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A study on confronts of global universities ranking

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Abstract

‘Being a world class university’ is the motto of the majority of the Universities. Ranking have become a popular way to compare higher education institutions performance and productivity. Getting good ranking in the world ranking and maintenance of the same is not an easier task. But the most critical problem is that the presence of unlimited ranking agencies. Both institutions, as well as the stakeholders were in contrast, which ranking should follow to have most realistic information? The ranking is not everything still, it transform some aspects of quality assessment to the whole world. This article critically evaluates the top universities ranking agencies criteria. The top ranked university of India can get the rank in between 200 to 250 in the world list. This article also focuses on the India’s preparation for the world ranking and an attempt has been made to look into the solutions considering the management techniques.

Keywords: Ranking, universities, global, India, balanced scorecard (BSC)

1. Introduction

Globalisation is the buzzword in any of the field. Education is not an exception. The competitor is from worldwide. The universities have to prove their performance to the wide variety of the stakeholders around the world. But, India had a poor ranking in the world list even though it had a glorious tradition of education (Tilak, 2012). It can make placement only in the list of universities 400 and above.

The performance evaluation can be conducted in two ways, one is to compare against the standard and the other is to compare amongst the peer performers. The ranking is the technique which walks in the second path. Ranking of the universities is comparing one’s performance against the universities of the world.

Still, the reliability of these ranking, contrasting nature of the different agencies are the unanswered problems. With this backdrop, this article will look into top ranking agencies of the world, the India’s environment for ranking and the critical aspects of ranking.

2. Literature Review

Literature review on the ranking universities globally conceptualises the ranking universities globally. The results of various articles are discussed here. Nelofer (2013) states that private higher education sector are more responsive to the demands of the global market which is having higher ranking even then he was not satisfied regarding the quality. Jabnoan (2016) find out that the countries having high ranked university are having high wealth, high democracy and high transparency and vice-versa. Huang (2012) [3] analysis resulted in the high correlation in between h-index and ARWU ranking. Anand K Joshi (2016) explains the contrast of stakeholders in the selection of the college. He presents the dilemmas between the accredited college and the ranked college. Salmi Jamil (2009) in the World Bank Report proposes the initiatives of world class universities and its ranking, regional disparities. Altbach (2010) [1] opines that the challenge is to understand the nuances and uses-and misuses-of the ranking. Jandhyala B.G. Tilak (2016) [6] presents the list of globally ranked institutions and the India’s initiatives to set up world class universities.

Literature review leads to the research gap of critical evaluation of global universities ranking and the Indian ranking environment.

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3. Objectives

- ❖ To evaluate the global ranking mechanism of the universities
- ❖ To analyse the Indian universities ranking environment
- ❖ To suggest the management technique to solve the dissatisfaction as regards ranking

4. Methodology

The study is conceptual in nature utilises the secondary data from various sources of journal article for the conceptual study, various committee reports and official websites to know the ranking and the criteria used.

5. Conceptual Framework

The ranking was devised by Jose Lages, of the University of Franche-Comte and Dima Shepelyansky, of Paul Sabatier University. The academics will rank the universities in descending order by their page rank scores. Global universities are reshaping their objectives to match with the factors of world ranking agencies. The main intention of ranking is to ensure the quality through the performance evaluation and matching with that of peer performer.

5.1 Present Global Universities Ranking Agencies

There are plenty of ranking agencies in the global level to confess or to confuse the stakeholders. The top three ranking agencies are discussed here. Table 1 denotes the different ranking by three agencies namely Times Higher Education

(THE), Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), and Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU).

a. Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU)

Academic Ranking of World Universities famous as Shanghai Ranking publishes the annual ranking of universities. It is criticised that it emphasise the award factor. The rest of the factor and the weights are presented in the table2.

b. Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Ranking

It ranked universities in collaboration with Times Higher Education (THE) till 2009. They had started their work since 2004 with the head quarter at the United Kingdom. Since 2009 they are ranking in different fields of education and at different regions individually. The referring rate is much higher for QS. Even then, it is criticised that it over-emphasise the pure science over the social science and its emphasis on the peer review (40%).

c. Times Higher Education (THE) world University Ranking

After splitting from QS, Times Higher Education started annual world university ranking since 2010 with the collaboration of Thomson Reuters (TR). The various factor considered for ranking are presented in the table 2. The bibliometric nature of data collection is the drawback of this agency.

