Research publication as a strategy to improve international academic ranking

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Many universities in Asia are now focused on enhancing their global academic competitiveness. Various strategies are implemented to restructure, reform and transform universities aimed at improving ranking in the global university league. One significant strategy is to encourage academicians to place priority on publishing in high-impact international journals. This article examines how a public university in Malaysia strives to strengthen its ranking by increasing its research publication to enhance its position in the international academic ranking. The strategy has resulted in an increase in the number of publications at the international level.

Introduction

Contemporary discussion on international academic ranking focuses on why and how universities compete to climb up the greasy slope in the academic ranking league. For some proponents, international academic ranking has become a popular and useful means to compare universities within a country and around the world. Universities use it to benchmark themselves and compete with their counterparts around the world for prestige and for commercial purposes. A demand for more comparative information from parents and students has also increased the importance of international university ranking such as the times higher education (THE)—QS, QS and the Shanghai Jiao Tong ranking.

University presidents and vice-chancellors at a number of universities in East Asia such as China, Hong Kong and Taiwan are now focused on improving their institutions’ ranking in the global university league (Lo and Weng 2005, Mok 2005b). Consequently, the governance of some universities in Asia is now influenced by an intensified effort to compete in international academic rankings. The universities’ management perceives international benchmarking through international ranking as an indicator of the quality and reputation of the universities.

The QS World University Ranking lists citations per faculty as one of the measures used in its ranking. Citations of research by other academics in high impact international journals often reflect the quality of the research.

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