

University Research Rankings: From Page Counting to Academic Accountability*

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Abstract

The globalization of the education industry and concern by governments and funding bodies for academic accountability have turned university rankings into an international game with widening participation not only from North America and Europe but from the Asia-Pacific region. This paper provides a literature review that synthesizes current international and national policies and accountability initiatives with the history of research rankings and the use of bibliometrics to produce 21st century university research rankings. It explains key bibliometric measures and how the current ranking systems apply them. It highlights the commonalities and differences in rankings over time. The growth of research from Asian universities is a positive sign for the gradual rise of Asian universities in the top lists at the same time that the best from the past remain the best of today.

Keyword: Higher Education; Universities and Colleges; Bibliometrics; Research; University Rankings

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