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**Title** The rise and rise of the journal paper: intergenerational changes in research and publication patterns among higher education researchers  
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## **The rise and rise of the journal paper: intergenerational changes in research and publication patterns among higher education researchers**

### Introduction

The changing nature of academic life and the pressures of performativity are widely debated in the literature (eg O'Neill, 2002, Ball, 2003, and Lucas, 2006). One of the ways of understanding performative pressures is by reference to patterns of publication among academics over time. This paper reports on the findings from an analysis of the academic CVs of 24 higher education researchers drawn from three different generations. The results illustrate the growing dominance of the journal paper as a form of publication.

### Context/method

Rising levels of research output have been noted internationally on the basis of the Changing Academic Profession (CAP) survey. Among Hong Kong academics it increased two-fold between 1993 and 2007–08 with the production of more journal papers largely accounting for this increase (Macfarlane, 2017). Similar trends have been noted in Korea (Postiglione and Tang 2008). In the UK the research excellence framework (which started as the RAE in 1986) has had a considerable impact in re-shaping publication patterns.

This study drew on the CVs of 24 higher education researchers selected as representative of three different generations as follows: pathfinders (1963-1982), pathshapers (1983-2002), and pathtakers (2003 - ). These categorisations were inspired by conceptual distinctions between different generations of scholars made by Gumport (2002) in her exploration of the emergence of feminist scholarship. The publications periods relate to work published that is categorised as related to higher education research by the participant. A mutually agreed date of their first (and in some cases, last) 'HE relevant' publication was further established. In analysing publication patterns the following forms of publications were not counted: 'in press', unpublished conference papers, reprints, translations, book reviews, editorials, videos, blogs and websites. 'Reports and other outputs' includes newspaper articles, papers in professional magazines.

During the early 1990s a number of researchers in the sociology of science began to establish the CV as a methodology rather than simply a data source (eg Bonzi, 1992; Cañibano and Bozeman, 2009). It needs to be acknowledged that the CV is, at least to some extent, a tool of personal promotion the accuracy of which is dependent on the recollections and honesty of each individual. However, in this respect there is little to suggest that a CV is any less reliable than interview data and indeed may contain more factually accurate information on which to draw.

### Publication analysis

By contemporary standards the pathfinder (1963-1982) generation tend to have quite modest publication records. Their average annual productivity was 2.4 publications per

year and it was notable that books and book chapters were their most common form of output. Journal papers consisted of just 30% of their overall productivity. Only one of the pathtakers had a productivity rate above 2.8 while the lowest was 0.7. Here it is important to understand the context in which many of their careers had developed. Several members of this generation had forged their careers in academic management and administration roles leaving limited time, opportunity or support for research during large parts of their working life. Also, this generation were working, for large parts of their careers, at a time prior to the first UK research assessment exercise in 1986. Many pathfinders often went several years without producing a journal paper.

Figure 1: Inter-generational publication patterns

	Journal papers	Books & chapters	Reports and other outputs	Total years research active	Average annual productivity	Journal paper ratio
Pathfinders (1963-1982)	248	326	182	314	2.4	0.3
Pathshapers (1983-2002)	236	237	142	177	3.5	0.4
Pathtakers (2003 - )	60	22	21	54	1.9	0.6

The pathshaper (1983-2002) generation were, on average, around one third more productive than the pathfinder generation with an annual productivity rate of 3.5 outputs per year. This figure hides considerable variation though between individuals in a range from 1.5 outputs per annum to 4.6. Just two out of 8 pathshapers had a productivity rate below 3.4. One in five of this generation's publications were in the form of journal papers compared to 30% of outputs from the pathfinders. Books and book chapters continued to play an important role in their overall productivity but at a proportionately lower rate overall.

Most pathtakers (2003 - ) had, understandably, far fewer publications compared with the earlier two generations largely due to the relatively short duration of their research careers thus far. One only had conference papers accepted at the time of the analysis and so was recorded, on the basis of the criteria, as a nil return. In terms of productivity all except one were at or below two outputs per annum. However, it should be noted that, overall, and especially if one outlier is discounted, most members of the pathfinder generation had only slightly higher rates of annual productivity. Across the generations there was a notable rise in journal papers as a proportion of overall output (see figure 2). The pathtakers produced on average 3 journal papers for every book/book chapter or report accounting for 60% of all their publications. Another notable feature of the pattern of publication for this generation is that reports and other forms of output (ie 21) were almost as numerous as books and book chapters (ie 22). Partly this may be explained by the fact that many less experienced academics were employed in roles connected with funded research projects resulting in the generation of published reports on findings.

### Conclusion

Academic CVs provide a fine-grained picture of the changing nature of publication linked to the effects of performativity. It was notable that pathfinders often presented their publications as a single list, not discriminating between different types of output while

later generations were more likely to do so and also highlight their research funding before listing their publications. Further analysis is planned with respect to patterns of co-authorship and the relative representation of different aspects of academic achievement (eg research funding).

(988 words)

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