Table 1: Global Ranking of Top Ten Universities by the Top Three Ranking Agencies

Universities	Ranking By THE	Ranking By QS	Ranking By ARWU
California Institute of Technology	1	5	8
University of Oxford	2	6	7
Stanford University	3	2	2
University of Cambridge	4	4	4
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	5	1	5
Harvard University	6	3	1
Princeton University	7	-	6
Imperial College London	8	9	
ETH Zurich-Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich	9	8	3
University of Chicago	10	10	10
University College London	-	7	-
Columbia University	-	-	9

Source: Compiled by the authors from the websites of THE, QS, ARWU

THE had ranked California Institute of Technology as the first but, 5th rank under QS and 8th rank under ARWU. QS had ranked Massachusetts Institute of Technology as the world’s first university but as per THE and ARWU it occupies 5th position. ARWU had ranked Harvard

University as the first best university of the world but, QS and THE ranked it 3rd and 6th place respectively. It is difficult to find the similar ranking by all the agencies resembles four out come when three economists are meet.

Table 2: Broad Criteria and the Indicators used by the Different Ranking Agencies

Ranking Agency	Criteria	Weights
Times Higher Education(THE) World University Ranking	Teaching	30.00%
	Research	30.00%
	Citation	30.00%
	Industry Income	2.50%
	International Outlook	7.50%
Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)World University Ranking	Academic Peer Review	40.00%
	Faculty Student Ratio	20.00%
	Citation per Faculty	20.00%
	Employer Reputation	10.00%
	International Student Ratio	5.00%
Academic Ranking of World Universities(ARWU)	International Staff Ratio	5.00%
	Quality of Faculty	40.00%
	Research Output	40.00%
	Per-capita Performance	10.00%
	Quality of Education	10.00%

Source: Compiled by the authors from the websites of THE, QS, ARWU

Apart from the above, there are a number of ranking agencies around the world like Centre for World University Ranking, Eduniversal, G-factor, Global University Ranking by US News, Leiden Ranking, News Week, etc. One should match his objective with the factors considered by the agency for the ranking.

5.2 Indian Initiatives on Ranking

As India accepted globalisation in the field of higher education, it cannot ignore the word ranking. It is the headache of the educationalists of India which fails to get the good ranking in the world list. The Government is in the high struggle of developing world class universities. The Government of India had proposed to develop 10 private and 10 public world class universities in the country in its Budget 2016.

Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) itself rank the universities and hence came-up with National

Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) in 2015. NIRF released its first rank list in 2016. NIRF ranks Institutions of Engineering, Management, Pharmacy and Universities. The basic motto is to prepare the Indian institutions for the world competition. NIRF uses 22 parameters similar to global criteria covered in five major heads namely Teaching, Learning and resources (30%), Research, Productivity Impact and Intellectual Property Rights (30%), Graduation Outcome (20%), Outreach and Inclusivity (10%), Perception (10%). Reliability of data is much, as the report done by the statutory authority. Still, the most important drawback is that it ranks only those institutions which request and provide the data to the NIRF.

Apart from this, there are private national and regional agencies for the ranking of the universities and the colleges. A comparative table showing the ranking of NRIF and the Times Higher Education are presented in table 3.

Table 3: Ranking of Universities in India

Ranking Position	THE Ranking	NIRF Ranking
1	University of Delhi	IIS Bangalore
2	IIT Bombay	Institute of Chemical Technology Bombay
3	IIT Madras	Jawaharlal Nehru University
4	IIT Kanpur	University of Hyderabad
5	Anna University Noida	Tezpur University Assam
6	VIT Delhi	University of Delhi
7	Amity University	Banaras Hindu University
8	IIT Delhi	Indian Institute of Space, Science and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram
9	IIT Kharagpur	Birla Institute of Technology, Rajasthan
10	SRM University Chennai	Aligarh Muslim University

Source: Compiled by the authors from the websites of THE, QS, ARWU

6. Critical Evaluation of Ranking

The ranking of universities came up with the novel ideas like stimulation of the competition, quality determination and maintenance, relative performance measurement and to develop a professional brand to the universities. But in practice, the ranking is not free from confronts. Ranking will serve its intention only when it overcomes the following critical issues.

