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# A bibliometric analysis of the editorial boards of ophthalmology journals in Türkiye: Academic productivity, institutional affiliations, gender distributions, subspecialties, and geographical distributions

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** This research examines the current status of nine ophthalmology journals in Türkiye by analyzing their editorial and advisory boards in terms of gender representation, geographical distributions, academic seniority, and subspecialty areas.

**Methods:** This study examined the editorial and advisory boards of nine Turkish ophthalmology journals by analyzing demographic profiles and publication records obtained from institutional websites and bibliometric databases, National Institutes of Health iCite, and Dimensions.ai. Information regarding the subspecialties of Turkish academics was sourced from the Turkish Ophthalmological Association website. The iCite data provided metrics such as total publications, publications per year, total citations, citations per year, and relative citation ratio (RCR), while the dimensions database yielded complementary metrics, including total publications, total citations, mean citations per publication, field citation ratio, RCR, and percentage of cited publications.

**Results:** Professors constituted the majority (75.66%) of the 393 editors and advisory board members, and 37.25% were women. Geographically, 87.25% of editors were based in Türkiye, with major concentrations in Ankara (31.61%), Istanbul (21.47%), and Izmir (13.12%). Institutional analysis demonstrated diverse affiliations, with independent and private practice physicians constituting 8.10% (n=40) of the members, followed by physicians affiliated with private hospitals at 6.48% (n=32). Performance metrics from the iCite and dimensions databases identified the Turkish Journal of Ophthalmology as the leading body, with 88.71±84.5 publications, 2108.92±3046.14 citations, and an RCR of 1.24±0.86.

**Conclusion:** Enhancing the global impact of Turkish ophthalmology journals involves increasing transparency in editorial selection, promoting gender-balanced representation, fostering international collaboration, and addressing regional disparities through strategic diversity initiatives.

**Keywords:** Academic titles; bibliometric analysis; citation metrics; editorial boards; gender distribution; geographical distribution; ophthalmology journals.



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The editorial boards of scientific journals are highly important bodies that ensure quality control in academic publishing and determine publication policies. The composition of editorial boards directly affects journals' scientific quality and impact.<sup>[1]</sup> The academic profiles, institutional affiliations, and demographic characteristics of editorial board members thus represent important indicators for understanding the ecosystem of scientific publishing.

Journals in the field of general clinical ophthalmology serve as vital platforms for disseminating advances in the diagnosis, management, and treatment of eye diseases. These peer-reviewed publications not only provide a repository of cutting-edge research but also play an important role in shaping ophthalmologists' academic and professional trajectories.<sup>[2,3]</sup> These journals also contribute to the improvement of clinical standards and the overall progression of ophthalmology as a discipline by promoting evidence-based practice and a culture of continuous learning.

Ophthalmology journals in Türkiye play a crucial role in publishing and disseminating scientific studies in the field of eye diseases. They facilitate the sharing of academic knowledge in ophthalmology and also contribute to raising scientific standards. Editorial boards determine the publication quality of these journals and the scientific management of the processes involved. The demographic structure of these boards is of great importance to understanding journals' scientific impact and publication policies.<sup>[4]</sup>

The question of gender distributions in editorial boards has become an important research topic in academic publishing. Global analysis has shown that women are under-represented on the editorial boards of ophthalmology journals.<sup>[5]</sup> The under-representation of women in these influential positions not only reflects broader societal inequalities but also perpetuates systemic biases within the academic ecosystem. Gender inequalities in editorial boards can affect the diversity of perspectives in decision-making processes and potentially influence the selection of research topics, peer review practices, and publication outcomes.

Institutional affiliations and geographical distributions play an important role in shaping the academic ecosystem. Geographical proximity enhances the intensity and frequency of scientific collaboration, thereby strengthening the impact of research outputs.<sup>[6]</sup> Institutional prestige increases the likelihood of being published in high-impact journals.<sup>[7]</sup> These factors directly affect academic productivity and scientific communication, playing a

critical role in determining research quality and visibility. International collaboration and institutional connections are of considerable strategic importance to enhancing scientific productivity and integration into global academic networks for researchers in developing countries.

Bibliometric analysis tools play a crucial role in evaluating scientific impact and monitoring academic communications. The dimension database provides researchers with comprehensive data analysis capabilities by integrating a wide range of academic resources, including publications, grants, patents, clinical trials, and policy documents.<sup>[7]</sup> Its advanced search features and user-friendly interface mean that researchers can easily examine complex datasets and identify emerging trends and key contributors. Similarly, the iCite platform facilitates a more accurate assessment of scientific impact by providing comprehensive citation metrics and impact indicators for biomedical publications.<sup>[8]</sup> Innovative features such as the relative citation ratio (RCR), which normalizes citation rates for a specific field and time period, facilitate the comparison of scientific impacts across different research domains.

Focusing solely on quantitative criteria (such as publication and citation counts) is not by itself sufficient for the evaluation of scientific research. A comprehensive assessment requires consideration of various qualitative factors, including academic title, institutional affiliation, geographical location, academic background, and subspecialty areas. The Leiden Manifesto serves as an important guide in this regard, recommending that qualitative indicators should also be taken into account in research evaluation.<sup>[9]</sup> Accordingly, the combined use of quantitative and qualitative indicators in scientific assessments enables a more comprehensive and equitable evaluation of the scientific contributions of researchers and institutions.

