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NON-UNITED STATES-BASED AUTHORS PUBLISHING IN THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this descriptive study was to characterize the contribution of non-United States-based first authors in the International Journal of Self-Directed Learning for volumes 1 through 19 (period 2004-2019). The findings indicate that approximately one-fifth of all published articles ($n = 33$) had first authors from organizations outside of the United States, and this rate has not varied over time. These articles have been cited 688 times in the extant literature.

KEYWORDS: self-directed learning, international authors, citation count

1. INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in 2004, the International Journal of Self-Directed Learning (IJSDL) has published a total of 156 articles, and 33 [1]–[33] of these articles had first authors from organizations outside of the United States. For the purposes of this article, such authors will be referred to as “non-United States-based” (NUSB) rather than “non-United States” as the focus is on their place of work rather than their citizenship.

In 1986, Long created an international symposium related to the study of self-directed learning [34]. Prior to 2004, symposium papers were published in an edited compendium; however, in 2004, the IJSDL was created to better satisfy the publishing needs of contributing academicians, and the compendium ceased to be published [35].

In 2005, the International Society for Self-Directed Learning was founded with the following vision:

The International Society for Self-Directed Learning (ISSDL) is dedicated to the promotion of self-directed lifelong learning and to the encouragement and dissemination of continued research on self-directed learning both within and outside of institutional contexts: in childhood education, higher education, adult education, training and human resource development, as well as formal and informal contexts. ([36], para. 2)

The ISSDL is based in the United States and continues to annually organize the International Self-Directed Learning Symposium that is typically held in the state of Florida. The 36th symposium was held February 8–11, 2023 and had participants from not only the United States but also Brazil, Finland, Japan, Lithuania, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, and The Netherlands [36].

The IJSDL (published by ISSDL) “is a refereed, electronic journal founded to disseminate scholarly papers that document research, theory, or innovative or exemplary practice [and] ... is published twice annually” ([37], para. 2). As the IJSDL publishes one volume per year (two issues per volume), it has published an average of 8.2 articles per year since its inception. As an explicitly “international” journal, the IJSDL serves as a global outlet for studies related to self-directed learning; thus, the purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which this has occurred.

In order to characterize the international aspect of the IJSDL, the contribution of NUSB first authors to the total journal output will be presented. The focus is on first authors (who are sole authors for articles without coauthors) as they exert the greatest influence over the published work with studies often occurring in their work countries. Citation data will also be presented to characterize the impact of articles written by NUSB first authors (referred to as “NUSB articles”).

2. METHOD

All IJSDL volumes are available in the public domain [38]. For each published article, biographical information is included for each author; thus, this information was reviewed to identify articles with NUSB authors and their associated countries. To determine citation count, the entire citation as per the References section entry was entered for a search query using [google.com/scholar](https://scholar.google.com).

3. FINDINGS

For each IJSDL volume, Table 1 presents the total number of published articles, the number of NUSB articles, the NUSB first author countries, and the percentage of NUSB articles. Percentages ranged from zero (volumes 10 and 18) to 50% (volume 11). For the 19-year period (2004–2019), 21.1% (33/156) of all published articles had a NUSB first author. The correlation between volume number and number of articles with a NUSB first author is nonsignificant, $r = -.160$, $p = .512$ (two-tailed), as is the correlation between volume number and percentage of NUSB articles, $r = .178$, $p = .466$ (two-tailed); thus, neither the number nor percentage of NUSB articles have varied significantly over time.

Table 1: Percentage of NUSB articles by volume

<i>Volume Number (Year)</i>	<i>Articles, N</i>	<i>NUSB Articles, n</i>	<i>Countries of NUSB First Author</i>	<i>P (n/N)</i>
1 (2004)	14	1	Canada [20]	7.1%
2 (2005)	14	2	China [22], [23]	14.3%
3 (2006)	10	1	Portugal [27]	10.0%
4 (2007)	10	2	Australia [6]; Malaysia [21]	20.0%
5 (2008)	10	2	Italy [2]; Malaysia [12]	20.0%
6 (2009)	10	2	Canada [4], [30]	20.0%
7 (2010)	9	3	Canada [19]; Malaysia [25]; Portugal [26]	33.3%
8 (2011)	9	1	France [8]	11.1%
9 (2012)	8	3	France [7], [16]; South Africa [29]	37.5%
10 (2013)	6	0		0.0%
11 (2014)	8	4	Canada [24], [32]; France [10]; Latvia [31]	50.0%
12 (2015)	8	2	Japan [1]; South Africa [13]	25.0%
13 (2016)	6	2	France [5]; Sweden [33]	33.3%
14 (2017)	9	3	Canada [15]; Japan [11]; Switzerland [28]	33.3%
15 (2018)	5	1	Canada [3]	20.0%

16 (2019)	5	2	Egypt [14]; Netherlands [18]	40.0%
17 (2020)	7	1	China [9]	14.3%
18 (2021)	3	0		0.0%
19 (2022)	5	1	Turkey [17]	20.0%

For each NUSB article country, Table 2 presents the number of NUSB articles with associated citations. Canada is the country represented the most with eight published articles; France is second with five.

Table 2: NUSB articles by country (decreasing and alphabetical order)

<i>Country of NUSB First Author</i>	<i>NUSB Articles, n</i>	<i>NUSB Articles</i>
Canada	8	[3], [4], [15], [19], [20], [24], [30], [32]
France	5	[5], [7], [8], [10], [16]
China (includes Taiwan)	3	[9], [22], [23]
Malaysia	3	[12], [21], [25]
Japan	2	[1], [11]
Portugal	2	[26], [27]
South Africa	2	[13], [29]
Australia	1	[6]
Egypt	1	[14]
Italy	1	[2]

Latvia	1	[31]
Netherlands	1	[18]
Sweden	1	[33]
Switzerland	1	[28]
Turkey	1	[17]

Table 3 presents the citation count for each of the 33 NUSB articles. There was a total of 688 citations for all NUSB articles with $M = 20.8$ and $Mdn = 7.0$ citations per article. Note that article [19] had the most citations with 259 followed by article [27] with 74 citations. Due to the skewed distribution, the median citation count (7.0) is quite a bit lower than the mean (20.8).

Table 3: NUSB article citation count

<i>NUSB Article</i>	<i>Citation Count</i>
[1]	6
[2]	8
[3]	2
[4]	61
[5]	9
[6]	6
[7]	7
[8]	0
[9]	2
[10]	59
[11]	36
[12]	0

[13]	13
[14]	0
[15]	6
[16]	19
[17]	0
[18]	3
[19]	259
[20]	9
[21]	0
[22]	11
[23]	0
[24]	7
[25]	21
[26]	23
[27]	74
[28]	29
[29]	6
[30]	0
[31]	7
[32]	2
[33]	3

Note. Citation count via google.com/scholar conducted on February 18, 2023

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Self-directed learning continues to be a prominent avenue for scholarship outside of the United States (e.g., [39]). As such, the IJSDL serves as an opportunity for scholars to share their research and perspectives to the global community. Since the journal's inception in 2004, first authors from non-United States organizations have published 33 articles representing approximately one-fifth of all published works, and these articles have been cited 688 times in the extant literature. The findings from this study suggest that the IJSDL serves as a relevant outlet for non-United States-based authors thereby supporting its international focus and has impacted the larger intellectual community via its cited works. Hopefully this trend will continue for many years to come.

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