- Ranking by different agencies will differ for the same time period performance. For instance, the Harvard Business School ranked by THE at 6th position, QS at 3rd while ARWU is first. The factors considered are responsible for the variation. Still, the selection of such factors and the weights assigning is the crucial part and hence, which should be scientific.
- Ranking to some extent influences the marketisation of the education. It will create the brand values to the universities. A small favouritism by the ranking agency also strong enough to create a large difference. The agencies should be free from any kind of bias especially in the situation when the universities themselves engaged in the ranking (AWRU by Jiao Tong University) or the favouritism towards the funding or mother nation.
- The reliability of the data collection from the agencies will need at most care. The common critique of all ranking agencies was that it is bibliometric (Huang, 2012) [3].

- The ranking mere denotes the relative performance rather than the actual performance against a specific standard.
- Ranking sometimes distracts the universities by their vision and mission to the specific parameters of the ranking agencies with their enthusiasm to achieve good ranking.

7. Management Solutions

Ranking agencies can adopt Balanced Scorecard (BSC) approach in the selection of parameters to have a holistic approach in judging the performance of the institutions. Balanced Scorecard covers Financial Perspective, Customer Perspective, Internal Process Perspective and Growth perspective and a number of sub-objectives. Balanced Scorecard as the name indicates balances financial and non-financial factors, leading and lagging indicators, short and long term objectives in order to paint the complete picture of the organisation.

7.1 Proposed Balanced Scorecard Model

A proposed model of Balanced Scorecard framework presented in the following chart 1.

Chart 1

Yearly Balanced Scorecard of (Educational Institution)
 For the year ending.....

Approach	Objective	Performance driver	Standard Performance	Actual Performance	Result (5/6) %	Weight	Total Score (6*7)	Future Initiative
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Customer	To increase the employability	Placement						
	To improve the student lecturer relationship	Student lecturer ratio						
	To increase the standard of syllabus	GATE exam Syllabus						
Financial	To increase Fee Collection	Students Intake						
	To increase fund collection	Downers						
	To increase Surplus	Investment per student						
Innovation and learning	To increase the employees skill set	Training and workshop						
	To increase the industrial touch	Number of project with industry						
	To be the initiator of innovation	Adoption of research findings in practice						
Internal Process	To assist teaching with modern equipment	Equipment's like modern lab, library						
	To be the leader of the curricular	Professional Lecturers to student Ratio						
TOTAL POINTS								

Source: Authors development

- Approach:** The four perspective of balanced scorecard propounded by the Kaplan and Norton in 1992. Interlinked approaches having their own priorities and the contributing to the success of the each other.
- Objective:** The subset of the overall vision of the organisation
- Performance Driver:** the measure to gauge the performance.
- Standard Performance:** The goal fixed by the organisation itself. Fixing standard performance is a difficult task. The organisation can go for the industrial leader's performance as the standard one.
- Actual Performance:** The work performed during the time period. It is gauging the work done towards a particular objective. The data required are available within the organisation.
- Performance Result:** performance result measured by the percentage of actual performance to the standard performance $(4/5 \times 100)$. In order to bring the differently measured data to one common measure, the result converted into a percentage.
- Weight:** Each objective yields different proportionate importance. The total weight points assigned to each approach on the basis of the response.
- Total Score:** The final score for each objective determined by multiplying column (6×7) . Importance adjusted performance result.
- Future Initiatives:** The organisation is going to indicate the proposed plan for achieving the respective objectives mentioned under the head 'objective'

8. Conclusions

The reliability, validity and the comparability of the ranking depends on the ranking agency and the criteria chosen by them. It is highly critical to rely on any one ranking agency instead if we have the ranking by the statutory bodies like UNESCO or World Bank. In India, preparation for the ranking environment had been in progress since the

acceptance of globalisation. Still, it had the poor ranking in the world list and one cannot build a world-class university overnight. One should feed the trees through its root and not by painting leaves. The reformation should start from the primary education. Indian education system had a lot of problems to address and the management theory had a lot of tools and techniques to solve it. The thing required is matching the problem with the proper solution tool.

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