This study examined the current academic ecosystem of Turkish ophthalmology publishing via a multidimensional analysis of the editorial boards of relevant journals published in Türkiye. Indicators of academic productivity, institutional affiliations, geographical distributions, academic titles, and the gender distributions of editors and advisors were examined. The findings obtained will contribute to the development of strategies aimed at enhancing academic productivity, promoting diversity, and strengthening institutional collaboration.

## Materials and Methods

This study analyzed the editorial compositions and academic contributions of nine ophthalmology journals published in

Türkiye; Archives of Ophthalmological Research, Beyoğlu Eye Journal, Current Retina Journal, Journal of Glaucoma and Cataract, European Eye Research, MN Ophthalmology, Retina-vitreus, Turkish Journal of Ophthalmology, Türkiye Klinikleri Journal of Ophthalmology. The selection criteria for these journals were as follows: All active ophthalmology journals published in Türkiye and indexed in Web of Science (WOS), Scopus, total return index, and other national and international indexes were included in the study. The journals included in the study were selected from among those that were actively publishing, with publicly available editorial and/or advisory board information, and that had been regularly publishing articles for at least 1 year. Data were collected from December 1 to 31, 2024

The first step involved identifying these journals' editorial teams. Information regarding the chief editors, editors, assistant editors, and members of the scientific advisory boards were systematically collected from each journal's official website. Several demographic parameters were analyzed for each identified academic, including titles (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or specialist physician), gender distribution, geographical location (city of practice), and institutional affiliations (universities, private clinics, public hospitals, or international institutions). Information regarding the subspecialties of Turkish academics was obtained from the Turkish Ophthalmological Association website.

Based on this comprehensive data collection, this study employed a hierarchical approach to analyze the editorial structures of the journals, systematically categorizing leadership roles into three principal groups: (1) Editor-in-Chief/Co-Editor, (2) Associate Editor, and (3) Editorial or Advisory Board members. This classification was necessitated by the observed variation in editorial organization across journals. While some journals appoint an editor-in-chief, others designate co-editors; similarly, certain journals maintain an editorial board, whereas others have an advisory board. By consolidating these roles into three overarching categories, the study ensured a consistent and comprehensive evaluation of editorial governance, accommodating the structural differences present among the journals.

The identified individuals' academic publication records were next analyzed to evaluate their scholarly contributions and impact. Two widely recognized online databases were employed for this comprehensive bibliometric analysis, the National Institutes of Health iCite<sup>[10]</sup> and Dimensions. ai.<sup>[11]</sup> Five key bibliometric parameters were examined

using iCite, total publications, publications per year, total citations, citations per year, and RCR. The Dimensions database provided complementary metrics, including total publications, total citations, mean citations per publication, field citation ratio (FCR), RCR, and percentage of cited publications.

Since the data used in the study were obtained from publicly available sources, ethical approval was not required. The study adhered to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, ensuring that all data collection and analysis processes were conducted ethically and with respect for the rights and privacy of the individuals involved. The data collection and analysis were conducted systematically and independently verified by two researchers in order to ensure the inter-rater reliability and accuracy of the findings.

The analysis employed descriptive statistics, percentage distributions, and bibliometric indicators to characterize both the demographic composition and academic impact profiles of editorial board members.

## Results

All journals are indexed in Tübitak/Ulakbim except for Archives of ophthalmological research. The Turkish Journal of Ophthalmology is the only one of these journals indexed in WOS. In addition, the Turkish Journal of Ophthalmology Journal of Retina-vitreus Beyoğlu Eye Journal are indexed in Scopus, while PubMed/MEDLINE indexes both the Turkish journal of ophthalmology and Beyoglu eye journal.

The editorial structures of the nine ophthalmology journals revealed a total of 502 editorial board positions, which were held by 434 ophthalmologists. Closer examination showed that 378 ophthalmologists served on the editorial board of only one journal, while 43 individuals held positions on the editorial boards of two different journals. In addition, 10 ophthalmologists were members of three different editorial boards, and three academics served simultaneously on the editorial boards of four distinct journals. Ophthalmologists whose credentials could not be reliably verified were excluded from the study.

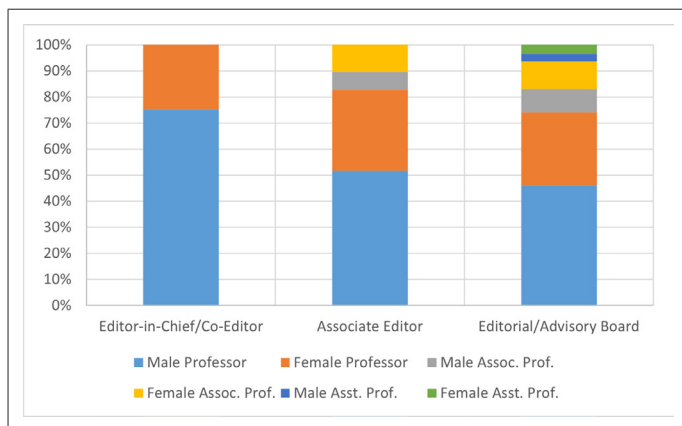
The composition and distribution of editorial positions revealed distinct patterns across different hierarchical levels. Among editor-in-chief and co-editor positions, all members (100%) held full professorial titles, with a gender distribution of 25% female and 75% male representatives. For associate editor positions, the academic ranking revealed a predominance of full professors (82.76%), followed by associate professors (17.24%), with no assistant professors represented. The gender

distribution among associate editors exhibited 41.38% female and 58.62% male representation. In terms of the editorial/advisory board category, the distribution revealed 74.19% full professors, 19.52% associate professors, and 6.29% assistant professors, with an overall gender composition of 42.08% women and 57.92% men (Fig. 1).

