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**Abstract**

We investigate the publication strategies and decisions of academics in two key fields at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. We ask how research output has been shaped over the last two decades by the increasing priority attached to institutional rankings and the accompanying pressure to publish in key journals. Drawing on output data from three selected years: 1993, 2003, 2013, and interviews with colleagues in Education and Social Anthropology, this contribution is an analysis of the factors behind the publishing patterns, including shifts towards international collaboration, that have emerged in South Africa over the past 20 years. Differing trends emerge in these two fields with a common theme including an emphasis, regardless of the questions being asked, on publishing internationally in accredited journals. The increasing pressure to satisfy performance management criteria required for promotion and monetary reward has driven researchers to be more individualistic in their approach to research output. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)