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**Author:** Zahedi, Z.
**Title:** Understanding the value of social media metrics for research evaluation
**Issue Date:** 2018-12-12
Understanding the Value of Social Media Metrics for Research Evaluation

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Keywords: Social Media Metrics (Altmetrics); Scholarly Communication; Research Evaluation

Cover design and layout: Andrea Reyes Elizondo
Printed by: Gildeprint-The Netherlands
ISBN: 978-94-6323-401-6

The research described in this thesis was performed at the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS), Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences at Leiden University, in the Netherlands. Part of the research was supported by fundings from the Iranian Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology (MSRT # 89100156), Thomson Reuters (Clarivate Analytics) & Altmetric.com (#1st altmetric grant); and the Leiden University Fund (LUF #4509).
Understanding the Value of Social Media Metrics for Research Evaluation

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof.mr. C.J.J.M. Stolker,
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties
te verdedigen op woensdag 12 december 2018
klokke 11:15 uur

door

Zohreh Zahedi

geboren te Lar, Iran
in 1980
Promotores en promotiecommissie

Promotor: Prof. dr. Paul Wouters
Co-promotor: Dr. Rodrigo Costas

Leden promotiecommissie:

Prof. dr. Sarah de Rijcke (Leiden University, the Netherlands)
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To all scholars and centers of academic knowledge
Abstract

The availability of indicators based on social media has opened the possibility to track the online interactions between social media users and scholarly entities. Indicators derived from these online interactions reflect aspects such as how often, by whom, and when are scholarly publications mentioned and discussed on social media platforms. These new indicators, popularly known as altmetrics and more technically referred as social media metrics are usually proposed as potential alternatives to citation-based indicators to inform research evaluation. The research presented in this book provides the state of the art in the possibilities of social media metrics for informing research evaluation. The main ambition is to increase the knowledge and understanding of the limitations, challenges, and actual possibilities of social media metrics for research evaluation. This thesis describes the presence and distribution of different social media metrics across scientific publications and their relationship with traditional impact indicators. It further describes the main characteristics of publications mentioned in Mendeley as one of the main social media metrics platforms. Moreover, critical challenges regarding data quality issues of social media data are thoroughly described and discussed. Finally, some possibilities and applications of social media metrics for informing research evaluation are presented. The research presented in this book provides both empirical and conceptual answers for the consideration of social media metrics in research evaluation.