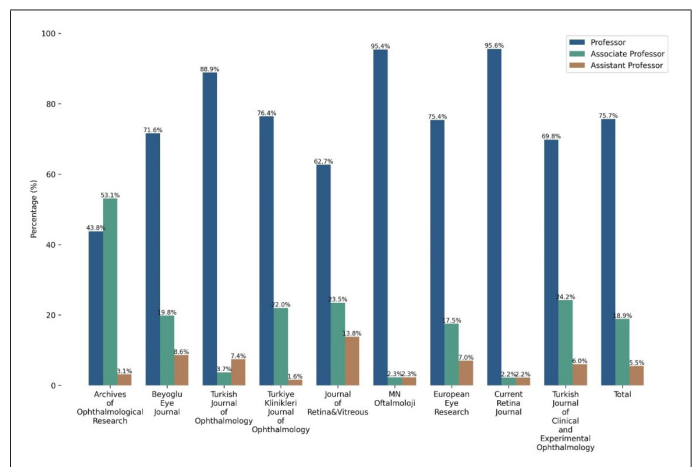
In the gender distribution of editors, only MN Ophthalmology was leading in terms of female representation. Regarding academic ranks, the majority of editorial positions were held by full professors, with Türkiye Klinikleri Ophthalmology journal exhibiting the highest concentration of senior academics (Fig. 2). The academic positions, gender demographics, and editorial structures of the nine Turkish ophthalmology journals are summarized in Table 1.

The geographical distribution of editorial and advisory board members demonstrated clear national trends. The vast majority of editors were based in Türkiye, with only a small proportion representing other countries. While a few journals maintained exclusively domestic editorial boards, others included a more diverse international presence. Notably, participation from countries outside Türkiye remained limited overall (Table 2). Three major metropolitan areas – Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir – emerged as the primary centers of editorial leadership, reflecting the established academic infrastructure in these cities.

The bibliometric analysis of Turkish ophthalmology journals, utilizing both the iCite and dimensions databases, revealed a clear stratification in academic performance and influence across the field. According to iCite data,



**Fig. 1.** The distribution of academic ranks and gender across editorial positions (Editor-in-chief/co-editor, associate editor, and editorial/advisory board) in Turkish ophthalmological journals. Each bar represents the proportion of male and female members within each academic rank for the specified editorial role. The slash (/) in position titles indicates alternative naming conventions used by different journals. Percentages are calculated within each editorial position.



**Fig. 2.** Distributions of academic titles across ophthalmology journals. The bar chart illustrates the percentage distribution of professors, associate professors, and assistant professors/specialist physicians across nine ophthalmology journals and the overall total.

the Turkish journal of ophthalmology consistently demonstrated the highest level of academic impact ( $88.71 \pm 84.5$  publications,  $2108.92 \pm 3046.14$  citations, RCR:  $1.24 \pm 0.86$ ) among all nine journals analyzed. This journal led in key metrics such as publication output and citation rates, establishing itself as the most influential publication in the field. The journal of Retina and Vitreous also performed strongly, closely following the leader in most performance indicators. Other journals, including the Beyoğlu eye journal and European eye research, exhibited more moderate levels of impact, while MN Ophthalmology and Türkiye Klinikleri Journal of Ophthalmology exhibited developing performance patterns, characteristic of newer or more specialized publications. Editorial/Advisory Board members had noticeably higher publication and citation counts compared to other editorial positions. However, the high standard deviations observed in this group ( $\pm 1125.24$  for publications and  $\pm 16505.03$  for citations) indicate considerable variability among members. When comparing associate editors with editor-in-chief/co-editors, associate editors exhibited slightly higher metrics, with more publications ( $63.48 \pm 46.23$  vs.  $54.42 \pm 46.25$ ) and higher numbers of publications per year ( $3.35 \pm 1.98$  vs.  $2.74 \pm 1.76$ ). Editor-in-chief/co-editors exhibited higher total citations ( $904.58 \pm 1555.69$  vs.  $712.62 \pm 608.19$ ) (Table 3).

The dimensions database further supported these findings, highlighting considerable variation in bibliometric performance among the journals. The Turkish Journal of Ophthalmology again stood out with the highest mean numbers of publications and citations, as well as the strongest

**Table 1.** Academic position, gender demographics, and editorial structure of Turkish ophthalmology journals' editorial board members

