country of origin diversity. This may be because such older journals have adapted their editorial policies in recent times to include more geographically open boards, which in turn significantly (and positively) affects their research output in terms of first author's country of origin.

On the other hand, we also show how journals' year of foundation acts as a cleaved transverse moderator (Holbert & Park, 2019). In this sense, the relationship between EBs' diversity and research approach diversity is positive in recently founded journals but negative in older ones. The reason for this counterintuitive finding, particularly when it comes to older journals, may be that, although many EB members of older periodicals come from different geographical areas, they may share a common approach to research practice, influencing the journal research

output. This may be due to interlocking editorship (the same scholars appointed to multiple EBs) and the practice in older journals of establishing a traditional invisible college made up of geographically diverse members but holding a common approach to science development.

Sixth, journals published on behalf of an academic association (most of them United States based) are less willing to consider both non-U.S. first authors and countries of data collection outside the United States, suggesting that their national expectations and research priorities govern the research output of such journals, whereas only one publisher (Wiley), compared with Sage, is more likely to include diverse data collection. This last finding might be due to two fundamental reasons: (a) the topics, approaches, and issues covered by Wiley journals (pooled sample), or (b) simply because this publishing house, with respect to Sage, is taking action, pressuring editors to turn communication studies in a more diverse, pluralistic area. We should mention that, compared with the other publishing houses, Wiley publishes a relatively limited number of journals which makes the comparison dubious. However, it is more likely that a limited number of journals would go together with less diversity, but this is not the case with Wiley. Thus, the more plausible explanation could be that Wiley strategically endorses diversity in its communication journals, or, in other words, it is more likely that Wiley's journals will have higher diversity indices than others.

In conclusion, the central theoretical implications emanating from the observations made in this article include (a) the key role of EBs in shaping journals' research output and (b) the need for promoting diversity and stimulating openness and plurality in EBs to trigger a correspondingly pluralistic orientation toward science.

Limitations and Future Studies

Several limitations of this analysis are noteworthy. First, we use the JCR list to measure the effects of EB diversity on journals' research output. Despite the fact that this index is the most influential in the assessment of both universities' and scholars' records of publications (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013), other rankings (such as the Scopus SJR) might be more inclusive. This is probably one reason why the analysis reveals such a strong dominance of Western scholars. The JCR is frequently criticized for its perceived bias in favor of the English language, trending (Western) topics, and quantitative approaches (Delgado & Repiso, 2013), as the JCR is frequently used as academic currency in the Western world (Bauder et al., 2017). Therefore, future studies might replicate this research based on other more diverse rankings, taking other international journals into account.

Second, the academic affiliations of EB members are considered to be an indication of their countries of residence. Therefore, this article takes their place of work to be their nationality. However, there are many scholars with a very international background, meaning that their country of origin might not be aligned with their country of residence.

Third, EB's gatekeeping role is only valid when board members are heavily involved in the review process, and not in the case of nominal EBs where board

members are not actively involved in reviewing. However, even in these cases, EB diversity can also encourage diverse submissions.

Fourth, we decided to code only the origin of the first author and we only coded the variable "country of data collection" for single-nation studies, whereas all the comparative studies were assigned to a single category called "multinational." This measurement may challenge the increasing relevance of multiple authorship as well as collaborative and comparative research. However, first, author order is considered to be an important factor when assessing academic reputation in general and publication output in particular (Du Jian, 2013). It has also been found that the level of participation is highest for first authors (Baerlocher et al., 2007). Thus, first authors have the most significant roles when analyzing research diversity. Notwithstanding, coding the geographical positions of all the contributing authors and coding each country for comparative studies would have made the analysis more complex. Future studies could also code multiple authorships. Second, regarding the country of data collection, we used the category "multinational" which referred to research papers dealing with more than one geographical location. This allowed us to include comparative studies, but future studies might extend the research by analyzing the geographic diversity of multinational research papers as well.

Finally, data for this study are correlational, precluding us to identify with certainty a causal relation between EB diversity and research output. More robust causal claims would be warranted by experimental data and more work is needed to draw causal inferences with greater confidence. Thus, the relationships theorized in this article should be interpreted with caution. However, extant research has shown the crucial role of EBs in determining what is published (Metz et al., 2016), and therefore a potential causal association is presumable.

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Supplemental Material

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