

## Article

# Trends of Top IS Research by Region, Outlet, and Emergence: A Semi-Automated Literature Review

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**Abstract:** Global trends towards the rapidly increasing use of information systems (IS) apply to the IS research domain and related publications. Nonetheless, investigations of trends in publication behavior and emergence as well as changes in IS research are usually narrowly focused. This article contributes to the growing number of articles published in the IS domain by analyzing the evolution of trends and major research fields as well as the regional distribution of publications in the AIS Senior Scholars' Basket of Eight (AIS Bo8) and the International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS), changes in publication behavior, and the emergence of as well as changes to IS research fields and trends. Our semi-automated literature review integrates scientific methods to support the review and classification of publications. Based on 6692 articles published in the ICIS proceedings and the AIS Bo8 journals in a period of 16 years, we elaborate the key characteristics of research development. Our contribution provides and interprets a contemporaneous account of contextual factors influencing the IS research domain. Thus, our study enhances understanding of the development of the IS research domain.

**Keywords:** global information systems research; research trends; research field; (semi-) automated literature review; latent semantic indexing



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## 1. Introduction

The Association for Information Systems (AIS) states that “the history of any academic field plays an important role in shaping the field’s present state and giving the field its unique identity. [ . . . ] It is important for all involved to study its past to understand its present, and to guide” [1] and bridge it to its possible future [2]. Ref. [3], who analyzed temporal trends in four top information systems (IS) journals and identified emergent themes that have begun to gain prominence in the IS research domain encourage other researchers to broaden their conversation by including a broader set of journals. Motivated by these statements and the need to avoid focusing solely on journals and research themes, our research paper focuses on shifts in research behavior and the development of the IS research domain, including geographical distinctions, differences in research fields, and trends in research fields and outlets (journals and conferences) to “provide important input in setting directions for future research” [4] (p. xiii).

Scientific articles in the IS domain have gained increasing interest along with the rapid growth of published articles over the last several decades [5–8]. A representative example of the rising number of articles is the ICIS, where the number of the overall publications increased from 94 articles in the year 2000 to 345 in 2015 [9]. Given the variety of topics and the interdisciplinarity of the IS research domain, multiple research choices exist. The sheer dynamism of IS and information technologies (IT), the variety of topics and the interdisciplinarity of the IS research domain offer a broad range of areas for investigation.