| Turkish ophthalmologic academic journals                   | Professor   | Associate professor | Assistant professor/specialist | Female      | Male        |
|--|-------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
|  | n (%)       | n (%)               | n (%)                          | n (%)       | n (%)       |
| Archives of ophthalmological research                      | 13 (41.94)  | 17 (54.84)          | 1 (3.23)                       | 11 (35.48)  | 20 (64.52)  |
| Beyoğlu eye journal  | 58 (69.88)  | 16 (19.28)          | 9 (10.84)                      | 40 (48.19)  | 43 (51.81)  |
| Turkish journal of ophthalmology                           | 25 (89.29)  | 1 (3.57)            | 2 (7.14)                       | 13 (46.43)  | 15 (53.57)  |
| Türkiye Klinikleri journal of ophthalmology                | 94 (76.42)  | 27 (21.95)          | 2 (1.63)                       | 55 (44.72)  | 68 (55.28)  |
| Journal of Retina and Vitreous                             | 34 (62.96)  | 13 (24.07)          | 7 (12.96)                      | 12 (22.22)  | 42 (77.78)  |
| MN ophthalmology   | 43 (95.56)  | 1 (2.22)            | 1 (2.22)                       | 24 (53.33)  | 21 (46.67)  |
| European eye research                                      | 43 (75.44)  | 10 (17.54)          | 4 (7.02)                       | 25 (43.86)  | 32 (56.14)  |
| Current retina journal                                     | 43 (95.56)  | 1 (2.22)            | 1 (2.22)                       | 11 (24.44)  | 34 (75.56)  |
| Turkish journal of clinical and experimental ophthalmology | 25 (69.44)  | 9 (25)              | 2 (5.56)                       | 18 (50)     | 18 (50)     |
| Editorial structure  |             |                     |                                |             |             |
| Editor-in-chief/co-editor                                  | 12 (100)    | 0 (0)               | 0 (0)                          | 3 (25)      | 9 (75)      |
| Associate editor   | 24 (82.76)  | 5 (17.24)           | 0 (0)                          | 12 (41.38)  | 17 (58.62)  |
| Editorial/advisory board                                   | 342 (74.19) | 90 (19.52)          | 29 (6.29)                      | 194 (42.08) | 267 (57.92) |
| Total  | 378 (75.3)  | 95 (18.92)          | 29 (5.78)                      | 209 (41.63) | 293 (58.37) |

n: Number, %: Distribution percentage. Data were collected from official journal websites between December 1 and 31, 2024. Percentages are calculated within each journal or editorial structure category. "Assistant Professor/Specialist" includes both assistant professors and specialist physicians without academic titles. Gender distribution is based on publicly available information; in cases of ambiguity, data were cross-checked with institutional profiles. Descriptive statistics were calculated for all metrics (mean±standard deviation)

RC). Second-tier journals, such as the Journal of Retina and Vitreous and European eye research, maintained moderate citation impacts and publication counts. The remaining journals exhibited comparable but lower RCR values, reflecting their emerging status within the academic community. In addition, editors-in-chief and co-editors exhibited strong academic profiles, with an average of 92 publications and 1,391 citations. Similarly, associate editors demonstrated consistent academic performance, with approximately 82 publications and 1,052 citations. In line with the data from the iCite database, Editorial/Advisory Board members displayed greater academic diversity; this group includes both researchers with very high numbers of publications and citations, as well as those with more modest academic outputs (Table 4).

The analysis of ophthalmology subspecialties revealed clear differences in both representation and academic influence. Medical Retina emerged as the most prominent subspecialty among editorial board members, followed by Vitreoretinal surgery and cornea and ocular surface. In contrast, fields such as contact lens and electrodiagnostic were represented

by a smaller proportion of members (Fig. 3).

Despite its limited representation, the contact lens subspecialty was noteworthy for its remarkable academic impact. This field demonstrated the highest levels of publication productivity and citation influence, outperforming other subspecialties in both RCR and FCR. Conversely, areas such as electrodiagnostic and neuro-ophthalmology, while clinically significant, exhibited lower citation metrics, indicating comparatively modest academic influence (Table 5).

## Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the characteristics of the editorial boards and academic productivity of nine ophthalmology journals in Türkiye. The data obtained yield a comprehensive analysis of the journals' publication metrics, citation performances, and international impacts. These results constitute an important basis for understanding the journals' current status and for

**Table 2.** National and international distributions of editorial board members in Turkish ophthalmology journals

| Turkish academic ophthalmological journals                 | Practicing in Türkiye | Practicing outside Türkiye | Total     |
|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
|  | n (%)                 | n (%)                      | n (%)     |
| Archives of ophthalmological research                      | 29 (93.55)            | 2 (6.45)                   | 31 (100)  |
| Beyoğlu eye journal  | 74 (89.16)            | 9 (10.84)                  | 83 (100)  |
| Turkish journal of ophthalmology                           | 22 (78.57)            | 6 (21.43)                  | 28 (100)  |
| Türkiye Klinikleri journal of ophthalmology                | 119 (96.75)           | 4 (3.25)                   | 123 (100) |
| Journal of Retina and Vitreous                             | 37 (68.52)            | 17 (31.48)                 | 54 (100)  |
| MN ophthalmology   | 45 (100)              | 0 (0)                      | 45 (100)  |
| European eye research                                      | 47 (82.46)            | 10 (17.54)                 | 57 (100)  |
| Current retina journal                                     | 40 (88.89)            | 5 (11.11)                  | 45 (100)  |
| Turkish journal of clinical and experimental ophthalmology | 33 (91.67)            | 3 (8.33)                   | 36 (100)  |

n: Number, %: Distribution percentage. Data were collected from official journal websites between December 1 and 31, 2024. "Practicing in Turkey" refers to editorial board members whose primary institutional affiliation is within Türkiye at the time of data collection. "Practicing outside Türkiye" refers to editorial board members whose primary institutional affiliation is outside Türkiye. Percentages are calculated within each journal. Editorial board member locations were determined based on publicly available institutional information; in cases of ambiguity. Data were cross-checked with institutional or professional profiles. Descriptive statistics were calculated for all metrics (mean±standard deviation)

