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Are Publication and Citation Counts Reliable Indicators of Research Productivity or Impact?

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III Are Publication and Citation Counts Reliable Indicators of Research Productivity or Impact?*

By Sean Rehaag**

ABSTRACT

Universities are increasingly using metrics such as publication and citation counts to measure faculty research productivity and impact, and to compare productivity and impact across departments and institutions. Canadian law schools are facing pressure to adopt similar metrics. In this article the author argues that publication and citation counts are not reliable indicators of research productivity or impact.

SOMMAIRE

Les universités utilisent de plus en plus des paramètres tels que le nombre de publications et le nombre de citations pour mesurer la productivité et l'impact de la recherche au niveau des facultés et pour comparer la productivité et l'impact de la recherche entre les départements et les institutions. Les facultés de droit canadiennes font face à des pressions pour adopter des paramètres similaires. Dans cet article, l'auteur fait valoir que le nombre de publications et le nombre de citations ne sont pas des indicateurs fiables de la productivité ou de l'impact de la recherche.

RELIABILITY OF PUBLICATION & CITATION COUNTS

Are publication and citation counts reliable indicators of research productivity or impact?

No.¹

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¹The following represent the most recently published journal articles listed on the faculty research websites of each faculty member at Osgoode Hall Law School at the time of writing: Harry W Arthurs, "Mining the Philosophers' Stone: Sixteen Tons and What Do You Get? Another Day Older and Deeper in Doubt" (2016) 12:12 Osgoode Legal Studies Research Paper Series 8; Margaret Beare & Chris Hogg, "Listening in ... to Gang

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