**Table 3.** Publication metrics and citation analysis of the editorial and advisory boards and editorial structure of Turkish ophthalmology journals: A bibliometric analysis using the iCite database

| Turkish academic ophthalmological journals                 | Total pubs     | Pubs per year | Total citations   | Cites per year | (RCR)        |
|--|----------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|
|  | Mean±S.D.      | Mean±S.D.     | Mean±S.D.         | Mean±S.D.      | Mean±S.D.    |
| Archives of ophthalmological research                      | 28.23±26.94    | 2.16±1.58     | 250.13±417.25     | 1.13±0.5       | 0.75±0.37    |
| Beyoğlu eye journal  | 46.99±45.78    | 2.91±1.96     | 599.33±1506.67    | 1.53±1.42      | 0.92±0.61    |
| Turkish journal of ophthalmology                           | 88.71±86.07    | 4.18±3.49     | 2108.93±3102.04   | 2.06±1.62      | 1.24±0.88    |
| Türkiye Klinikleri journal of ophthalmology                | 34.81±57.06    | 2.16±2.53     | 415.06±1464.51    | 1.24±1.27      | 0.79±0.67    |
| Journal of Retina and Vitreous                             | 539.26±1848.42 | 55.8±332.95   | 10883.15±47387.05 | 2.53±2.66      | 1.42±1.17    |
| MN ophthalmology   | 34.18±31.22    | 1.91±1.33     | 364.33±359.24     | 1.61±2.57      | 0.97±1.16    |
| European eye research                                      | 57.37±52.16    | 3.11±2.21     | 936.37±1941.43    | 1.52±1.23      | 0.89±0.58    |
| Current retina journal                                     | 37.95±22.56    | 1.97±1.07     | 484.98±706.87     | 1.78±2.81      | 0.97±1.2     |
| Turkish journal of clinical and experimental ophthalmology | 38.83±32.16    | 2.17±1.5      | 447.72±490.63     | 1.46±1.23      | 0.93±0.65    |
| Editorial structure  |                |               |                   |                |              |
| Editor-in-chief/co-editor                                  | 54.42±46.25    | 2.74±1.76     | 904.58±1555.69    | 1.85±1.83      | 1.07±0.89    |
| Associate editor   | 63.48±46.23    | 3.35±1.98     | 712.62±608.19     | 2.15±3.12      | 1.21±1.38    |
| Editorial/advisory board                                   | 186.33±1125.24 | 95.42±934.57  | 1885.45±16505.03  | 88.3±928.21    | 87.69±928.27 |

S.D.: Standard deviation, RCR: Relative citation ratio. Data were collected from iCite Database databases between December 1 and 31, 2024. Total pub: The total number of published articles indexed in the databases. Pubs per year: Average number of publications per year since the first indexed publication. Total citations: The cumulative number of citations received for all publications. Cites per year: Average number of citations received per year. RCR: A field-normalized metric that shows the citation impact of one paper relative to the average paper in its field. Some variations in metrics may be due to differences in journal indexing periods and database coverage. Editorial structure metrics are grouped by editorial position. Descriptive statistics were calculated for all metrics (mean±standard deviation)

shaping their future strategic directions.

Our analysis reveals that professors dominate editorial positions across the hierarchy, particularly at the Editor-

in-Chief level (100%), with their representation gradually decreasing in Associate Editor and Editorial/Advisory Board positions. This pattern indicates that while academic

**Table 4.** Publication metrics and citation analysis of editorial and advisory boards and editorial structure of Turkish ophthalmology journals: A dimensions database analysis

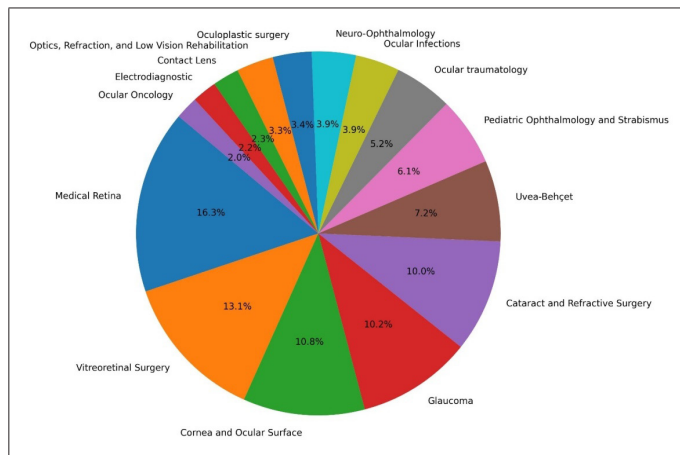
| Turkish academic ophthalmological journals                 | Total pubs     | Total citations | Citations (mean) | FCR            | RCR            | Publications with citations |
|--|----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
|  | Mean±S.D.      | Mean±S.D.       | Mean±S.D.        | Mean±S.D.      | Mean±S.D.      |                             |
| Archives of ophthalmological research                      | 37.2±29.9      | 272.53±284.39   | 11.32±22.93      | 2.24±3.7       | 1.2±1.11       | 72.59±15.48                 |
| Beyoğlu eye journal  | 63.65±52.18    | 647.37±782.98   | 61.85±419.95     | 2.28±5.22      | 2.78±14.78     | 71.04±12.65                 |
| Turkish journal of ophthalmology                           | 123.04±119.07  | 3234.43±4571.34 | 50.58±140.32     | 7.72±22.31     | 2.06±4.64      | 83.37±12.28                 |
| Türkiye Klinikleri journal of ophthalmology                | 60.67±98.3     | 774.37±2460.66  | 12.9±34          | 3.36±11.7      | 0.93±1         | 70.16±15.93                 |
| Journal of Retina and Vitreous                             | 99.65±73.26    | 1451.84±1410.5  | 14.29±9.12       | 2.13±1.15      | 1.27±1.2       | 74.75±15.42                 |
| MN ophthalmology   | 55.4±51.8      | 731.33±905.54   | 12.61±9.44       | 1.67±0.98      | 0.97±1.24      | 72.54±22.33                 |
| European Eye Research                                      | 87.04±75.74    | 1691.79±3069.42 | 15.86±16.59      | 2.12±1.71      | 1.04±0.6       | 74.42±13.74                 |
| Current retina journal                                     | 59.76±29.59    | 681.58±415.29   | 16.32±21.3       | 2.32±3.25      | 1.07±1.34      | 75.1±11.68                  |
| Turkish journal of clinical and experimental ophthalmology | 60.78±37.2     | 771.81±655.5    | 12.15±6.05       | 1.83±0.72      | 0.96±0.51      | 77.88±12.37                 |
| Editorial structure  |                |                 |                  |                |                |                             |
| Editor-in-chief and co-editor                              | 91.92±48.81    | 1391.17±1679.2  | 28.59±38.31      | 5.48±8.11      | 1.52±1.35      | 81.01±15.52                 |
| Associate editor   | 82.45±48.48    | 1051.86±806.36  | 13.21±7.9        | 2±0.76         | 1.26±1.45      | 77.07±11.93                 |
| Editorial/advisory board                                   | 240.54±1300.47 | 1187.65±2517.68 | 210.8±1383.37    | 197.87±1384.55 | 196.28±1384.75 | 266.73±1374.88              |

S.D.: Standard deviation. FCR: Field citation ratio, RCR: Relative citation ratio. Data were collected from the Dimensions database between December 1 and 31, 2024. All values are presented as mean±standard deviation. Total Pubs: The total number of articles published by editorial board members. Total citations: The cumulative number of citations received. Citations (mean): Average number of citations per publication. FCR: A field-normalized citation metric. RCR: A field-normalized metric indicating citation impact. Publications with citations: Percentage of publications that have received at least one citation. Editorial structure metrics are grouped by editorial position

seniority remains a key factor in editorial appointments, there is some diversification at lower editorial levels. Similarly, a previous study from Türkiye by Tutuncu demonstrated that full professors predominate on editorial boards, while young or early-career academics are under-represented.<sup>[12]</sup> Our findings showed that associate and assistant professors are particularly limited in senior editorial positions. This reflects a lack of scientific innovation and diversity in academic publishing.<sup>[13,14]</sup>

Gender disparities were most pronounced at higher editorial levels. Male professors held the majority of Editor-in-Chief and Co-Editor positions, with no associate or assistant professors of either gender occupying these top roles. At the Associate Editor level, male professors continued to outnumber females, although female associate professors had slightly higher representation than their male counterparts. In the Editorial/Advisory Board, male professors remained the majority, although the presence of

women increased among associate and assistant professors. Numerous studies consistently highlight systemic gender inequality in scientific publishing.<sup>[15-17]</sup> In this context, those authors emphasize male dominance in certain fields and teams through concepts such as “men’s clubs” and “male islands.” Similarly, Bransch and Kvasnicka reported that male dominance in editorial boards of top economics journals creates a barrier to female economists in the academic publication process.<sup>[18]</sup> Their findings show that both the likelihood of female authors publishing articles and the number of citations received by articles rise in line with the proportion of female editors. In addition, they noted that the presence of female editors positively affects article quality (as measured by citation counts). On the other hand, Ellemers *et al.* <sup>[19]</sup> highlighted the concept of “Queen Bee Syndrome,” noting that senior female academics who have succeeded in male-dominated academic fields may exhibit greater prejudice against other women.



**Fig. 3.** Distribution of ophthalmology subspecialties represented on the editorial boards of Turkish journals. The pie chart illustrates the proportion of editorial board members across various ophthalmology subspecialties. Including medical retina, vitreoretinal surgery, cornea and ocular surface, glaucoma, cataract and refractive surgery, Uvea-Beheçet, pediatric ophthalmology and strabismus, ocular traumatology, ocular infections, neuro-ophthalmology, oculoplastic surgery, optics, refraction and low vision rehabilitation, contact lens, electrophysiology/diagnostics, and ocular oncology. Each segment represents the percentage of total editorial board positions held by specialists in the respective subspecialty.

This imbalance points to the existence of structural gender-based barriers in accessing academic leadership positions. Amrein *et al.*<sup>[20]</sup> proposed a range of multidimensional strategies to address this issue, including transparent quota systems in editorial processes, mentorship programs for female academics, and ensuring equal access to research resources. Adopting gender-balanced approaches in editorial representation is of critical importance if ophthalmology journals in Turkey are to compete at the level of international standards and enhance their scientific productivity. The development of institutional policies, the establishment of diversity-focused goals by journal management, and the design of training programs to address implicit biases that perpetuate inequality may therefore be recommended.

Editorial boards predominantly consisting of members from Türkiye (87.25%) indicate that these journals primarily rely on local academic networks, with limited international participation. This is particularly apparent in journals such as Türkiye Klinikleri Journal of Ophthalmology (95.12%) and MN ophthalmology (100%), reflecting a national focus and a preference for local researchers. In contrast, journals such as the Turkish journal of ophthalmology (29.63%) and the Journal of Retina and Vitreous (35.29%) attracted higher levels of contributions from abroad. Similarly, Brinn and

Jones examined 60 academic accounting journals (22 from the UK, 13 from the USA, and nine from Australia) and 437 editorial board members, finding that most editorial boards were mainly composed of academics from the journal's country of publication, indicating a strong "home country bias."<sup>[21]</sup> This geographical concentration in editorial leadership is further supported by Csomos comprehensive analysis of 11,915 journals from WOS's SSCI and SCIE databases and 15,795 editors-in-chief, which revealed that editors-in-chief are largely concentrated in the USA (33.90%), demonstrating that country's marked dominance in this field. Those authors also found a strong correlation between the geographical distribution of editors and the origin of publishing houses.<sup>[22]</sup> This indicates a notable lack of global diversity and interdisciplinary collaboration, which may limit these journals' citation impacts and academic interaction potential. In the future, enhancing publication quality and visibility, as well as promoting international collaborations, may be recommended to increase global participation. These steps could enhance the global influence of the journals, enabling them to reach a broader readership.

The geographical and institutional distributions of the editorial boards of ophthalmology journals in Türkiye revealed notable inequalities in academic productivity. Editorial positions are dominated by major metropolitan areas such as Ankara (31.61%), Istanbul (21.47%), and Izmir (13.12%) due to advantages in terms of funding, technological infrastructure, and access to qualified human resources. In contrast, the lack of representation from regions such as Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia points to a grave inequity in access to scientific processes. In addition, while the marked representation of independent practitioners (8.10%) and private hospital physicians (6.48%) ensures a focus on clinical practice but raises the risk of sidelining basic sciences and long-term research. The balance between the historical legacy of traditional state universities (such as Ege, Ankara, and Gazi) and the dynamism of newer institutions such as the University of Health Sciences reflects the transformation in medical education in training. However, the lack of collaboration between these institutions limits the development of interdisciplinary studies. Hodgson's study highlighted a significant "institutional oligopoly" in the editorial structure of economics journals. Their findings show that editorial positions are heavily concentrated in a few prestigious universities, especially elite institutions in the USA (such as Harvard, MIT, Chicago, Yale, Princeton, and Stanford) and leading universities in the UK (including Oxford, Cambridge,

**Table 5.** Turkish ophthalmology association members by subspecialties based on Icite and dimensions databases

| Turkish ophthalmology subspecialty categories     | Icite                   |                          |               | Dimensions          |               |               |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
|   | Pubs per year mean±S.D. | Cites per year mean±S.D. | RCR mean±S.D. | Citations mean±S.D. | FCR mean±S.D. | RCR mean±S.D. |
| Cataract and refractive surgery                   | 2.18±1.37               | 1.06±0.41                | 0.72±0.31     | 12.51±6.87          | 1.83±0.93     | 0.84±0.30     |
| Contact lens                                      | 3.52±3.57               | 1.98±1.58                | 1.23±0.79     | 40.18±181.71        | 6.79±12.61    | 1.79±2.34     |
| Cornea and ocular surface                         | 2.98±2.21               | 1.33±1.00                | 0.87±0.53     | 21.58±44.08         | 3.40±6.85     | 1.25±1.33     |
| Electrodiagnostic                                 | 1.51±0.95               | 1.12±0.53                | 0.69±0.24     | 8.36±3.42           | 1.30±0.45     | 0.74±0.32     |
| Glaucoma  | 2.81±1.84               | 1.32±0.86                | 0.83±0.49     | 15.96±25.72         | 2.49±3.83     | 0.94±0.73     |
| Medical retina                                    | 2.70±2.35               | 1.63±1.90                | 0.95±0.86     | 12.33±7.80          | 1.71±0.67     | 0.96±0.87     |
| Neuro-ophthalmology                               | 1.94±1.27               | 0.98±0.35                | 0.69±0.25     | 7.86±3.66           | 1.59±1.24     | 0.94±1.02     |
| Ocular infections                                 | 4.08±3.19               | 1.80±1.99                | 1.11±0.77     | 24.28±63.77         | 3.63±9.16     | 1.33±1.81     |
| Ocular oncology                                   | 3.39±2.36               | 1.29±0.97                | 0.77±0.48     | 12.64±9.87          | 1.68±1.33     | 0.91±0.62     |
| Ocular traumatology                               | 2.39±1.27               | 1.54±1.81                | 0.88±0.75     | 16.63±29.89         | 2.70±4.74     | 1.01±0.95     |
| Oculoplastic surgery                              | 2.23±1.25               | 1.52±1.95                | 1.02±0.95     | 11.54±9.21          | 1.65±0.74     | 1.13±0.65     |
| Optics. Refraction. and low vision rehabilitation | 2.02±1.16               | 1.24±0.53                | 0.84±0.31     | 11.15±7.34          | 1.70±0.59     | 0.91±0.28     |
| Pediatric ophthalmology and strabismus            | 1.56±0.89               | 1.04±0.60                | 0.73±0.44     | 8.85±5.04           | 1.48±0.66     | 0.87±0.39     |
| Uvea-Behçet                                       | 2.88±1.74               | 2.01±2.45                | 1.13±1.05     | 14.04±10.64         | 1.93±0.67     | 1.21±1.20     |
| Vitreoretinal surgery                             | 2.43±1.3                | 1.99±2.45                | 1.10±1.05     | 13.42±8.33          | 1.83±0.87     | 0.99±0.96     |

S.D.: Standard deviation, FCR: Field citation ratio, RCR: Relative citation ratio. Data were collected from the iCite and Dimensions databases between December 01 and 31, 2024. All values are presented as mean±standard deviation. Pubs per year: Average number of publications per year (Icite). Cites per year: Average number of citations per year (Icite). RCR: A field-normalized metric indicating citation impact (Icite). Citations: Total number of citations (Dimensions). FCR: A field-normalized citation metric (Dimensions). Subspecialty categories were determined based on expertise classifications provided by the Turkish ophthalmological association. Descriptive statistics (mean±SD) were used for all variables

and the London School of Economics). This concentration limits opportunities for researchers from other institutions to access editorial roles and publish their work.<sup>[23]</sup> Lowe's study examined the editorial boards of accounting journals and found that board members were generally selected from more prestigious universities, suggesting the possibility of an "elite" bias in these selections.<sup>[24]</sup> Melhem's study on the editorial boards of international biomedical journals similarly points to the low representation of certain regions and suggests that the homogeneity of editorial boards may influence scientific publication decisions.<sup>[25]</sup> In the light of these findings, we believe that strategic steps aimed at enhancing the diversity of editorial boards in Türkiye could play a critical role in addressing regional disparities and supporting interdisciplinary and basic scientific research.

The evaluation of publication metrics for the editorial and advisory boards of ophthalmology journals

published in Türkiye against global standards is crucial for understanding their place in the international academic arena. Tutuncu's study from Türkiye, which analyzed 219 Turkish national social science journals indexed in Tr Dizin, showed that journals with highly qualified editors have lower acceptance rates, reflecting higher standards.<sup>[26]</sup> The data from the current study revealed these journals' international performance, competitiveness, and development potential. This assessment not only helps clarify the current status of these journals but also serves as a roadmap for early-career academics. Young researchers can shape their academic careers and learn strategies for enhancing international impact by examining these journals' achievements and areas for development.

ICITE and dimensions analyses revealed significant performance differences among the editorial and advisory boards of Turkish ophthalmology journals. The Turkish Journal of Ophthalmology demonstrated the strongest

metrics with the highest publication, citation, and RCR values, while journals such as the Journal of Retina and Vitreous and European eye research exhibited strong but somewhat lower performance. Erdag and Citirik reported that the editorial board of the Turkish journal of ophthalmology demonstrated higher performance than other Turkish ophthalmology journals in terms of WOS publication count, h-index, and total publications in Scopus. However, no significant difference was found between journals in terms of average citation counts in WOS.<sup>[27]</sup> These analyses provide a framework for future efforts aimed at optimizing editorial practices and research dissemination strategies in the field.

The “Contact Lens” category demonstrates a higher citation impact compared to other subspecialties based on its metrics. “Electrodiagnostic” and “Neuro-Ophthalmology” have the lowest RCR values, reflecting limited academic activity in these fields. This situation can be explained by the fact that ophthalmologists specializing in electrodiagnostics are less common compared to ophthalmologists specializing in areas such as the retina.

Erdağ and Erda reported that retina specialists exhibited higher academic productivity compared to other subspecialties.<sup>[27]</sup> Tanya *et al.*<sup>[28]</sup> determined that among Canadian ophthalmologists, the subspecialty rankings based on H-index demonstrated that ocular oncology achieved the highest academic impact with an H-index. The use of different databases for academic productivity data and the varying training programs and working hours within the Ophthalmology sub-registration areas may have contributed to these inconsistencies.

These data can guide young ophthalmologists in their career planning while also serving as important reference points for institutions and health policymakers in resource allocation and strategy development.<sup>[28]</sup>

Similarly to Gershoni *et al.*'s<sup>[29]</sup> report, the most prevalent subspecialties among the analyzed position holders in the present study were retina, cornea, and glaucoma. In light of these data, and considering factors such as high income potential and popularity, ophthalmology leaders appear to have concentrated their focus on retina, cornea, and glaucoma subspecialties.

Several recommendations may be proposed to address challenges and enhance the global impact of these journals. These include improving transparency in editorial selection processes, promoting gender-balanced representation, fostering international collaboration, and addressing regional disparities through strategic diversity initiatives.

## Limitations

The publication and citation counts presented in this study should be considered solely as quantitative indicators of editors' academic profiles. However, as emphasized in the literature, higher numbers of publications and citations do not always directly translate to academic quality or performance. These metrics can be influenced by various factors and are potentially subject to manipulation (such as excessive self-citation, citation circles, and salami slicing of publications). Such indicators alone are not, therefore, sufficient to evaluate the scientific contributions of editors, and the results should be interpreted with these limitations in mind.

There are a number of limitations to this study. For example, the presence of multiple entries for some editorial board members in the dimensions or ICITE databases, rather than verified unique names, may have affected the data accuracy. In addition, the existence of authors with identical names increases the likelihood of errors and flawed matches during the author selection process. Furthermore, the fact that not all ophthalmologists are active members of the TODNET.org database and that some physicians with advanced subspecialties had to be categorized under the general ophthalmologist category constitute other limitations of the study.

## Conclusion

The editorial boards of ophthalmology journals in Türkiye exhibit geographical imbalances in terms of being concentrated in major cities, the predominance of full professors in editorial positions, limited representation of early-career academics, and a gender disparity favoring male academics. In addition, the predominance of Turkish citizens on editorial boards indicates a lack of international participation. The Turkish journal of ophthalmology exhibited the strongest publication and citation metrics, reflecting its primacy among Turkish ophthalmology journals.

**Ethics Committee Approval:** This study is a study focused on public internet databases. It did not require ethics committee approval.

**Peer-review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

**Authorship Contributions:** Concept: C.M.; Design: M.B.; Supervision: M.B., C.M.; Materials: M.B., C.M.; Analysis and/or Interpretation: A.H.R.; Literature Search: A.H.R.; Writing: A.H.R.

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